



+



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

Release Date

October 15, 2026

End Date

Nov. 8, 2026

Media Contact

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

**Ashley Coates
Marketing &
Communications
Director**

ashley@nwcts.org

Press Release: October 15, 2026



Diwali Festival Returns to The Judy on November 8

*Free, family-friendly celebration features
Indian arts, dance, crafts, and treats*

PORTLAND, Ore. — Northwest Children's Theater (NWCT) invites families to celebrate Diwali, the Festival of Lights, at The Judy Kafoury Center for Youth Arts on Sunday, November 8 from 11 am to 1 pm. This year, the festival falls on Diwali itself, giving families the opportunity to celebrate on the holiday's official date. Now in its third year, the free, family-friendly festival brings the community together to experience the traditions, artistry, and joy of one of India's most widely celebrated holidays.

Presented in collaboration with members of Portland's Indian-American community, the festival will transform spaces throughout The Judy into a vibrant celebration filled with hands-on activities for all ages. Families can work on a large community-created rangoli design, make their own lanterns, learn a diya (lamp) dance, watch a live dance recital, and enjoy savory and sweet Indian treats. Attendees are encouraged to explore the building room by room, discovering new activities and cultural experiences along the way.

Hundreds of families have attended the festival in previous years, making it a growing community tradition at The Judy.

"At its heart, Diwali celebrates the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil, reminding us of the hope and positivity we can bring into our lives," said Poorna Sridharan, NWCT board member and operations and transformation

leader at GE Vernova. "I'm delighted that NWCT is creating a space where families from all backgrounds can come together, experience the traditions and joy of Diwali, and celebrate the spirit of community."

For NWCT, the festival builds on a long history of partnering with Portland's Indian-American community on theatrical productions, including 2015's adaptation of *The Jungle Book*, 2018's production of *Chitra: The Girl Prince*, and 2019's *Tenali: The Royal Trickster*, all of which incorporated traditional Bharatanatyam and Bollywood dance styles.

These award-winning productions were developed in collaboration with Anita Menon, the acclaimed Bharatanatyam dancer, choreographer, educator, and founder of Portland's Anjali School of Dance. Menon was a pioneering cultural bridge in Portland's performing arts community, helping bring Indian dance and storytelling to new audiences through her groundbreaking work with the Anjali School of Dance and NWCT. Anita Menon passed away in June 2025.

"There is nothing quite like seeing The Judy filled with lanterns, music, dance, and hundreds of families celebrating together," said Sarah Jane Hardy, artistic director of NWCT. "Diwali is about light and hope, and we're so grateful to our

continued on next page



+



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

Release Date
October 15, 2026

End Date
Nov. 8, 2026

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

**Ashley Coates
Marketing &
Communications
Director**
ashley@nwcts.org

Press Release: October 15, 2026



Diwali Festival Returns to The Judy on November 8

*Free, family-friendly celebration features
Indian arts, dance, crafts, and treats*

continued from previous page

community partners for helping us share that
with Portland."

The Diwali Festival is free to attend, with a
suggested donation of \$10 per family. RSVPs are
strongly encouraged at nwcts.org.

About Northwest Children's Theater

The mission of Northwest Children's Theater
and School is to educate, entertain, and enrich
the lives of young audiences. Founded in 1993,
NWCT is the largest children's theater and
theater school in Oregon, producing year-round
Mainstage productions and offering training
and performance opportunities for young
artists. To date, NWCT has provided high-quality
theater arts and education experiences to more
than one million children, families, and students,
earning regional and national recognition as one
of Portland's most respected arts institutions.



VENUE: NWCT's Home:
The Judy Kafoury Center for Youth Arts
1000 SW Broadway, T-100
Portland, OR 97205
Sunday, Nov. 8, 2026 • 11am-1pm

All ages are welcome!

**FREE to attend with \$10 suggested donation
per family**

NWCTS.ORG • [503-222-2190](tel:503-222-2190)

