

ROALD DAHL'S

Matilda

THE MUSICAL



JULY 22-24

CENTER OF CREATIVE ARTS
cocastl.org



COCA Summer Musical

Roald Dahl's
MATILDA
The Musical

Book
Dennis Kelly

Music & Lyrics
Tim Minchin

Based on the Novel by
Roald Dahl

Originally Directed by
Matthew Warchus

JUL 22 | 7:00PM

JUL 23 | 3:00 & 7:00PM

JUL 24 | 1:00 & 5:00PM

Run Time: 2 hours 30 minutes with one intermission

ROALDDAHL'S *MATILDA THE MUSICAL* is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com *Matilda* was first commissioned and produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company and premiered at The Courtyard Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, England on 9 November 2010. It transferred to the Cambridge Theatre in the West End of London on 25 October 2011 and received its US premiere at the Shubert Theatre, Broadway, USA on 4 March 2013." Any video and/or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

Artistic Directors' Note

Dear COCA Community,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 COCApresents Season. After a year of challenge and transition, art has persevered and led the way. Art has guided us to a re-emergence that centers our commitment to developing new talent while elevating the work of the artistic professionals who call COCA home. This season you will find a carefully curated selection of thought-provoking work for the St. Louis community. Through a showcase of partnerships, national artists, and student-work, this season brings us back with a combination of traditional audience favorites and innovative new work for theatre and dance lovers across the region. We invite you to re-emerge with us and celebrate what makes our artistic community unique and vital to our region.

Sincerely,



Kirven Douthit-Boyd
Co-Artistic Director
of Dance



Antonio Douthit-Boyd
Co-Artistic Director
of Dance



Jennifer Wintzer
Artistic Director
of Theatre

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This project has been supported by the Missouri Department of Economic Development's Neighborhood Assistance Program.

Creative Team

Director

Jennifer Wintzer

Choreographer

Chris Page-Sanders

Musical Director

Colin Healy

Producer

Delaney Piggins

Scenic Designer

David Blake

Costume Designer

Shevaré Perry

**Lighting &
Projections Designer**

Jayson Lawshee

Sound Designer

Kareem Deanes

Dialect Coach

Nancy Bell

Fight Choreographer

Michael Pierce

Associate Director

Michael Tran

Assistant Director

Raevyn Ferguson

Assistant Choreographer

Rebecca Hartman

Assistant Lighting Designer

Jonathan Scully

Producing Apprentice

Abi Loiterstein

Rehearsal Accompanist

Henry Palkes

Production Team

Technical Director

Jayson Lawshee

Stage Manager

Carolyn Carter

Costume Manager

Shevaré Perry

Props Manager

Taijha Necole Silas

Assistant Technical Director

Jacob Cange

Scenic Charge

Cameron Tesson

Scenic Artist

Alexis Pearson

**Assistant Stage Manager
& Stage Manager Cover**

Caroline John

Assistant Stage Manager

Kentrell Jamison

**Assistant Stage Manager
& Youth Monitor**

Sammie Haas

**Wardrobe Supervisor &
Costume Fellow**

Cody Floyd

Sound Technician

Justin Foster

Scenic & Props Apprentice

Julia Nelson

Lighting Apprentice

Arielle Pedersen

Lighting Apprentice

Emma Li

Electrics Apprentice

Naomi Bentley

Costume Apprentice

Raina Bentley

COCA Artistic Team

Senior Director of Arts Programming

Orlando Graves Bolaños

Artistic Director of Theatre

Jennifer Wintzer

Co-Artistic Director of Dance

Antonio Douthit-Boyd

Co-Artistic Director of Dance

Kirven Douthit-Boyd

Artistic Producer

Delaney Piggins

Technical Director

Jayson Lawshee

Production Manager

Carolyn Carter

Costume Manager

Shevaré Perry

Costume Fellow

Cody Floyd

Dance & Pre-Professional Division Program Manager

Sam Gaitsch

Pre-Professional Division Support Services Coordinator

Alisa Cooper

Incoming Artistic Producer

Cameron Tyler

Cast

Matilda	RILEY CARTER ADAMS
Trunchbull	WILL BONFIGLIO
Miss Honey	ALICIA REVÉ LIKE
Mr. Wormwood	DUSTIN PETRILLO
Mrs. Wormwood	TYLER WHITE
Alice, Matilda Understudy (SAT, 3:00PM)	DEVYNN YAKEL
Lavender, Matilda Cover	NORAH WOLTERS
Bruce	ISAAC WILSON
Amanda	BRYNN MEYER
Eric	JAROD RHODES
Nigel	RIAN PAGE
Hortensia	DANITY GATES
Tommy	PAUL HORN
Michael	ELISHA JOHNSON
Doctor, Rudolpho, Ensemble, Big Kid	CAMERON TYLER
Sergei, Ensemble, Big Kid	MATT BILLINGS
Mrs. Phelps, Ensemble	MARGERY A. HANDY
The Escapologist, Ensemble, Big Kid	MICHAEL THANH TRAN
The Acrobat, Ensemble, Big Kid, Mrs. Wormwood Cover	REBECCA HARTMAN
Adult Ensemble, Big Kid, Miss Honey Cover	JAILYN GENYSE
Child Ensemble, Alice Understudy (SAT, 3:00PM)	ALEXANDRIA ELLER
Child Ensemble, Bruce Cover	VINCENT EMMANUEL MEYER
Child Ensemble	LOUIS MALLON
Child Ensemble	ZOE KLEVORN
Teen Ensemble, Big Kid	KENNEDY JENKINS
Teen Ensemble, Big Kid	DIZZY FUNKE
Teen Ensemble, Big Kid	QUENTIN FARQUHARSON
Adult Ensemble, Big Kid	MARIE GARLICH
Adult Ensemble, Big Kid	LUCY MYERSCOUGH

Band

Keys 2 & Music Director	COLIN HEALY
Keys 1	HENRY PALKES
Guitar	TOM WATKINS
Bass	JACON MREEN
Drums	ALEX ADELMAN
Trombone	JORDAN EPPERSON
Trumpet	BRYAN FOOTE
Reeds	JACOB JOHNSON

Content Transparency

Mature Discussion & Language

- Mild references to physical violence, and some stage combat
- Fatphobic microaggressions
- Brief sexually suggestive references
- Transphobic microaggressions
- Loss of a parent, death

This show is recommended for ages 6+

In following COCA's mission to deliver thought-provoking programs and train informed young theatre artists who will advocate for change within the theatre and our society, we have decided to include the mature content and language of *Matilda*.

Including the mature content helps fully capture the frustration, hardships, and absurdism of this story.

