



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Abby Frohne, Director of Marketing  
[afrohne@cocastl.org](mailto:afrohne@cocastl.org), 314.561.4876

## COCA SUMMER MUSICALS OFFER THEATRE EXPERIENCES FOR ALL AGES

*Lineup includes mainstage musical Pippin and student camp productions of Mean Girls JR. and Disney's The Lion King JR.*

**ST. LOUIS (June 21, 2023)**—This summer, COCA brings three musical theatre productions—*Pippin*; *Mean Girls JR.*; and *Disney's The Lion King JR.*—to the Catherine B. Berges Theatre stage, providing live theatre experiences for audiences of all ages.

“COCA’s summer musical theatre lineup offers something for everyone,” said Shawna Flanigan, COCA Artistic Director of Theatre. “*Pippin* is a high-energy production with an unforgettable score. The story is a coming-of-age tale that both teens and adults can enjoy. Our two student musicals, *Mean Girls JR.* and *Disney's The Lion King JR.*, are sure to captivate families and younger audience members and provide an opportunity to engage with live community theatre geared toward them.”

The series kicks off with COCA’s 2023 Summer Musical and mainstage production, [Pippin](#), a coming-of-age story that perfectly captures the teenage years of life and the search to find what fulfills us, July 21–22. This full-length, fully produced musical brings a fresh, modern-day view of this classic to tell the story of the quest to live an extraordinary life and features adult professional performers and community members working alongside a few of COCA’s most advanced students. *Pippin* is choreographed by Christopher Page-Sanders with music direction by Tre’von Griffith. *Pippin* is recommended for ages 14 and up.

Two of COCA’s Summer Arts Camps culminate in performances of *Mean Girls JR.* and *Disney's The Lion King JR.* These student musicals are led by professionals and cast by audition. Providing an accessible opportunity to enjoy musical theatre, the 75-minute educational experiences are sure to delight families.

Teens from COCA’s Summer Camp Youth Musical hit the stage with [Mean Girls JR.](#), July 28–29. In the most fetch musical this summer, Cady Heron, a naïve newbie to suburban Illinois, navigates the wilds of the American high school and the social ranks by taking on The Plastics, a trio of lionized frenemies led by the charming Queen Bee Regina George. *Mean Girls JR.* is directed by Lizi Watt, choreographed by Christopher Page-Sanders with music direction by Joe Schoen.

[Disney's The Lion King JR.](#), August 4–5, brings the African savanna to life on stage with Simba, Rafiki, and an unforgettable cast of characters as they journey from Pride Rock to the jungle and back again, in this inspiring, coming-of-age tale. This production features teens from COCA’s Summer Camp Musical intensive. *Disney's The Lion King JR.* is directed by Jim Butz, choreographed by Diadie Bathily with music direction by Dr. Philip A. Woodmore.

Tickets are on sale at [cocastl.org](http://cocastl.org) or by contacting the COCA Box Office at 314.561.4873.

COCA's Summer Musical, *Pippin*, is proudly presented by Mary Strauss. COCA's Summer Arts Camps are supported by Steward Family Foundation and Ameren.

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#### **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 200 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 their work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and onsite at its campus in University City.