



## **ADVENTURE THEATRE**

**Since 1951**

**Where Theatre Begins**

### **Board of Directors Opportunity**

Adventure Theatre has recently undergone a shift in its model – from a community theatre to a professional theatre model. We are in the midst of launching our strategic planning process and possibly building a new facility, as we have outgrown our space. Adventure Theatre has enjoyed much critical success in the past few years. We have successfully completed several major transitions. We are now in the midst of *revitalizing* our Board of Directors. In particular, we are seeking committed individuals interested in advancing our organization's vision and mission as we move ahead. In particular, we are interested in recruiting diverse individuals with the following experience/talents/skill sets:

- **Resource Development/Nonprofit Fundraising**
- **Capital campaign Experience**
- **Legal Expertise/Attorney/Nonprofit Legal Management**

### **About Us**

Founded in 1951, Adventure Theatre is the longest-running children's theater in the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Area.

Adventure Theatre is located in Historic Glen Echo Park, a magical place situated on the Potomac palisades near Bethesda, Maryland. Originally a Chautauqua retreat, then an amusement park, this National Park is now host to a variety of arts, environment and history programs.

Children and their families can plan a full day of activities at the Park when seeing an Adventure Theatre production, by riding the 1921 Dentzel Carousel, frolicking on the playground, taking a ranger-guided tour, enjoying a picnic, or exploring the Minnehaha Creek.

Reaching nearly 50,000 children and their families annually, Adventure Theatre has been a cherished family institution in the Washington Area for three generations and a valued source of artistic enrichment for the community.

**Mission Statement:** Adventure Theatre cultivates new generations of audiences and artists by creating memorable theater experiences in an intimate and interactive environment. We produce stage adaptations of traditional and popular children's stories, offer creative theater-education programs, and build community through outreach initiatives.

**Vision Statement:** Adventure Theatre is a leading community arts organization in the DC Area with an emphasis on theatre for the very young. We meet the needs of the ever growing genre of children's theatre with an active and continuous outlook to the highest quality production and classes both artistically and technically. Superior efforts are made to create an entertaining experience that is lasting, but also bridges the

gap between theatre for children and adults. We will lead in the creation of new work, theatre training and generating initiatives for using theatre in education and community development. With an extensive theatre-education program, nationally recognized outreach and community engagement program and excellent professional productions, we expand children's creative capacity, thereby allowing them to celebrate theater as artists, patrons and stewards. AT has a progressive list of partnerships with other arts and humanities organizations that is culturally diverse and exploits creative community engagement activities and theatre education opportunities, resulting in an enhanced image and improved recognition locally, regionally, and nationally.

## **Our History**

- In 1951, Adventure Theatre was founded by a group of women from the Community Arts Association's drama classes, who believed that children deserve to experience excellent theater.
- Beginning in 1955, Adventure Theatre commissioned plays by award-winning, nationally-recognized children's theater playwrights, Flora Atkins and Helen Avery. Both are recipients of the prestigious Charlotte B. Chorpenning Award from The Children's Theatre Association of America.
- In 1969, the *In-School Players*, a traveling troupe was launched as a result of a request by the Director of Language Arts for the District of Columbia Public Schools. The *In-School Players* remains a vital part of AT programming.
- In the 1970s, Adventure Theatre received numerous awards:
  - The Pauline Eaton Oak Award for "Best Director" from the Washington Theater Alliance for its entry in the D.C. One Act Play Tournament;
  - A production award from the Eastern States Theater Association Festival;
  - The Montgomery County Recreation Award's Community Service Award;
  - The D.C. Department of Recreation's Sybil Baker Award for "Best in Show"; and
  - "Best Original Play" Award from the Maryland One-Act Play festival.
- In 1971, after years of producing shows at various locations, Adventure Theatre negotiated with the National Park Service to establish a permanent home in the Old Arcade Building of Historic Glen Echo Park. The American Alliance for Theater and Education presented Adventure Theatre with the Outstanding Theater Project of the Year Award for its renovation of the Old Penny Arcade at Glen Echo Park.
- From 1974 -79, Adventure Theatre expanded its programs by partnering with the Junior League to create *The Picture Book Players*, a performance troupe for preschool and early elementary aged children. It also offered its first theater-education classes and created a puppet division, which later became the Puppet Co., another resident anchor in Glen Echo Park.
- In 1986, New Plays Books published *Six Adventure Theatre Plays*, which were distributed to bookstores and children's theaters around the country. The County Council of Montgomery County proclaimed June as "Adventure Theatre Month," in honor of the theater's 35 years of service.
- In 2003, Adventure Theatre received a Governor's Citation as the recipient of The Cherry Adler Award for Excellence in Children's Theater from the Maryland State Arts Council.
- In 2007, Adventure Theatre opened its newly renovated facilities, which included a high-tech theatre and new rehearsal/education spaces, enabling the theater to expand its programming.