Acknowledgment of the Author: Roald Dahl

Before sharing the story of *Matilda* on the COCA stage, we'd like to acknowledge that Roald Dahl, the author who originally conceived of this story, held and shared anti-Semitic, misogynistic, and other forms of racist prejudice. As the Dahl family remarked, "We hope that, just as he did at his best, at his absolute worst, Roald Dahl can help remind us of the lasting impact of words." As artists, we seek to find the heart of every story and its value to us amidst a harmful history and flawed world. Tim Minchin and Dennis Kelly adapted the most golden parts of this story as they saw it. Our COCA ensemble has sought to do the same, and we think there is much to glean from the power of a young girl and her band of revolting children to never "let a little thing like little" stop them from creating change. We hope you will also take the time to examine this story and author and determine its value for yourself.

Musical Numbers

ACT I

Miracle	KIDS, PARENTS, MATILDA, ENSEMBLE
Naughty Acrobat Story I	MATILDA THE ACROBAT, THE ESCAPOLOGIST
School Song	KIDS
Pathetic	MISS HONEY
The Hammer	TRUNCHBULL, KIDS
Naughty Reprise (Superglue)	MATILDA
Chokey Chant	KIDS
Loud	MRS. WORMWOOD, RUDOLPHO, ENSEMBLE
This Little Girl	MISS HONEY
Bruce	KIDS

ACT II

All I Know	MR. WORMWOOD
When I Grow Up	KIDS, MISS HONEY, MATILDA
I'm So Clever	MR. WORMWOOD
Acrobat Story IV (I'm Here)	THE ESCAPOLOGIST, MATILDA
The Smell of Rebellion	TRUNCHBULL, KIDS, MATILDA, MISS HONEY
Quiet	MATILDA
My House	MISS HONEY, ESCAPOLOGIST
Revolting Children	KIDS
Priyatna Paznakomitsa	SERGEI
Bows	COMPANY

Check out our Lobby Display and Engage in the Story of *Matilda*

Be sure to engage before or after the show with the activities and resources in the lobby, or as we like to call it “the headquarters of the revolting children.”

Matilda's Library Bike

COCA has partnered with the University City Public Library to bring our audience a taste of Matilda's love of reading and search for knowledge to shift the world around her for the better. There is a **Book Bike** mobile library unit staffed by a member of the University City Public Library staff in COCA's lobby. Here you can sign up for a library card, check out books, and get involved in their summer reading challenge.

Find out more about this resource at ucitylibrary.org or on Instagram @ucitylibrary.

Miss Honey's Chalkboard

In the lobby, you can find the chalkboard Miss Honey uses to teach her students everything from arithmetic to how to treat others fairly. Our cast and creative team have contributed to a collage of questions about growing up. We want to know what you think!

Stop by and add an answer or a thought to our vision board.

Revolting Challenges—By Youth, For Adults

Matilda says, “Just because you find that life's not fair, it doesn't mean that you just have to grin and bear it. If you always take it on the chin and wear it, nothing will change.”

We want to know where the youth of our audience sees opportunities for change.

Youth under 18 should visit the table next to the front doors, and answer the question, “What's one step an adult audience member could take to make a change in the world?”

Adults can stop by the table next to the front doors to take an action with them on their way out. When they leave COCA, the first thing they could ask is “When can I try this action of change to support the youth in my life?”

Want to join from your seat? Use *#revolting challenges* on Instagram or Twitter and tag @cocastl to repost your challenge for adults to take action and create change!

Matilda The Musical Professional Artists Discuss Collaboration with COCA Students

Roald Dahl's *Matilda The Musical* takes COCA stage July 22–24. The production features influential performances, high-energy dance numbers, and a story about justice performed by professional and student artists in collaboration with each other.

We asked *Matilda The Musical* cast members who are also COCA staff and professional artists to share insights into what it has been like working alongside students throughout the production process. Hear from them below!

Will Bonfiglio
Director of COCABiz
Trunchbull for *Matilda The Musical*



What do you hope our student artists will learn from working alongside COCA staff and professional artists for this production?

I hope our students learn the importance of ensemble and being a team. It takes each and every one of us to work together to tell this wonderful story. Building community is such an important part of making theatre.

Why is it so important for young artists to have opportunities to engage with professional artists? And vice versa?

We get to learn so much from one another! I love the energy and curiosity these young people have been bringing into rehearsals! It's so fun to see their wonder and excitement—it's infectious. They remind me of just how magical theatre is and how lucky we are to share this moment and this opportunity together. They bring the perfect mix of professionalism and fun to the process; We get to play around and be silly while trying things and making choices in rehearsals. They all have created very specific characters and are learning so much about their characters—who they are, what their relationship is to the story, etc. These young people are the future of the theatre, and based on this amazing group of folks, I am confident that the theatre is going to be in great hands! I feel so lucky to be working alongside such incredible artists.

What are you most looking forward to about the *Matilda* process?

Rehearsal! I have always been someone who loves the theatre-making process over the product. Of course, it's wonderful and exciting to perform the show for an audience, but my favorite part of theatre is the rehearsal process—getting to know one another and finding our characters and working together in community to figure out how to tell the story. That is so exciting to me.

What is your advice for aspiring young theatre artists at COCA?

Take risks and have fun! There are no right answers, so remember to stay curious—you never know what you will discover in the rehearsal room!

Michael Thanh Tran

Marketing Fellow & COCA Teaching Artist

Associate Director, Escapologist, Ensemble for *Matilda The Musical*

What do you hope our student artists will learn from working alongside COCA staff and professional artists for this production?

There's a lyric in the show that best captures what I hope they learn: 'even if you're little, you can do a lot, you mustn't let a thing like little stop you.' I hope that in working alongside these student artists, they not only learn the importance, significance, and power of their voice, but that they also learn that they have the agency and autonomy to use it. Whether in a rehearsal room or within a creative collaborative process. That they are allowed to speak up and advocate for themselves, their needs, and their amazing talents.



Why is it so important for young artists to have opportunities to engage with professional artists? And vice versa?

By working alongside professional artists and following a professional model of rehearsal, COCA provides young artists the opportunity to experience the same thing that professional actors experience. Not only that, but with multiple professional actors in the room, young artists are able to see what processes and practices work for them and which don't. For the adult actors in the room, there is also so much to learn from these imaginative, creative, and fearless young artists.

What are you most looking forward to about the *Matilda* process?

For me, *Matilda* is a story of how young people respond in the face of injustice. With everything happening in the world, what I am looking forward to most is the end of the *Matilda* process—I am excited to see how these amazing young artists will use the themes of this show and apply it to their own lives as they grow as individuals, artists, and activists.

What is your advice for aspiring young theatre artists at COCA?

I'll give them the same advice my therapist recently gave me: Don't strive for perfection. Strive for precision. Trust yourself and normalize being in process.



