



+



Press Release: September 12, 2023

SPOTLIGHT A FAMILY ARTS FESTIVAL

An Explosion of Creativity at THE JUDY!

1000 SW Broadway
T-100
Portland, OR 97205

Phone: 503-222-2190
Fax: 503-222-4130
nwcts.org

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

For one weekend only, catch Portland's best theater, music, and dance geared toward children and families at *Spotlight: A Family Arts Festival!* Northwest Children's Theater is hosting a unique experience where you can see all of your favorite family-friendly acts perform in one place - The Judy, NWCT's new home in downtown Portland.

Festival attendees will have access to all three performance spaces at The Judy - The Schnitzer Stage, The Ball Black Box, and The Family Cinema - and experience a wide variety of art from clowning to comedy and drumming to dance! The incredible lineup of performers includes Alex Addy, Bodyvox's Junior Artist Generator (JAG), Grupo Condor, Kickstand Comedy, Mo Phillips, PHAME, and Renegade Opera.

NWCT's Artistic Director Sarah Jane Hardy expresses, "I'm really looking forward to having such a fantastic variety of artists in The Judy and to share all of their work with children and families. It's going to be an explosion of creativity!"

Meet the performers:

Alex Addy comes from Ghana, West Africa and is traditionally trained. Much of his youth was spent in Ghana where he was involved in drumming performances at his church before moving to Portland when he was 15. He joined Homowo African Arts & Cultures/Obo Addy Legacy Project in 1992, and he teaches the five hand techniques of Ghanaian drumming throughout the city.

Junior Artist Generator, JAG, is the dance training and performance program at the home of Portland's world renowned dance company, Bodyvox. JAG dancers train in ballet, contemporary, and jazz and have a choice between four dance electives: Hip Hop, Flamenco, Salsa, and Improvisation. At *Spotlight*, JAG will be showcasing material choreographed

by **Andrea Parson, Kiri Maasen, Bryaunna Kostelnik**, and Elenaluisa Alvarez.

Gerardo Calderon is a composer, teaching artist, producer and multi-instrumentalist. Born in Mexico City, he grew up surrounded by music, dance and culture. Gerardo is the musical director of **Grupo Condor**, joining storyteller, actress, and musician **Nelda Reyes**. At *Spotlight*, they will present *Legends of Mexico*, which promotes ancient cultures and shares legends from different parts of Mexico. The showcase includes storytelling, acting, and live music using replicas of original clay flutes, rattles, and drums.

Kickstand Comedy will perform *Imagine-Nation*, an interactive comedy adventure show filled with magic, wonder, and LAUGHS! Using props, costumes, and audience suggestions, their adventurers bring imaginations to life with a raucously funny improvised story for all ages! After the story is over, kiddos can take the stage as they join the *What The Fun* Performers in a series of fun-forward improv games that will engage your bodies and funny bones.

Teaching artist and a fun-time maker **Mo Phillips** writes and records songs, makes oddball videos, produces choose-your-own-adventure musicals, all in Mo-Fi. Mo-Fi is a way of making art centered on joy and exploration. Prepare for "a terribly unsophisticated way to have a good time!"

PHAME is a fine and performing arts academy serving adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Their mission is to empower individuals with I/DD to lead full, creative lives through arts education and performance. They are bringing their Rock Ensemble to *Spotlight*, a 15 - 20 member performance group that specializes in pop and rock music. With a combination of stellar

continued on next page

Release Date
September 12, 2023

End Date
October 1 2023

Media Contact
To set up interviews
or discuss other
possibilities for
stories,
please contact:
Rachael Brown
NWCT Marketing
Director
rachael@nwcts.org



+



Press Release: September 12, 2023

SPOTLIGHT

A FAMILY ARTS FESTIVAL

An Explosion of Creativity at THE JUDY!

1000 SW Broadway
T-100
Portland, OR 97205

Phone: 503-222-2190
Fax: 503-222-4130
nwcts.org

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

vocalists and energetic drummers, the Rock Ensemble is sure to have audiences dancing in the aisles!

Renegade Opera is Portland's unconventional immersive opera company focused on creating accessible opera that enchants and surprises. *Bird Songs of Opera*, their hit immersive production, puts the spotlight on Nature's singing divas — birds! Pairing iconic opera arias with Pacific Northwest birds, Renegade Opera's operatic scavenger hunt is a delight for all ages.

Catalyst: NWCT's Youth Company will also perform songs from NWCT original musicals and **John Ellingson** (recently seen on the NWCT stage as Gerald in *Elephant & Piggie's "We Are in a Play!"*) will be bringing his trunk of tricks as Punchinello the Clown!

Ellingson started his career on stage — really in the center ring — at the bright old age of eight. "I want to be a CLOWN!" he said. That's how he met the late, great James Allen, AKA Rusty Nails, a former Ringling Bros. clown who even inspired Crusty on *The Simpsons*. Rusty Nails mentored Ellingson in clowning for over 10 years. Later performing his solo act at birthday parties and festivals all over Oregon, Ellingson discovered that he loved performing for children. Today, Ellingson's clown trunk of tricks has helped him create some of his most iconic roles at NWCT, including the Mad Hatter from *Alice in Wonderland*, MC Dog from *Go, Dog. Go!*, and of course Gerald from *Elephant & Piggie*. "I can't wait to dust off my clown shoes and create a super fun interactive clown show for kids and their families at The Judy!" he exclaims.

Children and families will also get a chance to connect with the local organizations behind the

art. Artists will be set up expo-style in the lobby of The Judy to share more about classes and upcoming events. There may even be surprise artist pop-ups! "This is a one-of-a-kind way to learn more about how you can get involved in our city's vibrant arts community!" says Hardy.

VENUE >> NWCT's NEW HOME:



The Judy Kafoury Center for Youth Arts
1000 SW Broadway, Suite T-100
Portland, OR 97205

ONE WEEKEND ONLY!
September 30 & October 1, 2023

COST:
\$25 per day
\$40 for a weekend pass

Performances start at 10am and run until 4pm across all three performance spaces at THE JUDY: The Schnitzer Stage, The Ball Black Box, and The Family Cinema. Stay as long as you'd like!

To keep the Festival accessible, pay-what-you-can options are available at the door both days.

Most enjoyed by ages 5 and up

TICKETS & SCHEDULE:
nwcts.org/spotlight
503-222-2190

Release Date
September 12, 2023

End Date
October 1 2023

Media Contact
To set up interviews or discuss other possibilities for stories, please contact:

Rachael Brown
NWCT Marketing Director
rachael@nwcts.org