



Press Release: June 23, 2022

NWCT MOVES TO BROADWAY!

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Northwest Children's Theater Moves to Broadway

NWCT Announces the Judy Kafoury Center for Youth Arts Plans to Renovate Former Movie Theater at 1000 SW Broadway

*Our mission—
to educate, entertain
and enrich the lives
of young audiences*

**Founding Executive
Director**

Judy Kafoury

Managing Director

Nick Fenster

Artistic Director

Sarah Jane Hardy

Northwest Children's Theater (NWCT) is announcing plans to leave their historic home at the NW Neighborhood Cultural Center and move to downtown Portland, converting the fourplex movie theater located at 1000 SW Broadway into a multi-venue arts center for youth. Located across the street from the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall and Newmark theater, NWCT's new home will welcome families back to the heart of the city.

About Northwest Children's Theater:

NWCT has been a pillar of Portland's creative community for 30 years, presenting colorful, engaging, magical plays that kindle a lifelong love of theater. Their doors are wide open to every Portland family, and children are encouraged to see the theater as their own, both onstage and behind the scenes. This means prioritizing the child's perspective and emphasizing representation onstage and off. It means creating a program where no one is ever turned away for lack of funds, with many programs offered free to all, so that economics plays no part in deciding a child's creative trajectory. In a normal year, NWCT offers multiple professional productions, a year-round theater school, hundreds of school partnerships and residencies, and a robust pre-professional training program.

NWCT is committed to the creation of original plays, with a focus on stories that eliminate harmful stereotypes and emphasize the joy of imagination and personal empowerment. The theater forms cultural partnerships with other organizations at the creative foundation, so that every facet of creation is informed by multiple voices. NWCT's longest collaboration is with Anita Menon and the Anjali School of Dance, who have joined them to create and present three award-winning original plays.

NWCT's Theater School offers camps and classes on weekends and during all school breaks. Camps have a reputation for being challenging, creative, and fun, and have been called "laboratories for empathy" by parents. Advanced students build skills both onstage and backstage, and have the opportunity to perform alongside professional performers and designers who double as mentors. NWCT's top-notch instructors and hands-on approach earned two distinctions in 2022: NW Kids' magazine's readers awarded NWCT Best Performing Arts Summer Camp, and PDX Parent magazine's readers honored NWCT with Best Performing Arts Camps and Classes.

Project Overview:

Over the past 30 years, NWCT has touched the lives of more than one million children and adults operating out of the historic NW Neighborhood Cultural Center. When the building's ownership announced their intent to sell the Cultural Center, NWCT's Board made plans to identify a new home to guarantee that impact continues for the next generation.

A planning process was launched in 2017, including evaluation of programs, space needs, and community preferences for a new site. NWCT worked with professional consultants and outside advisors including Capital Campaign consultants Amy Varga and Dedee Wilner-Nugent, and local real estate and business advisers Noel Johnson, Mark Desbrow, and Robb Ball. Along with NWCT's Executive Committee (Artistic Director Sarah Jane Hardy, Managing Director Nick Fenster, and Founder Judy Kafoury), this team worked to identify how NWCT impacts students, families, schools, and the city at large.

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To set up interviews
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Parent surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews informed the following goals and priorities for our space search:

- 1. Keep all programs under a single roof.** Both students and parents emphasized the value of the Theater School model that places students taking classes next door to professional rehearsals and the creative process. This connection between educational space and creative professional work is inspiring, and marks NWCT as unique in Portland's arts landscape.
- 2. Secure a long-term lease.** Any investment in a new space needed to come with long-term security. Theaters are large operations, requiring significant up-front investment in space and equipment. As Portland's real estate market continues its skyward trajectory, NWCT needs to know they will not be displaced by dramatic rent increases or redevelopment. A long-term lease with predictable, controllable rent escalation was essential.
- 3. Stay in the central city.** NWCT pulls families from across the Portland metro region and beyond. Subscribers can come from Sherwood, school groups from SW Washington, and summer camp students travel from Hood River. This broad regional appeal informed a decision to keep our primary location centrally located. Ultimately, NWCT evaluated nearly a dozen sites on both sides of the river, before landing on its final location, 1000 SW Broadway.

NWCT's New Home:

1000 Broadway is an ideal home for NWCT, meeting all search criteria, and located in the downtown arts hub (with the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall and Portland 5 theaters across the street). The Moyer Family, long time owners of the One Thousand Broadway Building, are pleased to support the re-activation of the theater space. Matt Bassist, Director at NAI Elliott, represented the tenant in the market rate long-term lease, securing this space as the new home of NWCT for the next 31 years and aligning with the Moyer Family's separate, ongoing work to modernize the building and streetscape.