Cameron Tyler

Registrar & Incoming Artistic Producer

Doctor/Rudolpho/Ensemble for *Matilda The Musical*

What do you hope our student artists will learn from working alongside COCA staff and professional artists for this production?

I hope the students will see the work that all of professionals, crew, and performers alike put into the production behind the scenes and what it takes to do this professionally. They see us leading in the classroom or during technical rehearsals for the shows they participate in, but don't typically get to see us digging in and memorizing our lines, learning choreography, and creating the world that we present on stage!

Why is it so important for young artists to have opportunities to engage with professional artists? And vice versa?

Our young artists see how much work it takes and how our training has pushed us to be able to perform at the level we need to be at for each show. And as professionals, it's important for us to see the excitement, energy, and life the students bring to each scene we rehearse. The students help revitalize our love for the art, and we see the new direction that our students will not only take theatre and dance but the world!

What are you most looking forward to about the *Matilda* process?

I am excited to be working with the students in a different capacity! They see most of us as just as teachers and forget that we are real people and working professionals. I am also excited to see how the students grow and develop.

What is your advice for aspiring young theatre artists at COCA?

If you can dream it, you can be it! I want them to know that no matter if they go into the arts or something completely different, they can do any and everything they set their minds to!

Creative Team Biographies

TIM MINCHIN (COMPOSER & LYRICIST) is an Australian composer/lyricist, musician, comedian, actor, writer, producer and director. In 2009, he was commissioned by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) to write the music and lyrics for a stage adaptation of Roald Dahl's *Matilda*. Directed by Matthew Warchus and with a book by Dennis Kelly, the musical opened in Stratford-Upon-Avon in 2010. *Matilda the Musical* went on to become one of the most critically and popularly successful musicals of the last 20 years, winning more than 85 international awards, 16 for Best Musical, including a record seven Olivier Awards and five Tony Awards. It continues to run on the West End, had a long and successful Broadway run between April 2013 and January 2017, played for six months in Toronto, Canada, and toured the US twice. It opened at the Lyric Theatre in Sydney, Australia in August 2015, and went on to play Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide. Having played in 50 cities worldwide *Matilda* then swung over to Auckland, New Zealand in August 2017, followed by a tour of the UK and Ireland 2018-2019. *Matilda* embarked on an international tour, 2019/2020, concurrent with the continuing West End run at the Cambridge Theatre, visiting China, South Africa and Southeast Asia. He worked on the stage musical adaptation of *Groundhog Day*, writing the music and lyrics, with Danny Rubin (who wrote the original screenplay) writing the book and Matthew Warchus directing. Following its hugely successful and acclaimed limited run at The Old Vic, London, in the summer of 2016, the show opened at the August Wilson Theatre on Broadway, April 2017, to more rave reviews and ran until September 17th, 2017. MTI are now licensing productions at regional theatres around the world. Biography courtesy of timminchin.com and broadwayworld.com

DENNIS KELLY (BOOKWRITER) is an internationally acclaimed writer, with plays performed in more than 30 countries. He received a Tony Award for *Matilda*. Stageplays include *Debris* (Theatre 503/Battersea Arts Centre, 2003), *Osama the Hero* (Hampstead Theatre, 2004), *After the End* (Paines Plough, Traverse Theatre, Bush Theatre, 2005), *Love and Money* (Young Vic/Manchester Royal Exchange, 2006), *Taking Care of Baby* (Hampstead Theatre/Birmingham Repertory, 2006), *DNA* (National Theatre, 2008), *Orphans* (Paines Plough, Traverse Theatre, Soho Theatre and Birmingham Rep, 2009), *The Gods Weep* (Royal Shakespeare Company, 2010) and *The Ritual Slaughter of Gorge Mastromas* (Royal Court, 2013). Dennis co-wrote and created the award-winning comedy series "Pulling" (Silver River/BBC 3) and wrote and created *Utopia* (Kudos) for Channel Four. For film he wrote the screenplay for *Black Sea*, directed by Kevin MacDonal. Biography courtesy of matildathemusical.com

JENNIFER WINTZER (DIRECTOR) is the Artistic Director of Theatre at COCA (Center of Creative Arts) where she oversees COCApresents and the COCA Pre-Professional Division training program for emerging theatre artists. Jennifer joined COCA's team from Shakespeare Festival St. Louis where she served as Director of Education/Associate Artistic Director. Under Jennifer's leadership, the Festival

was recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the Missouri Arts Council, and FOCUS St. Louis, as well as St. Louis Theatre Circle nominations and awards, including best new play and scenic design. In 2018, as lead producer for the launch of the Festival's new works series, her producing work received four St. Louis Theatre Circle Awards with the regional premiere of *Into the Breeches!* by George Brant, including Best Production. Before relocating to St. Louis, Jennifer worked with Lincoln Center Theater, Second Stage Theatre, and MCC Theater. Jennifer is a graduate of University of Pennsylvania's Executive Program in Arts and Cultural Strategy. She earned an M.F.A. from the Academy for Classical Acting at Shakespeare Theatre Company and George Washington University, and a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University. She is a recipient of the Actor's Fund Scholarship for the Marymount Manhattan College Arts Ed Program. She is a proud member of AEA, a RAC CAT Fellow, and serves as adjunct faculty in the Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University.

CHRISTOPHER PAGE-SANDERS (CHOREOGRAPHER) is originally from St. Louis, Christopher is the Founding Co-Artistic Director of NU-World Contemporary Dance Theatre. As a performer, he has danced extensively with national dance companies such as the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble, Hannah Kahn Dance Company, and Owen/Cox Dance Group, to name a few. As a director and choreographer, Christopher has worked with theatre companies such as The Aurora Fox Arts Center, COCA, Fly North Theatricals, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis (Imaginary Theatre Company), Town Hall Arts Center, Vintage Theatre Productions, as well as teaching and choreographing for Chapman University, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, Davis Contemporary Dance Company, Deeply Rooted ECS, Denver School of the Arts, Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center, and Park Hill Dance Academy. He is the recipient of The Leni Wylliams Award from Cleo Parker Robinson Dance and a two-time True West Award winner for his work on *Amplify* (Arvada Center) and *The Scottsboro Boys* (Vintage Theatre Productions). He is also a 2020 Colorado Henry Award winner for his choreography in *The Scottsboro Boys* (Vintage Theatre Productions). "On the shoulders of my ancestors and mentors, I Dance!"

