

For immediate release.



**CENTER THEATRE GROUP
ANNOUNCES FOUR NEW SCHOOLS SELECTED FOR
DISNEY MUSICALS IN SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

**Los Angeles Area Public Elementary Schools to
Produce a Disney Musical at No Cost**

Center Theatre Group is pleased to announce the four new schools that have been selected to participate in the 2019-2020 **Disney Musicals in Schools** program. The program is an initiative developed by Disney Theatrical Group to create sustainable theatre programs in under-resourced elementary schools. The four schools are a part of Los Angeles County. The four schools include: Dr. Owen Lloyd Knox Elementary (LAUSD), Eastman Avenue Elementary (LAUSD), Euclid Avenue Elementary (LAUSD) and San Gabriel Avenue Elementary (LAUSD).

The selected schools will begin a 17-week musical theatre residency later this month. 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-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 on the Ahmanson Theatre stage for an audience of students, teachers, family and community members.

On being selected, the principals from each school had the following to say:

“We are grateful for this opportunity to create a sustainable theatre program for our school. This grant will be an ongoing gift to our community that will have a lasting effect on our students and their families. Our students will develop a capacity for creativity and perseverance through collaboration.” –Maria Vasquez, Knox Elementary

“At Eastman Avenue Elementary we take pride in providing multiple opportunities for students to succeed within and beyond the classroom. We want students to be exposed to opportunities that they might not have access to within our immediate community. Disney Musicals in Schools is one more partnership that will instill in our students the love for theatre at an early age.” –Laura Naulls, Eastman Avenue Elementary

“San Gabriel Avenue Elementary believes art education is not a privilege; it is a human right and our students deserve the opportunity to showcase their skills and talent. This platform helps us offer our community a high quality theatre arts program.” –Elizabeth Martinez, San Gabriel Avenue Elementary

“Participating in Disney Musicals in Schools will be a life-changing experience for our students. Thank you for helping us close the opportunity and achievement gap and for the gift of the arts, rich language and personal development.” –Cristina Muñoz, Euclid Avenue Elementary

During the past two years, 10 Los Angeles area public schools have successfully participated in the program, with 496 students and 52 school teachers working together to create a culture of musical theatre at their schools. Center Theatre Group is pleased to announce that all former schools are continuing to produce musicals at their schools. They include: Breed Street Elementary (LAUSD), Cantara Street School (LAUSD), Harrison Elementary (LAUSD), Hope Street Elementary (LAUSD), Humphreys Avenue Elementary (LAUSD), La Ballona Elementary (Culver City Unified School District), Ritter Elementary (LAUSD), Saturn Street Elementary (LAUSD), Tulsa Street Elementary (LAUSD) and Wild Rose School of Creative Arts (Monrovia Unified School District).

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 Group’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 Theater International (MTI), are 30-minute musicals designed for elementary school performers and have been adapted from the classic Disney films “101 Dalmatians,” “Aladdin,” “The Aristocats,” “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 the leadership of Artistic Director Michael Ritchie, Managing Director Meghan Pressman and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker, programs seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1600 to 2100-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 Group (DTG) operates under the direction of Thomas Schumacher and is among the world's most successful commercial theatre producers, bringing live entertainment events to a global audience of more than 20 million people a year in more than 50 countries. Under the Disney Theatrical Group 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," "Aladdin" and "Frozen." 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. DTG has collaborated with the nation's preeminent theatres to develop new stage titles including "The Jungle Book," "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," "Freaky Friday" and "Hercules." As a part of the recent acquisition of 21st Century Fox, DTP also heads the Buena Vista Theatrical banner which licenses Fox titles for stage adaptations including "Anastasia"; "Moulin Rouge! The Musical"; "Mrs. Doubtfire" and "The Devil Wears Prada."

Disney Theatrical Group also delivers live shows globally through its license to Feld Entertainment, producer of "Disney on Ice" and "Marvel Universe Live!," bringing beloved Disney stories and characters annually to over 12 million guests in nearly 50 countries worldwide. In addition, DTG 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.

MTI maintains its global headquarters in New York City (mtishows.com), with additional offices in London (MTI Europe: mtishows.co.uk, mtishows.eu), and Melbourne (MTI Australia: mtishows.com.au).

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