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Young Actors' Theatre (YAT) Announces Three Productions for Fall 2017-2018 Season

Spring Valley, CA (July 13, 2017) – Young Actors' Theatre Board President Jean Isaac has announced the Junior and Senior productions for the Fall 2017 – 2018 season. YAT's Fall production season will kick off with the classic tale *Disney's My Son Pinocchio JR.* for junior actors in grades 2nd-8th, followed by the Original Broadway Version of *Peter and the Starcatcher* for senior actors in grades 8th through college and the RSC version of the timeless classic *The Wizard of Oz* for junior actors in grades 2nd – 8th.

"This line up is truly a Season of Dreamers! YAT has always strived for unique opportunities for our members, and this season is no exception," said YAT Board President, Jean Isaac. "Starting with *My Son, Pinocchio Jr.*, this fun and timeless story visits the cartoon of old, with Geppetto dreaming for his real boy, and ends up telling us some very important messages. *Peter and the Starcatcher* is very new to the musical theatre world. Having seen this classic re-telling of *Peter Pan* a few years back, this is what theater is all about. It's fresh, it's edgy, and it's just what the teens and college kids are asking for! Closing out the Fall with *The Wizard of Oz* is perfect because it ties the shows together with the ultimate dreamer, Dorothy Gale of Kansas. I hope you enjoy our delightful season!"

***DISNEY'S MY SON PINOCCHIO JR* by David Stern with music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz**

In *Disney's My Son Pinocchio JR.*, the classic tale of toymaker, Geppetto's, little wooden puppet is given new life. This new musical, which retells the classic Disney story from Geppetto's perspective, features the beloved classic songs, "When You Wish upon a Star" and "I've Got No Strings," alongside a host of new songs by Oscar winner and Grammy Award winner, Stephen Schwartz. Join the Blue Fairy, Stromboli and a lively cast of characters as Geppetto journeys beyond the toyshop to discover the meaning of family.

"This new musical beautifully tells the classic Pinocchio story with an impactful twist," said Director Marisa Musgrove. "We now see the story from Geppetto's perspective as he learns what it means to be "the perfect child" – and what it means to be 'a real father.'"

Auditions for *Disney's My Son Pinocchio JR.*, are on July 24th at Encore Theatre, with callbacks on July 25th. Performance dates are scheduled for August 31 – September 10th. Online registration for auditions is available now.

***PETER AND THE STARCATCHER* by Rick Elice and music by Wayne Barker**

A young orphan and his mates are shipped off from Victorian England to a distant island ruled by the evil King Zarboff. They know nothing of the mysterious trunk in the captain's cabin, which contains a precious, otherworldly cargo. At sea, the boys are discovered by a precocious young girl named Molly, a Starcatcher-in-training who realizes that the trunk's precious cargo is starstuff, a celestial substance so powerful that it must never fall into the wrong hands.

Main Administration & Registration

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When the ship is taken over by pirates – led by the fearsome Black Stache, a villain determined to claim the trunk and its treasure for his own – the journey quickly becomes a thrilling adventure.

“Peter and the Starcatcher excited me because this show is a slight departure from what YAT normally produces. It is not a traditional book and song musical, but more of an ensemble driven play,” said Director Joe Dionisio. “I’m looking forward to working with our young actors to challenge their skills and talents. Also, what’s great about this show is the fact that Peter and the Starcatcher’s creative team encourages non-traditional casting, so there are opportunities for all actors (male or female) to inhabit the creative roles in this show.”

The audition workshop for Peter is on August 6th at Encore Theatre, with auditions on August 18 and callbacks on August 19. Performance dates are scheduled for October 5-15th. Online registration for the workshop and auditions are available now.

THE WIZARD OF OZ by L. Frank Baum with music and lyrics by Harold Arlen and E.Y. Harburg

After a tornado whisks away a young Kansas farm girl, Dorothy, to the magical land of OZ, she starts her quest to find the mighty Wizard of Oz who has the power to send her home. Along the way she meets a Scarecrow, a Tin Woodsman and a Cowardly Lion who help her on her journey. The well-known score includes some of the best loved songs in the American musical pantheon.

“The Wizard of Oz holds a special place in my heart,” said Director Christine Cordova. “The themes of good vs. evil, lifelong friendships, and achieving goals provide wonderful opportunities for character building within the cast and crew. Additionally, I made my directorial debut with this show many years ago, my own kids have performed in numerous productions of Oz, and I worked as a make-up artist for this show more times than I can count! I am particularly excited to bring these iconic characters to life with YAT’s talented Junior Division. These kids amaze me with their performing skills, energy, and enthusiasm!”

The audition workshop for *Wizard of Oz* is on September 17th at Encore Theatre, with auditions on September 22 and callbacks on September 23. Performance dates are scheduled for November 9-19th. Online registration for the workshop and auditions will be available beginning August 1.

All three productions will be presented at ENCORE! Theatre, located at 9620 Campo Road, Spring Valley, CA 91977. Ticket prices are \$24.00 for adults and \$22.00 for students and seniors. Discounted tickets are available through cast members.

About Young Actors’ Theatre

Founded in 2002 and headquartered in Spring Valley, California, Young Actors’ Theatre is a non-profit organization providing life-changing theatrical experiences and training to youths of all ages in a positive and supportive environment. Led by Jean M. Isaac, Young Actors’ Theatre offers year-round classes and productions for children ages 2nd grade through College, and its educational outreach initiatives bring drama workshops, residencies and teacher training to schools and community groups throughout San Diego. Young Actors’ Theatre has received numerous honors including the Playbill® “*Billy*”, San Diego Bravo award and a variety of National Youth Theatre Arts Awards. The company can be reached through its Web site at www.yatsandiego.org or via telephone at 619-670-1627.

Note to Editors: Free tickets are available to journalists seeking to attend this event for professional review purposes. Please contact our office at frontdesk@yatsandiego.org, 619-670-1267, with desired attendance date, press credential and email address.