COLIN HEALY (MUSIC DIRECTOR) is a dog-owner based in the city of St. Louis who is also a composer, music director, and the artistic director of Fly North Theatricals. Starting at age 15, as a touring singer/songwriter with South Florida-based rock band The Republik, Colin's work as a recording artist spans five full-length studio albums—three as a performer (*Last Chance Planet*, 2006; *The Unexpected Answer*, 2010; *We Are The Wild Things*, 2012), and two as a producer (*The Gringo: Original St. Louis Cast Album*, 2017; *Seeing Other People: A New Musical Concept*, 2021). 2012's *We Are The Wild Things*, was recorded at Adam Schlesinger

(Fountains Of Wayne, *Crybaby: The Musical*) and James Iha's (Smashing Pumpkins) legendary Stratosphere Studios in New York and was produced by Brian Viglione (Dresden Dolls). Healy's body of studio work has been recognized by Billboard and College Music Journal and has received radio play nationwide. His work as a composer includes *Forgottonia*, *The Gringo*, *Madam*, and *Big Machine*, which had its world premiere at COCA in the 2022 COCAwrites Festival. Notables: *The Gringo* headlined the 2018 St. Louis Fringe Festival and became the best-selling show in festival history; the 2021 concept album *Seeing Other People* was produced in collaboration with Saint Louis University where Healy served as the Artist-In-Residence.

DELANEY PIGGINS (PRODUCER) is a St. Louis Theatre Artist. She earned a B.F.A. in Acting from The Sargent Conservatory of Theatre arts at Webster University. With COCA, Delaney is the producer and lead teaching artist of COCAwrites, which earned national recognition this season from ReImagined TYA a collaboration of TYA USA, The Kennedy Center, Children's Theatre Foundation of America, and Write Now. She also teaches playwriting and acting, as well as serving as the Artistic Producer on COCA's Artistic Team. She is a member of the 2021 Confluence Regional Writers Cohort at St. Louis Shakespeare Festival where her play *HOMES* premiered in March. Delaney's play *Burden of Proof* premiered at SATE in 2018 and was produced in November 2020 by Exit Left Theatre Company in Holland, Michigan. As an actor, Delaney has worked with St. Louis companies including The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, and The New Jewish Theatre. Delaney was also an Associate Producer on Shakespeare Festival's Shakespeare in The Streets. She is a member of AEA and Intimacy Director with St. Louis companies and Educational Institutions like STAGES, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, The Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University and Saint Louis University. In the Fall, Delaney will be an Arts Leadership Fellow under the leadership at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre and pursuing her M.F.A. in Arts Leadership from DePaul University. Thank you to the Artists, Artistic Team, and the rest of the folk at COCA for 3 years of learning and artistic collaboration!

DAVID BLAKE (SCENIC DESIGNER) was the scenic designer for last year's *Billy Elliot* at COCA. He has designed sets for Nashville Children's Theatre, Door Shakespeare, St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, New Jewish Theatre, Stray Dog Theatre, HotCity Theatre, SATE, Young Liars, and Metro Theater Company. David is a graduate of the UMKC Department of Theatre. He shares a home with his partner, Scott, and their two neurotic canine children Millie and Hermione.

SHEVARÉ PERRY (COSTUME DESIGNER & COSTUME MANAGER) is an artist, storyteller, poet, and fashion educator. She explores creative expression through the overlap of visual art, theater, and fashion. In 2021, Shevaré debuted *She Is Her, I Am She*, as the inaugural artist for Saks Fifth Avenue Gallery and collaborated with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital for their Saints Gala fundraiser. Over the last few years, her art has been featured at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, and galleries in Chicago, New York, and London.

She lives her life passion focused; a true example of, "Love what you do, do what you love." Shevaré earned a B.S. in Fashion Design from Philadelphia University and attended graduate school in London, England. She has also completed the Community Artist Training and Teaching Artist Institute programs at the Regional Arts Commission.

JAYSON LAWSHEE (LIGHTING & PROJECTIONS DESIGNER & TECHNICAL DIRECTOR) is a St. Louis-based Lighting and Scenic Designer, Electrician, Programmer, and Technical Director whose experiences includes musical theatre, opera, new work, and dance. An alumni of The Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University, Jayson earned a B.F.A. in Lighting Design. Jayson has designed for Metro Theater Company and COCA, as well as Lyric Rep, St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, and various other companies throughout the area and beyond. Some lighting design credits include *Billy Elliot*, *wUNDERland*, *Four Little Girls* (COCA); *Last Stop on Market Street* and *Ghost* (Metro); and *Love at the River's Edge* (SFSTL). He has additionally served as the Assistant Lighting Designer on the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis' production of *Pride and Prejudice*. He was the Lighting Programmer for St. Louis Shakespeare Festival's production of *King Lear*. He was the first Electrics Intern at Wolf Trap Opera in Washington, DC, and served as Assistant Master Electrician at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Jayson often refers to the tech table as his "home" and is passionate about making theatre in all forms accessible to all people.

KAREEM DEANES (SOUND DESIGNER) is thrilled to be working on this amazing production of *Matilda The Musical*. Kareem has been working in sound design and engineering for the past 20 years around the St. Louis area. Most recently, Kareem has designed for St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Upstream Theater, The Black Rep, and Lindenwood University. Kareem earned a M.A. in Theatre Education and spends his days teaching Theatre and Media Studies at Parkway West Middle School and at COCA. Kareem is also a founder and director of a children's theatre program in residence at Sherwood Forest Camp in Lesterville, Mo., and split his summer between camp and COCA for this production. Kareem is immensely proud of the work of the talented cast and crew of *Matilda*; we hope you enjoy it as much as we did creating it.

NANCY BELL (DIALECT COACH) is a multidisciplinary theatre artist and educator whose body of work comprises directing, playwriting, acting, and producing. She is known nationally and locally as the founding Playwright-In-Residence of St. Louis Shakespeare Festival's award-winning community-based theatre project, Shakespeare in the Streets, and the founding Director of The Confluence New Play Festival. Her other plays have been produced regionally and at many local theatres. Favorite directing credits include *Into the Breeches* at St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, *The How and the Why* at the New Jewish Theatre, and *Billy Elliot the Musical* at COCA. She is the recipient of the St. Louis Visionary Award for Outstanding Arts Professional and the Scholarly Works Award from Saint Louis University, where she directs the Theatre program. NancyEllenBell.com

MICHAEL PIERCE (FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER) is thrilled to be working on another COCA production. Previous work with COCA includes *Big Machine* and *Billy Elliot*. Michael has also contributed fight direction and choreography with The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, New Jewish Theatre, St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, and more. Michael is a member of the Society of American Fight Directors and the founder of Slings and Arrows, an organization dedicated to the professional development and training of performing artists. Find out more at slingsandarrows.net and join us for our free summer training opportunities.