The mixed-use 24-story iconic high-rise consists of Class A office space, ground floor retail, and 8 stories of public parking convenient for the theater guests. Liz Killpack, Real Estate Manager with NAI Elliott representing the Moyer Family says, "We are thrilled this corner of the arts district will be infused with new exciting energy, lit up and brought to life with Northwest Children's

Theater. It is the perfect space for them and we look forward to a great relationship ahead."

Working with Project Manager Noel Johnson, SERA Architects, and Turner Construction Company, NWCT has developed a plan to restore and adapt the four movie theaters into a wide range of performance and education spaces.

Highlights Include:

- A 240-seat proscenium theater
- A 120-seat flexible black box theater
- A 190-seat family cinema for family film showings, movie sing-a-longs, and birthday parties
- Multiple large classroom/rehearsal studios for classes, camps, rehearsals, community meetings, and more.

With onsite maker space, improved concessions, and an attached parking garage, this new home will allow NWCT to grow their programs while also providing generous rental and partnership opportunities.

Timeline:

NWCT's lease at the current space (the NW Neighborhood Cultural Center) is set to expire on October 1, 2022. Given this fast-approaching date, NWCT and the construction team at Turner have put together an aggressive renovation and move timeline. NWCT signed the lease on April 8, 2022, and submitted tenant improvement permits in June. Current plans forecast renovations being completed by the end of the year, with a grand opening slated for January 2023. This aggressive pace is matched by NWCT's fundraising, having already secured \$4.2 million of the \$6.3 million needed to complete the campaign.

Project Funding:

Overall, this project calls for a budget of approximately \$6.3 million. This includes all renovation costs, project staff, new equipment, contingency, and operating reserves. This represents a significant investment, however the costs are modest compared with the tens of millions of dollars needed to renovate the NW Neighborhood Cultural Center or construct a new theater elsewhere.

NWCT has multiple paths to meeting this \$6.3 million campaign goal, with \$4.2 million already

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secured and over \$1.2 million in grants currently under review. NWCT starts off in a favorable position, thanks to a dramatic \$2 million lead gift from founder Judy Kafoury and her husband Gregory Kafoury, of the law firm Kafoury & McDougal. Remaining funds will be raised from a mix of private donors and naming opportunities, energy incentives provided through the Energy Trust of Oregon, and in-kind gifts from project partners. Over the past four years, NWCT has worked with capital campaign consultants The Varga Group to build major donor lists, prep fundraising materials and strategies, and begin laying the groundwork for this final stage of the campaign. This leaves NWCT with approximately six months to close the \$900,000 gap by its Grand Opening in January 2023.

LEAD DONORS

Broadway Circle

Judy & Greg Kafoury
Dan Gibbs & Lois Seed
Julia & Robert S. Ball

Producer Circle

Ronni Lacroute
Carolyn Sheldon
The Hilltop Foundation
Anonymous
The Pollin Family Fund
Anonymous
The Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation

Artist Circle

Noel Johnson
Jennifer Standke
Melody Bridges

Project Team:

The move to 1000 Broadway represents one of the largest undertakings in NWCT history. To achieve a successful site selection, design, renovation, and move, NWCT has assembled a top tier team of some of Portland’s most accomplished real estate veterans. The overall Project Manager is Noel Johnson, a local developer and consultant whose work spans more than \$1 billion in complex project delivery. Architect Steven Ehlbeck is leading a team from SERA, one of Portland’s most prestigious architecture firms. Demolition, renovation, and new construction are all being handled by internationally recognized firm Turner Construction, and a team of builders, engineers, and construction managers led by General Manager Kyle Warren and Project Manager Tyler McIntyre. Legal support was given by Jack Conners of Radler White Park LLP. The site was identified, reviewed, and recommended by NWCT’s Board-appointed NWCT Building Search Committee, consisting of Board President Carolyn Sheldon, Founding Executive Director Judy Kafoury, Managing Director Nick Fenster, Artistic Director Sarah Jane Hardy, Project Manager Noel Johnson, and outside advisors Robb Ball and Mark Desbrow.

Take Action:

Access to arts programming in schools is disappearing and quality performing art spaces in Portland are being pushed out as the city grows. NWCT’s vision for “The Judy” is a space where children grow, dream, and develop essential life skills. If you believe Portland needs the arts to jumpstart our communal, cultural, and civic life, support NWCT’s Big Move at: <https://nwcts.org/move>.



“The Judy”:

NWCT founder Judy Kafoury has been a bedrock of support for the children’s theater for the past 30 years. Under her management, the company grew from “\$6,000, a desk, and a phone” to a \$2.2 million a year nonprofit impacting over 75,000 lives each year. It weathered the great recession, and the Covid-19 pandemic. And now, thanks to an unprecedented gift of \$2 million, NWCT is positioned to begin a new era in a new home. In honor of her tireless support and advocacy for the children of Portland, NWCT is proud to name our new home The Judy Kafoury Center for Youth Arts or “The Judy.”

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