



AHMANSON THEATRE
MARK TAPER FORUM
KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE

JASON MARTIN
Head of Publicity

T: 213.972.7376 | CTGMedia@CTGLA.org

601 W TEMPLE ST | LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 | CenterTheatreGroup.org

For immediate release.



**CENTER THEATRE GROUP ANNOUNCES THE FIVE SCHOOLS
SELECTED FOR DISNEY MUSICALS IN SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

Los Angeles Area Public Elementary Schools to Produce a Disney Musical

Center Theatre Group is pleased to announce the five elementary schools that have been selected to participate in the inaugural 2017-2018 **Disney Musicals in Schools (DMIS)** program. The program is an initiative developed by Disney Theatrical Productions to create sustainable theatre programs in under-resourced elementary schools. The five schools are in Los Angeles County and include the following: Harrison Elementary (LAUSD), Hope Street Elementary (LAUSD), Humphreys Avenue Elementary (LAUSD), La Ballona Elementary (Culver City Unified School District) and Ritter Elementary (LAUSD).

The selected schools will begin a 17-week musical theatre residency in January of 2018. Each school will receive performance rights, education support materials and guidance from two teaching artists. The program features a professional development focus, through which participating school teachers partner with Center Theatre Group teaching artists to learn how to produce, direct, choreograph and music direct, culminating in their first 30- to 45-minute Disney KIDS musical at their school. As a capstone to the experience, Center Theatre Group will host a Student Share Celebration in which each school performs one number from their show for an audience of students, teachers, family and community members. The Student Share Celebration will now take place at the Ahmanson Theatre on May 21, 2018. Please note that a previous announcement stated that it would take place at the Mark Taper Forum.

Harrison Elementary Principal Carlos Madrigal said, “Being accepted into the DMIS Program means so many things. It means joy, self-expression, creativity, community and collaboration – not only for our students, but for our team teachers as well.” On being selected, Hope Street Elementary Principal Pamela LeMueix said, “We are thrilled to be partnering with Center Theatre Group and DMIS to give Hope Street Elementary School students the valuable experience of participating in a live musical theatre performance. We are so excited to watch them shine!” Alejandro Almaguer, the principal of Humphreys Avenue Elementary, said that the program will “not only give our students the unique opportunity to participate in a top-notch musical program, but it will also expose them to a career in theatre arts and dance...[it] will be a transcendental experience...” La Ballona Principal Jennifer Slabbinck said that “DMIS gives us an opportunity to train our teachers to take the lead and to more regularly bring arts instruction into their own classrooms.” “This is a wonderful opportunity for our students to engage in the theatre arts and learn to express themselves in a variety of ways,” said Ritter Elementary Principal Dr. Michelle Rappino. “This opportunity will also increase our students’ level of confidence and help them build self awareness as they learn the art of stage performance.”

“Each school selected demonstrated not only a strong commitment to their students but also to creating and sustaining a musical theatre program in their school for years to come. We are delighted to launch our inaugural DMIS season with such passionate educators,” said Center Theatre Group Director of Education and Engagement Tyrone Davis. “The DMIS program is about building educators’ capacity, which aligns with our commitment to support educators as art leaders in their own communities.”

Using the unique world of musical theatre, **Disney Musicals in Schools** helps to foster positive relationships between students, faculty, staff, parents, and the community. Students and teachers work in teams, developing the wide spectrum of skills needed when producing a piece of musical theatre, including: critical thinking, problem solving, ensemble building, communication, self-confidence and interpersonal skills.

Disney Musicals in Schools was launched in 2010 in response to Disney Theatrical Production’s concern that under-resourced public elementary schools were not afforded equitable access to the arts. After successfully offering the program in New York City schools, Disney Theatrical Productions began partnering with organizations in other communities across the United States.

Disney KIDS musicals, created in partnership with Music Theatre International (MTI), are 30- to 45-minute musicals designed for elementary school performers and have been adapted from the classic Disney films “101 Dalmatians,” “Aladdin,” “The Aristocats,” “Cinderella,” “The Jungle Book,” “The Lion King” and “Winnie the Pooh.”

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading nonprofit theatre company, which, under Artistic Director Michael Ritchie, programs seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1600 to 2000-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the nation’s leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and

education programs that reach across generations, demographics and circumstance to serve Los Angeles.

Disney Theatrical Productions (DTP) operates under the direction of Thomas Schumacher and is among the world’s most successful commercial theatre enterprises, bringing live entertainment events to a global annual audience of more than 19 million people in more than 50 countries. Under the Disney Theatrical Productions banner, the group produces and licenses Broadway productions around the world, including “Beauty and the Beast,” “The Lion King,” Elton John & Tim Rice’s “Aida,” “TARZAN®,” “Mary Poppins,” a co-production with Cameron Mackintosh, “The Little Mermaid,” “Peter and the Starcatcher,” “Newsies” and “Aladdin.” “Frozen,” based on the Academy Award®-winning film, will open on Broadway in 2018. Other successful stage musical ventures have included the Olivier-nominated London hit “Shakespeare in Love,” stage productions of Disney’s “High School Musical,” “Der Glöckner Von Notre Dame” in Berlin, and “King David” in concert. DTP has collaborated with the country’s leading regional theatres to develop new stage titles including “The Jungle Book,” “The Hunchback of Notre Dame” and “Freaky Friday.”

Disney Theatrical Productions also delivers live shows globally through its license to Feld Entertainment, producer of “Disney on Ice” and “Disney Live!” For over 30 years, “Disney on Ice” and “Disney Live!” have brought beloved Disney stories and characters annually to over 12 million guests in nearly 50 countries worldwide, through productions such as “Marvel Universe Live!” and “Frozen,” the most well attended and highest grossing “Disney on Ice” production to date. In addition, DTP licenses musical titles for local, school and community theatre productions through Music Theatre International, including “The Lion King Experience,” a unique holistic arts education program wherein accredited elementary and middle schools produce condensed, age-appropriate JR. and KIDS adaptations of “The Lion King.”

Music Theatre International (MTI) is one of the world’s leading theatrical licensing agencies, granting theatres from around the world the rights to perform the greatest selection of musicals from Broadway and beyond. Founded in 1952 by composer Frank Loesser and orchestrator Don Walker, MTI is a driving force in advancing musical theatre as a vibrant and engaging art form.

MTI works directly with the composers, lyricists and book writers of these musicals to provide official scripts, musical materials and dynamic theatrical resources to over 70,000 professional, community and school theatres in the US and in over 60 countries worldwide.

MTI is particularly dedicated to educational theatre, and has created special collections to meet the needs of various types of performers and audiences. MTI’s Broadway Junior™ shows are 30- and 60-minute musicals for performance by elementary and middle school-aged performers, while MTI’s School Editions are musicals annotated for performance by high school students.

#

December 8, 2017