MICHAEL THANH TRAN *He/Him* (ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, THE ESCAPOLOGIST, ENSEMBLE, BIG KID) is thrilled to return to COCA, having previously performed in *Suffer the Children* and the World Premiere of *Big Machine*. He is fortunate to have performed with some amazing theatre companies over the years, namely 3 seasons with St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, The MUNY, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Arrow Rock Lyceum Theatre, and Metro Theatre Company. TV/Film: "Four Day Delay", "90s Baby." BFA Webster Conservatory. To learn more about Michael and his work, visit michaelthanhtran.com / IG: @michael.thanh.tran . #UnapologeticallyAsian

RAEVYN FERGUSON (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR) is a rising senior at Washington University in St. Louis, working with COCA through the Gephardt Institute as the Arts as a Civic Engagement Fellow. She is elated to have the opportunity to assist in directing *Matilda!* Raevyn is most commonly seen on stage at WashU, acting in productions such as *For Colored Girls*, *She Kills Monsters*, and *Black Anthology* for the past two years, and will be having her first short film produced this fall. Raevyn would like to thank the Gephardt Institute for placing her with this amazing organization, and her family, Lathon Ferguson, Chalana Scales- Ferguson, and Jazmyn Ferguson for inspiring her to always chase her dreams and continue her career in the creative arts.

REBECCA HARTMAN *She/Her* (ASSISTANT CHOREOGRAPHER, THE ACROBAT, ENSEMBLE, BIG KID & MRS. WORMWOOD UNDERSTUDY) is thrilled to making her COCA debut in *Matilda The Musical*. Some of her recent work includes: Maria/Choreographer in *The Sound of Music*, Turtle/Choreographer in *A Year With Frog and Toad*, Swing/Choreographer in *Amelie* and the Mary Poppins u/s in *Mary Poppins*. When she is not on stage, Rebecca can be found teaching at Big Muddy, COCA, and Variety, or playing various characters for business events and birthday parties through Enchanted Events. If you want to know more about Rebecca, you can check her out on Instagram @rebecca_hartman_.

JONATHAN SCULLY (ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER) is excited to be returning to COCA for his third production. He is a St. Louis native and a recent graduate of the Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts with a B.F.A. in Lighting Design. In addition to COCA, he has worked with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Metro Theater Company, Stages St. Louis, and more. In his free time, Jonathan enjoys watching all sorts of TV from classic

sitcoms to trashy reality TV, going out with friends to find new local breweries, and spending some time outdoors in his hammock. Scullylighting.com

ABI LOITERSTEIN (PRODUCING APPRENTICE) is so excited to be a part of this show! Other COCA productions she has been a part of are the 2021 COCAwrites Festival, *Kaleidoscope Crown*, and *Big Machine*. She is also involved in COCA's Improv Troupe.

HENRY PALKES (REHEARSAL PIANIST & ORCHESTRA KEYBOARD) is a graduate pianist of The Juilliard School and joined the Washington University in St. Louis Music Department faculty in 1995, and Performing Arts Department in 2010. Recently returned from the two year First National Tour of *An American In Paris*, Henry focuses much of his musical interest on music for dance, and in that pursuit has become a much sought after ballet and dance pianist, playing classes at Washington University, Webster University, and COCA. He teaches two courses in Musical Theater at Washington University, and professionally has won two Kevin Kline Awards for his musical direction. Palke Henry has been an affiliate orchestral pianist for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra since 1992.

CAROLYN CARTER (PRODUCTION MANAGER & STAGE MANAGER) is overjoyed to be joining the staff here at COCA as the new Production Manager. She is so grateful to join this community and to be a part of the incredible work and teaching that happens here. She graduated with a BFA in Stage Management from The Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University. Some of her favorite credits include Assistant Stage Manager for *The Gradient* and Stage Manager for the Imaginary Theatre Company season at the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Stage Manager for *A Vengeance and Love* at the Rivers Edge at Shakespeare in The Streets, Stage Manager for *I Now Pronounce* at the New Jewish, and Production Coordinator for The Conservatory's 50th Anniversary.

TAIJHA NECOLE SILAS (PROPS MANAGER) is from Alexandria, LA. She received her bachelor's degree from Northwestern State University in musical theatre and directing. She is also a first year acting fellow at The St. Louis Black Repertory. At The Black Rep, she has props designed and managed shows such as *Fireflies*, *Jitney*, and *Sweat*. She has also acted in their production of *Behind The Sheet* as Mary and *Turn-Up and Stamping, Shouting, and Singing Home*, which is a part of their Touring Season. This is Taijha's first time working with COCA, and she has learned so much in her time here. "I am forever thankful to all the blessings I've gotten to experience in my life and know this is only the beginning of so much more!" - Taijha N. Silas (She/They)

JACOB CANGE (ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR) is excited to join COCA once again as a helping hand backstage as Assistant Tech Director. After graduating The Sargent Conservatory at Webster University as a B.F.A. Acting major, Jacob has collaborated on stage and off with Metro Theater Company, The Repertory

Theater of St. Louis, The Young Liars Theater, Circus Flora, and The New Jewish Theater. He lives in the vibrant Cherokee Arts District with his tabby cat, Louie.

CAROLINE JOHN (ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER, STAGE MANAGER COVER) is elated to join the COCA family for *Matilda The Musical*. Caroline is currently pursuing a B.F.A. in Stage Management from the Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University, Class of 2023. Most recently, she was the production assistant for The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis' production of *The 39 Steps*. She spent last summer with Crane River Theatre stage managing *Cinderella* and *Mamma Mia*. Previously, she's worked with Variety Theatre St. Louis on *Disney's The Little Mermaid* and *Disney's Mary Poppins*. She has also stage managed around St. Louis for MADCO and The Ambassadors of Harmony. @_carolinejohn

KENTRELL JAMISON (ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER) joins another musical adventure as an Assistant Stage Manager for *Matilda The Musical*. He's a Chicago native who graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with a bachelor's degree in performing arts. He performed in an astounding version of *King Lear* for the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival 2021 season. In 2021, he was a Transportation Munny Driver and a Production Assistant at The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis for the World Premiere of *The Gradient* and *Stick Fly*. And recently was the Assistant Stage Manager for *Big Machine*, a new musical. He is thankful for all his opportunities at COCA.

SAMANTHA HAAS (ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER & YOUTH MONITOR) is very excited to be a part of her first production with COCA. She is currently a senior at Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University, pursuing a B.F.A. in Stage Management. Favorite credits include: *Mlima's Tale* (PA, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* (PSM, Sargent Conservatory), and *Miss You Like Hell* (ASM, Sargent Conservatory). She'd like to thank her fellow ASM's and Stage Manager, Carolyn Carter, for making this production such a positive experience. @Sammie.Haas

ARIELLE PEDERSEN (LIGHTING APPRENTICE) is grateful to be a part of *Matilda The Musical's* technical team at COCA. Although being most comfortable on the stage, she has decided to challenge herself by learning and growing from this perspective. Professional credits include: MUNY, Union Avenue Opera (*A Little Night Music*, Aug. 2022), Fox Theatre (Moscow Ballet's *Nutcracker* and a Finalist voted Best Musical Theatre Performer in the 2021 Fox Performing Arts High School Talent Competition), and Variety Theatre. Arielle is an Actor's Equity Candidacy Member and plans to attend Brigham Young University to study musical theatre and vocal performance in the fall. ariellepedersen.com.

