

Courage! Cunning! Compassion! Bay Area Children's Theatre Opens *The Night Fairy* Oct. 27

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Tiny Flory awakens on the dewy ground after falling out of the nighttime sky, her wings ripped off by a bat. How will she eat? Stay warm? Protect herself? Giant footsteps send her scurrying to safety behind some leaves. She will need all her ingenuity to survive in the strange new daylight world into which she has plunged.

In its first play of the season for older children (age 8 and up), [Bay Area Children's Theatre](#) (BACT) presents ***The Night Fairy***, the story of feisty young Flory, who faces the dangers in the garden that has become her unexpected home by using her wits, summoning her courage, and learning to give and take with the fascinating but often forbidding creatures she meets.

Adapted for the stage by John Glore from the book of the same name by Newbery Medal winner Laura Amy Schlitz, ***The Night Fairy*** plays Friday, October 27, through Saturday, December 30, at the BACT Theatre Center, [2055 Center Street, Berkeley, CA 94704](#), with shows at 7 p.m. on Fridays and at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

"Flory has barely learned how to fly when she loses her wings and must find herself anew," said BACT Executive Artistic Director Nina Meehan, who is co-directing ***The Night Fairy*** with BACT Artistic Associate Director Hannah Dworkin. "The 'tween years are so often about finding oneself and one's place in the world that we were immediately drawn to Flory's story for young audiences in the upper elementary grades. ***The Night Fairy*** is our first production in our new 60-seat theatre, which we're calling The Second Stage, at the BACT Theatre Center. The intimacy of The Second Stage gives our audience the opportunity to connect viscerally with Flory's experience, which is very physical—she's a fierce little fairy trying to survive—often humorous, and deeply moving. We think older children will empathize with Flory's plight and perhaps even learn a bit about marshaling their own strengths and the strengths of others."

TICKETS: \$26 adults, \$24 seniors (65+), \$20 children (age 2 – 14), \$15 groups (minimum 15)

BOX OFFICE: www.bactheatre.org or call (510) 296-4433

((high-res .jpg attached of Kaleena Newman as The Night Fairy. Photo credit: Melissa Nigro.))

ARTISTS

Hannah Dworkin, director, is the casting director, Arts in Schools program director, and artistic associate director at BACT. Dworkin directed BACT's *The Rainbow Fish Musical* (nominated for Outstanding World Premiere Musical at this year's Theatre Bay Area Awards Celebration). Other recent BACT credits include *Fancy Nancy: Splendiferous Christmas the Musical* (director/choreographer), *A Year with Frog and Toad* (choreographer) *Goodnight Goodnight Construction Site the Musical* (choreographer, TBA Award nomination), and *Elephant and Piggie's WE ARE IN A PLAY!* (director/choreographer). Dworkin is a professor at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and teaches music to children with special needs through Youth in Arts. She holds an MA in Music and Music Education from Columbia University, a

Multiple Subject Teaching Credential with a Dance Certification from the University of California, Berkeley, Extension and a BA in Dance and Anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley. In addition, she is a classically trained vocalist, a dancer, and a company member of Upswing Aerial Dance.

Nina Meehan, director, is the executive artistic director of Bay Area Children's Theatre. Meehan has directed numerous productions for the company, including *Fly Guy, the Musical* (nominated for best director and for Outstanding World Premiere Musical at this year's Theatre Bay Area Awards Celebration); *The Wheels on the Bus* (Theatre for the Very Young); *A Year With Frog and Toad*; BACT's acclaimed original production and remount of *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site—The Musical*; *The Day the Crayons Quit—the Musical*, and *James and the Giant Peach*. She champions new works for young audiences and has produced original adaptations of BACT's award-winning *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*; *Ivy+Bean, the Musical*; *Ladybug Girl and Bumblebee Boy, the Musical*, and many others. Meehan serves on the Theatre Services Committee for Theatre Bay Area and the Board of Directors for TYA/USA. She received her BS in Theatre from Northwestern University and her Masters in Nonprofit Administration from the University of San Francisco.

Jamella Cross (Hummingbird, Bat), honored with a 2016 Theatre Bay Area award for her role as Cement Mixer in BACT's *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site—The Musical*, has most recently been seen at BACT as Pippi in *Pippi Longstocking*. Other BACT productions include *The Day the Crayons Quit—the Musical* and *Bad Kitty*. Cross has performed throughout the Bay Area with theatre companies such as the Magic Theatre (*Soujourners*), TheatreFirst (*Stop Kiss*), Berkeley Playhouse (*Hairspray*), Free Theatre (*Henry IV*), Virago Theatre Company (*Crooked*) and Aurora Theater (*Safe House*).

Kaleena Newman (Flory, the Night Fairy) was recently seen in BACT's production of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show*. She has been an ensemble member with Childsplay in Arizona for eight years, where her credits include Sally in the national tour of *Cat in the Hat*, May in *Junie B. Jones*, and The Boy in *The Velveteen Rabbit*. She holds a BA in Theatre from Arizona State University.

Amanda Nguyen (Wren, Spider) last appeared on BACT's main stage as Mayzie LaBird in *Seussical, TYA*. She is currently part of the BACT school tour of *Rock the Block: A Walk and Roll Musical* and *Step Up*. Other theatre credits include *A Chorus Line*, *Rent*, *West Side Story*, *Dames At Sea*, *In the Heights*, and *Beauty and the Beast*. Nguyen graduated from San Francisco State University with a BA in Drama.

Jack Nicolaus (Skuggle the Squirrel, Raccoon) is an actor, director, clown, educator, and arts advocate. He returns to BACT after appearing in *Pippi Longstocking*. He has worked with organizations such as the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, American Repertory Theater, Geffen Playhouse, 59E59, Peoples Improv Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and the Department of Defense. He is the artistic director emeritus of Everybody Nose: NYC, a clown ensemble in New York.

Brianna Grey Rodriguez (Flory understudy) a Vallejo native, was last seen in BACT's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show*. She attends San Francisco State University where she is pursuing a degree in Music. Her favorite credits include Ariel in Napa Valley College's *The Little Mermaid* and Antonio in TheatreCORE's *Twelfth Night*.

About Bay Area Children's Theatre

Established in 2004, Bay Area Children's Theatre, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, serves more than 110,000 children and adults throughout the Bay Area, with main stage performances in Berkeley, Oakland, and San Francisco; programs and productions in local schools; and classes and summer camps in the East Bay and San Francisco.

Our Mission: To inspire young audiences with imaginative productions, introduce children of all backgrounds to the excitement of live theatre, and create an engaging, entertaining, and educational environment in which children and their families can explore and enjoy the arts.

How We Carry Out Our Mission:

- Bring high quality, professional theatre to children and their families, with artists who create vibrant worlds that are intriguing to young audiences
- Encourage young people to explore literature, language, and the arts by producing stage adaptations of great children's books
- Engage preschoolers in the world of theatre with productions specially designed for them
- Develop and perform exciting new work for the stage
- Reach out to children who might not otherwise experience live theatre with free tickets, special performances for school groups, and touring productions at local schools
- Create touring productions for young audiences nationwide
- Partner with communities to meet the need for theatre education
- Introduce children to the joy of performance through our theatre education program