



Press Release: April 21, 2025



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*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 Celebrates Second Anniversary at The Judy

*More than 100,000 families served since the grand opening of
The Judy Kafoury Center for Youth Arts*

This month, Northwest Children’s Theater (NWCT) proudly celebrates its second anniversary at The Judy Kafoury Center for Youth Arts—affectionately known as The Judy—in downtown Portland. Since opening its doors in April 2023, The Judy has welcomed over 100,000 families, establishing itself as a vibrant hub for arts education and performance in the heart of the city.

In just two years, NWCT has provided a wide breadth of programming at The Judy, including:

- 360+ performances
- 150+ theater camps
- 1,200+ theater classes
- 50+ movie screenings
- 13 special events

In addition to NWCT programming, The Judy has become a sought-after venue, providing rental space to dozens of local arts and civic organizations.

The opening of The Judy marked a major milestone in NWCT’s history. After spending three decades at the Northwest Neighborhood Cultural Center, the organization launched a \$6.3 million capital campaign to create its new home in the historic Broadway movie theater building. The campaign was completed with widespread community support, including both

cash and in-kind donations from private donors, foundations, and local business partners.

NWCT extends a heartfelt thank you to SERA Architects and Turner Construction Company for their partnership on this project. As the lead construction partner on The Judy, Turner delivered the project on time and on budget, which was no small feat during a period of record-breaking inflation.

Kyle Warren, VP and General Manager at Turner Construction, shares why the company chose this unique project: “The renovation of The Judy wasn’t just a construction project—it was a chance to build something that would have a lasting impact on the community. Our team poured themselves into every square foot of this space, not just as builders, but as neighbors who care deeply about the future of Portland. Seeing the kids thrive in the new space on opening day, and now celebrating its second anniversary, is a powerful reminder of why we do what we do, creating places that bring people together.”

Recently, NWCT has experienced a significant surge in demand for its programming. Enrollment in summer camps has doubled, and ticket pre-sales have returned to pre-pandemic levels, including a nearly sold-out run of *Pete the Cat*.

These accomplishments come despite ongoing challenges such as rising operational costs and

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End Date
May 31, 2025

Media Contact
To set up interviews or discuss other possibilities for stories, please contact:
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reduced funding across the arts sector. NWCT has proactively adapted to these headwinds, making strategic decisions to safeguard its mission and long-term sustainability.

Founding Executive Director
Judy Kafoury

"NWCT is confronted with the same challenges facing all performing arts companies today," says NWCT Managing Director Nick Fenster. "But ticket sales, enrollment, and donations are all up. Our team is working hard to keep costs down. There is cause for optimism. Northwest Children's Theater is in a strong position to continue serving the community for the next 33 years and beyond."

Managing Director
Nick Fenster

Artistic Director
Sarah Jane Hardy

As NWCT turns 33 this year, its leadership remains committed to its founding vision while building a future that meets the evolving needs of Portland's families. With momentum on its side, NWCT heads into the spring and summer season with gratitude—and excitement for what's next.

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Ashley Coates
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Upcoming Programming

VENUE >> NWCT's HOME:

THE JUDY

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

**A NIGHT ON BROADWAY:
NWCT'S ANNUAL AUCTION GALA**
April 26 at 6pm

MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY
Weekends, May 3-18
10am, 12:30pm, & 3pm

CATALYST PRESENTS: A CHORUS LINE
Weekends, May 17-24
1pm

SPRING THEATER CLASSES
May 3-June 1
Ages 4-14

SUMMER THEATER CAMPS
June 16-August 22
Ages 4-14

NWCTS.ORG • 503-222-2190

\$5 Arts for All tickets are available for Oregon Trail/SNAP Card holders. Please see nwcts.org/faqs for details.