Cast Biographies

RILEY CARTER ADAMS (MATILDA) is a rising seventh grader and is extremely excited to join the cast of *Matilda The Musical*! She is a member of COCA's Pre-Professional Division Theatre Artist Program, Ballet Eclectica, and COCADance. She had the honor of portraying the role of Belinda in The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis' *A Christmas Carol* while in the theatre program. Riley is a member of The Muni Kids Touring Troupe and has performed in the youth chorus since 2019. Muni credits include *Camelot*, *Kinky Boots*, *Cinderella*, and the upcoming *The Color Purple*. Huge thanks to all the COCA directors, cast, and crew for this unforgettable experience. @its_miss_riley

WILL BONFIGLIO (TRUNCBULL) excitedly returns to the COCA stage after performing in COCA's productions of *Billy Elliot* (Mr. Braithwaite), *Balloonacy* (Man), *Ragtime* (Father), and *Seussical* (Horton). Other favorite regional productions include *Buyer & Cellar* (Stray Dog Theatre), *Fully Committed* (New Jewish Theatre), *Grey Gardens* (Max & Louie Productions), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Insight Theatre Company), and *Old Wicked Songs* (New Jewish Theatre). He is the proud recipient of three St. Louis Theatre Circle Awards for Outstanding Actor in a Comedy. A huge thanks to Jenny for this dream come true!

ALICIA REVÉ LIKE (MISS HONEY) is an actor and singer/songwriter based in St. Louis. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of Missouri. Like is a graduate of the University of Missouri in Columbia with a degree in vocal performance. Other regional credits include: *Peter and the Wolf* (St. Louis Symphony Orchestra), *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *Puss in Boots* (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *Ghost, It's a Wonderful Life* (Metro Theater Company), *Miss Julie*, *Clarissa and John* (The Black Rep), *The Wiz* (Coterie Theatre, Kansas City, MO), and *The Gringo* (Fly North Theatrics). Like is currently the host of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra's on-demand videos series SLSO SoundLab, discussing how music can be heard, felt, and seen. Like also performed in COCA's last summer musical, *Billy Elliot*.

DUSTIN PETRILLO (MR. WORMWOOD) is very grateful to be making his COCA debut! Since graduating from The University of Wyoming in 2017 with a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre, he has worked professionally in both theatre and film/commercials around St. Louis, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. Theatre credits include Mickey in *Flanagan's Wake* (Westport Playhouse), Jack Horn in *Forgottonia* (Fly North Theatrics), Edmund/Oswald in *King Lear* (Ozark Actors Theatre), Judas in *Godspell* (Snowy Range Summer Theatre), Kenickie in *Grease* (Theatre West) and J.D. in *Heathers* (Myriad Productions). Film Credits include

William Byrd in *Bacon's Rebellion* (Cortina Productions). He hopes you enjoy the work of this wickedly talented cast and dedicated crew.

TYLER WHITE (MRS. WORMWOOD) is a native of St. Louis and a full-time artist who is elated to work with COCA! Tyler is granted the duty of both serving her role as theatre artist both on and off the stage. Her credits on stage include Teaspoon in *Sarafina*, Talisha in *Like Sugar*, Yolanda in *Crowns*, Ensemble in *The Black Nativity*, Lillie Mae in *The Me Nobody Knows*, Ensemble in *Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope* (The Black Rep), Ermina in *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* (Mustard Seed Productions), Woman in Yellow in *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow Is Enuf* (Washington University), Mr. Dennis/Ensemble in *Last Stop On Market Street* (Metro Theater Company) and Knight/Ensemble in *King Lear* (St. Louis Shakespeare Festival). Stage Manager credits include *The Barber of Seville* (Union Opera), *Hairspray Jr.* (COCA). Assistant Stage Manager credits include *Canfield Drive*, *Two Trains Running*, and *Nina Simone: Four Women* (The Black Rep). Tyler served as Education/Community Director for three years at The Black Rep. She graduated from Southeast Missouri State University with a Bachelor of Science in Human Environmental Science.

DEVYNN YAKEL (ALICE, MATILDA UNDERSTUDY ON SATURDAY AT 3:00PM), a 10-year-old 6th grader, is excited for the opportunity to perform two roles in *Matilda The Musical*! She has been a member of COCA's Pre-Professional Division Junior Division, as well as STAGES Triple Threats, performing most recently as Bird Woman in *Mary Poppins*. Some of her other previous credits include Anita (*101 Dalmatians*), Amanda Thripp (*Matilda The Musical*), and Marta (*The Sound of Music*). Last year she performed in *A Christmas Carol* with The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. She has performed in Gen Horiuchi's *The Nutcracker* with Saint Louis Ballet, and attended Destination Broadway with Tiffany Haas. Devynn thanks her family and friends for their love and support, and Ms. Jenny and the entire cast and crew of *Matilda* for an amazing production!

NORAH WOLTER (LAVENDER, MATILDA COVER) is a 12 year-old 7th grader from Jefferson City, Missouri. She so excited to be making her COCA debut as Lavender in *Matilda The Musical*. She has been previously seen in shows at The Little Theatre of Jefferson City and Capital City Productions. A few of her favorites include being Matilda in *Matilda The Musical*, Charlie the Elf in *Elf*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Bonnie & Clyde*. Norah would like to thank her parents and her brother, Jace, for their constant support, as well as her coaches, teachers, mentors, and so many others. A big thanks to the cast and crew of *Matilda* and everyone at COCA for this opportunity.

ISAAC WILSON (BRUCE) is thrilled to be making his COCA debut as Bruce in *Matilda The Musical*. Isaac is a rising 8th grader in the Webster Groves School District where he has played multiple roles in the theatre department. Isaac wants to thank his amazing choir teacher Ms. Gado, his incredible drama coach

Mr. Conners; and his family for their support and encouragement. Isaac is grateful to join this fantastic cast and thanks the COCA directors and staff for this opportunity!

BRYNN MEYER (AMANDA) is a 10-year-old 6th grader and fashion designer. She's excited to be cast as Amanda Thripp, especially since she gets to be tossed! Some of her favorite past credits include: *Jane, Mary Poppins, Jr.* (SPAA); Wendy Fezziwig/School Boy/Urchin, *A Christmas Carol* (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), Lavender, *Matilda Jr.* (SPAA); Gretl, *Sound of Music* (SPAA). Most recently Brynn was honored to be a featured fashion designer in the Crusade Against Cancer Fashion Show. She's an accomplished young artist who has placed first in the State of Missouri. Brynn wants to give a loud shout out her COCA *Matilda* family; her mom, dad, and sister, Aspen; and all her family and friends for their continuous love and support.