- In 2008, Adventure Theatre, in partnership with Tribute Productions, produced *GOOD NIGHT MOON*, which received 3 Helen Hayes Nominations, the most ever received by a children’s theater for a single production.
- In 2010, Adventure Theatre’s Producing Artistic Director, Michael J. Bobbitt received the 2010 County Executive’s Awards for Excellence in the Arts – Emerging Leader and became the President of the League of Washington Theaters. Adventure Theatre partnered with Montgomery College to co-produce Harry Connick, Jr’s, *THE HAPPY ELF* directed by Tony Winner John Rando and starring Tony winner Michael Rupert. Additionally, Adventure Theatre adapted and produced the classic television special – *RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER*. Adventure Theatre’s production of *IF YOU GIVE A PIG A PANCAKE* was featured in American Theatre Magazine.
- In 2011, Adventure Theatre celebrates 60 years of commissioning new works, cultivating many generations of theatre artists and audiences, and transitioning from a community-based arts organization to a nationally-recognized children’s theater.

### **Main-Stage Productions**

Adventure Theatre produces several children’s theater productions each year. Each season, our productions are staged, designed and performed by approximately 50 professional theatre artists, technicians, interns and apprentices from the Washington D.C. Area. Several Adventure Theatre artists have gone on to successful careers in national, international and Broadway theaters. Some, like actor Brad Oscar (*THE PRODUCERS*) and playwright Dick Scanlon (*THOUROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE*) have earned Tony Award nominations.

Productions include:

- *STUART LITTLE*, based on the book by E.B. White
- *THE SECRET GARDEN*, based on the book by Frances Hodgson Burnett
- *MIRANDY AND BROTHER WIND*, based on the book by Patricia McKissack
- *IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE*, based on the book by Laura Numeroff
- *RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER*, based on the Rankin/Bass film by Romeo Mueller

### **Theater Education**

Throughout the year, Adventure Theatre offers theater-education programs. Children ages 3 -15 have the opportunity to develop their talents and creativity, while exploring the world through drama. Each offering complements the traditional Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum. The theatre-education program seeks to promote the development of social skills, self-confidence, communication, cooperation, discipline, and pride in each and every child. Adventure Theatre’s talented, highly-trained instructors share the theater’s commitment to providing excellent theater and education.

Our offerings include:

- On-site classes and seasonal workshops, including Adventures in Theatre, Light Saber Adventures, Play Labs for Preschoolers, and Summer Musical Theatre Workshops;
- School residencies and classes at satellite venues;
- Student matinees of Main-Stage Productions;
- Interactive playbills, “Post-show” discussions, Teacher Study Guides, and “Meet the Actors” programs;
- Educational touring productions;
- An Adventure Theatre book club (“Read the Book and See the Play”);
- Professional internships; and
- Opportunities for area school students to earn Student Service Learning Hours.

## Community Engagement - Share the Adventure

Adventure Theatre's community-engagement program, *Share the Adventure*, is committed to using theater as a way to engage and give back to the community. Through various partnerships, Adventure Theatre extends the experience of seeing a production by teaching young audience members about philanthropy, volunteerism and model citizenship.

Past Community- Engagement events include:

- *GO, DOG. GO!* - Dog Adoption Day, in partnership with the Montgomery County Humane Society;
- *YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN* - blanket making, in partnership with Project Linus Blanket;
- *FROSTY THE SNOWMAN* - a hat-and-mitten drive, in partnership with A Wider Circle;
- *HAROLD AND THE PURPLE CRAYON* – a Crayon Recycling Project, in partnership with several schools, restaurants and the Children's Inn at the National Institute of Health; and
- *STREGA NONA* - a food drive, in partnership with a local chapter of Manna Food

## Outreach

Adventure Theatre reaches into the community, making its programs accessible, affordable and inclusive to diverse community members through partnerships with other community and arts organizations.

Adventure Theatre:

- Offers reduced tickets to nearly 5,000 D.C. public, private, charter and Maryland Title One school students;
- Offers Sensory/Autism Friendly performances;
- Hosts "Celebrate-Adoption" weekends, in partnership with several adoption agencies; support, and education organizations, and brings adoptive families to the theatre;
- Partners with Rainbow Families DC, to bring children from LGBT families to the theater; and
- Donates nearly 200 tickets each year to PTA's, schools, and other charitable organizations for their auctions and fundraisers.

## Adventure Theatre Core Values:

- **Youth** - We know that the future is in the hands of young people and that positive experiences in the theater will give them some tools to help navigate the world. We believe that young people embody complex realities, imagination, possibility, curiosity, risk taking and candor and their concerns must be central to our programming choices.
- **Creativity** - We believe that theater must encourage the power of imagination and critical thinking; artists must be valued and provided with the tools to achieve excellence and realize their vision and that we do our best work when all are involved as collaborators in the pursuit of the artistic excellence.
- **Community** - We are part of a larger world and our theater has a responsibility to illuminate connections, build bridges, and celebrate diverse cultures.

**Additional Values:** Professionalism, Quality, Outreach, Diversity, Accomplishment, Collaboration, Excellence, Fun, Growth, Success, Partnership, Learning

## Goals:

To improve marketing, outreach and capacity to further develop audiences both locally and nationally.

To increase the visibility of our programming to contribute to the genre of Children's Theatre on a National level.

To improve the quality of our facilities, offerings, and resources - allowing us to increase our level of professionalism.

**Timeline:** The Adventure Theatre Board recruitment effort underway is a high priority for the organization. We are hoping to expand our Board with new membership immediately. Therefore, we would like to receive applications as soon as we can to share with the Board at our upcoming meetings.

**To Apply:** Prospective Board members should contact Michael J. Bobbitt at the address below.

Michael J. Bobbitt

Producing Artistic Director

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