JAROD RHODES (ERIC) is thrilled to join the cast of *Matilda The Musical!* He has loved the stage since his first opportunity at the age of four. His past theatre experience includes: *Seussical the Musical, Madagascar Jr., Wizard of Oz, Newsies, Into The Woods*, and the *Big One-Oh!* Last year, Jarod was in *A Christmas Carol* with The Rep. Most recently he took on the role of Buddy in *Elf Jr* with his school play. Jarod also enjoys dancing and singing, and he trains at both COCA and Expressions Academy of Dance.

RIAN PAGE (NIGEL) is super excited as well as thankful to be a part of COCA's production of *Matilda The Musical*. Rian made her stage debut at the The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis' production of *A Christmas Carol* as Tiny Tim, Christmas Past Attendant, and Ignorance. Rian sings with Phil Woodmore Singers KIDZ and with the children's choir at Kennerly Temple COGIC. She had a solo spotlight at the Mayor's State of the City Address. Rian loves spending time with her family and friends and plans on gracing the stages of Broadway in New York someday.

DANITY GATES (HORTENSIA) is an upcoming 6th grader and has a passion for theatre arts. Her hobbies include dancing, gymnastics, acting, and singing. Danity's personality is very dramatic, comical, and bubbly. Her favorite school subject is social studies, and when she grows up she wants to be a historian and/or an actress. This is Danity's first year being a part of COCA, however Danity was seen in plays such as *James and the Giant Peach* with the YMCA Chesterfield. Danity is thankful and super excited about her role as Hortensia in *Matilda The Musical* and looks forward to growing with her new COCA family.

PAUL HORN (TOMMY) is thrilled to be in his first COCA production! He sang in his school choir in 4th grade (Reed Elementary), was in the show *Mary Poppins* (Ensemble, Variety Theatre), and has also participated in his school musicals (*Frozen-King Agnarr*, and *Lion King-Scar*; Ladue Middle School). He has been singing and dancing with the Variety Children's Chorus for the past three years. Paul thanks Debby Lennon, Dr. Jeffrey Carter and Dawn Gilbertson (Variety

Chorus and Dance), Leah Alrutz (Ladue Middle School theatre director), Nathan Ruggles (CMS), and his family for supporting him on his theatrical journey!

ELISHA JOHNSON (MICHAEL) is an upcoming sophomore who has completed several acting and theatrical classes. He's a student in COCA's Pre-Professional Division. He's worked in two productions at COCA, which allowed him to be on the stage for *Hairspray, Jr.* directed by Christopher Page and able to live the backstage life working as a Production Assistant in *Big Machine* directed by Nancy Bell. He's done many other shows at SIUE Cougar Camp. He's excited for many more shows and to see where the theatrical world takes him.

CAMERON TYLER (DOCTOR, RUDOLPHO, ENSEMBLE, BIG KID) is so excited to be back performing with COCA. You might have seen Cameron around COCA as a Registrar or working with Productions as a Stage Manager or Assistant Director. Some of Cameron's past rolls include Roger in *Grease* (Paul Bunyan Playhouse), Donkey in *Shrek* (MBU theatre and Larry D. Clark Rep) and Billy in *Anything Goes* (Missouri Baptist University). Cameron is a southeast Missouri native, growing up in the Jackson/Cape Girardeau area. He is additionally a recent graduate from Missouri Baptist University where he earned his Bachelor of Music in Musical Theatre.

MATT BILLINGS (SERGEI, ENSEMBLE, BIG KID) Although he was born and raised in Northern California, Matt has been a St. Louisan for nearly seven years and received his education from the Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University. Matt is excited to be returning to COCA this season. He was last seen at COCA as Thomas Midgley in *Big Machine*. Some of Matt's other credits include *Grease*, *Catch Me If You Can* (Tent Theater), *Flanagan's Wake* (Playhouse at Westport Plaza/Emery Entertainment), and *Love's Labour's Lost* (Sargent Conservatory).

MARGERY A. HANDY (MRS. PHELPS, ENSEMBLE) is honored to take the COCA stage in *Matilda The Musical*. Margery's other recent performances include: *Kaleidoscope Crown* (COCA), *The Full Monty*, *Sister Act*, and *The Wizard of Oz* (Alton Little Theater); and *Dreamgirls* (Straydog Theatre). In 2019, Ms. Handy received the Arts for Life Best Performance Award for Best Actress in a Comedic Role. Margery's future performances include: *The Bee Play* (Ma'Dear) with New Jewish Theatre in September 2022, and *Caroline, Or Change* with Fly North Theatricals in the summer of 2023. Thank you, Kat and Miles, for inspiring and supporting me in my happy place...the theatre!

JAILYN GENYSE (ADULT ENSEMBLE, BIG KID, MRS. HONEY COVER) is a rising senior at the Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University. She is excited to make her COCA debut in *Matilda The Musical*. A few of her Webster credits include *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* (Edward Tulane),

Urinetown the Musical (Little Becky Two Shoes), and *Canfields Drive* (Actor 7). She would like to thank her family and friends for supporting her in her journey.

ALEXANDRIA ELLER (CHILD ENSEMBLE, ALICE UNDERSTUDY ON SATURDAY AT 3:00PM) has been performing since she was five. Her favorite roles include Chip in *Beauty and the Beast* with Vivre Theatre and Gracie Shinn in *The Music Man* with MBU Theatre. She's also been in productions with COCA Vocal Company, O'Fallon TheatreWorks, Ballet 314, and STAGES Performing Arts Academy. When not on stage, Alexandria enjoys all things Pokemon and spending time with family, friends, and her cat, Eevee. She would like to thank the Lord, her family, her teachers, and all the amazing Maggots for such a wonderful show! @actingalexandria

VINCENT EMMANUEL MEYER (CHILD ENSEMBLE, BRUCE COVER) is thrilled to be part of the youth ensemble in COCA's production of *Matilda The Musical*. An actor, musician, composer, visual artist, and member of COCA's Pre-Professional Division, Meyer has received additional training in interdisciplinary arts at the Interlochen Center for the Arts. Last season's production of *A Christmas Carol* at The Rep was Meyer's first professional stage appearance. Meyer will attend Ladue Middle School this fall.

LOUIS MALLON (CHILD ENSEMBLE) is a rising 7th grader who performed in COCA's *Billy Elliot* last summer and has been part of the COCA Pre-Professional Division this past year. He performed two improv shows with COCA (Dec 2021 and May 2022). He has also been active in his middle school theatre program, performing in *Snow Angel* (November 2021), *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (March 2022), and *Seussical the Musical* (May 2022). He thanks Ed Reggi and all of COCA for their support and training. Love to Mom, Dad, Avie, and Dash. He hopes everyone enjoys the show!

ZOE KLEVORN (CHILD ENSEMBLE) is delighted to be a part of *Matilda The Musical*! She has always been passionate about music and performing. Zoe recently joined the St. Louis Children's Choir and starred as Annie in COCA's First Musical: *Annie Kids*. Zoe is a kind, hard-working, easy-going, and creative child who loves acting, basketball, board games, movies, singing, skiing, soccer, swimming, traveling, and her school, Holy Redeemer. Zoe is grateful for the love and support of her family, friends, and mentors at COCA and would like to be a singer and mom when she grows up!

KENNEDY JENKINS (TEEN ENSEMBLE, BIG KID) is an Honor Roll student at Hazelwood East High School where she will be a junior in the fall. She enjoys making people laugh and performing. A few of her favorite performers are Keke Palmer, Zendaya, and Giveon. Her ultimate goal is to be known as an amazing actress.

DIZZY FUNKE (TEEN ENSEMBLE, BIG KID) is so excited to be working on *Matilda The Musical*! This is their third production, but xyr first with COCA. Dizzy would like to thank the cast and crew for being so supportive and amazing. They enjoy singing, dancing, acting, thrifting, and drawing. Other productions xe have been in include *Willy Wonka Jr.*, and *Moana*, where they played *Moana*. Xe has had so much fun working on this production!

QUENTIN FARQUHARSON (TEEN ENSEMBLE, BIG KID) will be entering high school in the fall and is excited to spend his summer in the cast of *Matilda The Musical*. This is Quentin's first opportunity to act at COCA. Quentin has performed in several school productions. His favorite role was that of Harry McAfee in the middle school's production of *Bye Bye Birdie*. He was one of a few middle schoolers chosen for the high school productions of *Guys and Dolls* and most recently *Cinderella* which won Best Musical at the 2022 St. Louis High School Musical Theater Awards. He aspires to perform in many future productions.

MARIE GARLICH (ADULT ENSEMBLE, BIG KID) is a B.F.A. Musical Theatre student at Southeast Missouri State University. They performed in COCA's *Billy Elliot* (ensemble), Vocal Company, and were a part of the Pre-Professional Division. Some of their other theatre credits include Sheila in *A Chorus Line* (Ignite Theatre), Swing/understudy in *Remembering Morgan* (SEMO), and Gertrude McFuzz in *Seussical* (Parkway North High School). Marie is excited to be working with COCA again as part of the *Matilda* ensemble. They would like to thank their parents for their constant support and the cast and crew of *Matilda* for all their hard work.

LUCY MYERSCOUGH (ADULT ENSEMBLE, BIG KID) is a rising sophomore at Loyola University Chicago. Her most recent credits include several ensemble roles in a student production, *Pretty Little Fools* (Loyola University Chicago), Ballet girl in *Billy Elliot* (COCA), and Hope Cladwell in *Urinetown* (CBC High school). Lucy is a recurring intern for Fly North Theatricals and has worked on productions including *Forgottonia*, *Madam*, and their recent Spring Thing Fundraiser. She was a COCA Pre-Professional Division student for eight years taking classes and performing in main stage productions. She is very excited to take on an apprentice role in *Matilda* this summer!

About COCA

COCA's mission is to enrich lives and build community through the arts. With a commitment to equity and access, COCA serves as a regional hub for learning in and through the arts for all ages from all backgrounds. One of the most diverse cultural institutions in St. Louis, COCA serves more than 50,000 students, audience members, artists, and families from more than 220 zip codes across the St. Louis region every year. The fourth largest multi-disciplinary arts organization in the country, COCA is committed to supporting the vitality and creativity of more than 200 artists at the heart of its work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and onsite at its campus in University City.

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Masks must be worn at all times inside the COCA building, except when eating or drinking in designated areas.

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Land Acknowledgement

Land acknowledgements help us honor a place's Indigenous people—past and present—and recognize the history that brought us to where we are today and the fact that our communities are in stolen lands. Here is COCA's Land Acknowledgement:

In alignment with our mission to enrich lives and build community through the arts, COCA chooses to learn about, come to terms with, and share the truth of Westward Expansion. COCA acknowledges its community spaces, studios, and theatre rest on the traditional lands of Native People, including the Illini Confederacy, Osage Nation and Missouri tribe. We acknowledge this land is stolen land and acquired through a history of violence. We honor these tribes now and the other tribes who made their homes in St. Louis before us. We encourage you to learn more about native communities and land where you live.

The above publication was created in collaboration with the students in the COCAwrites Program and extends for COCA's youth a platform to incorporate their feedback into professional dramatic texts and reflect on their own artistic process.

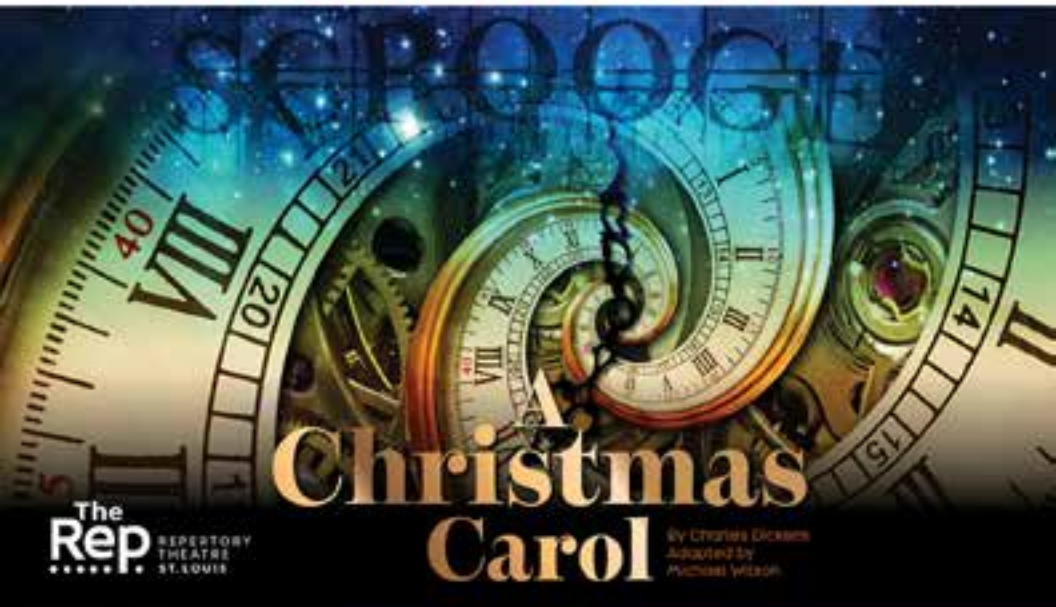


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