

THE NEW VICTORY THEATER 2016-17 SEASON

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The New Victory Theater Presents



A Kennedy Center Commission Based on the *Elephant & Piggie* books by Mo Willems

Script and lyrics by Mo Willems
Music by Deborah Wicks La Puma
Dramaturgy by Megan Alritz
Choreographed by Jessica Hartman
Directed by Jerry Whiddon

Opens January 28

New York, NY (January 10, 2017) -- *Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play!* makes its Off-Broadway Premiere from January 28 – February 5, 2017, at The New Victory Theater, NYC's only theater dedicated to quality performing arts for kids and families. Produced by **Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences on Tour, this vaudevillian romp of a musical features script and lyrics by six-time Emmy Award winner and *New York Times* bestseller **Mo Willems** with a jazzy score by **Deborah Wicks La Puma**, a Jane Chambers Playwriting Award and the Robert M. Golden Award recipient.**

Elephant & Piggie's We Are in A Play! is based on six of the books in the award-winning children's collection written by Mo Willems. In this popular series about friendship, Elephant Gerald is a careful, formally-attired worrywart and Piggie is a perky, smiley bundle of fun. Total opposites? No way! In ***Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a***

Play!, Elephant and Piggie sing and dance their way through plenty of pachydermal peril and swiney suspense, facing fundamental questions like: What do you wear to a fancy costume pool party? Should you share your ice cream? And how can two friends play with one toy? Backed by nutty back-up singers The Squirrelles and the bop-along band of Dr. Cat and the Bear-a-Tones, Elephant and Piggie will have you doing the “Flippy Floppy Floory” dance all night long!

Elephant & Piggie's We Are in A Play! is directed by Jerry Whiddon and choreographed by Jessica Hartmann. Evan Casey and Lauren Williams, who received a Helen Hayes award nomination for her performance, originated the roles of Elephant Gerald and Piggie and will reprise their roles for the production's Off-Broadway Premiere at The New Victory Theater. Jamie Eacker (Squirrelle, Delivery Dog), Julia Klavans (u/s Squirrelles), Jennie Lutz (Squirrelle, Ice Cream Penguin), Justine “Icy” Moral (Squirrelle) and Christopher Michael Richardson (u/s Elephant Gerald) complete the cast. Dr. Cat and the Bear-a-Tones includes Steven Landau on piano, Mike Livingston on reeds, Kevin McNaughton on percussion and Joseph Wallace on double bass.

The *Elephant & Piggie* book series received Geisel Honors in five consecutive years from 2011-2015 with the Geisel Medal awarded to *There is a Bird on Your Head* in 2008 and *Are You Ready to Play Outside?* in 2009. Both *Today I Will Fly* and *Elephants Cannot Dance!* were listed on *Time* magazine's Top 10 Children's Books of the Year in 2007 and 2009, respectively.

Author Mo Willems began his career as a writer and animator for *Sesame Street*, where he earned six Emmy awards for writing. He later created two animated television series, *The Off-Beats* for Nickelodeon and *Sheep in the Big City* for Cartoon Network. Since 2003, Willems has authored children's picture books, earning three Caldecott Honors for *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale* and *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity*. Composer Deborah Wicks La Puma has been honored with a Jane Chambers Playwriting award, the Robert M. Golden award, a National Endowment for the Arts' New American Works grant and two Helen Hayes award nominations for Outstanding New Play.

The musical was commissioned in 2012 by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., where it had a sold-out run in the Family Theater in 2013. The Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences on Tour brings original Kennedy Center productions for students and families into communities and performing arts centers around the country. Artistic teams consist of carefully selected professionals from all corners of the nation who possess extensive experience with both youth and adult theater. As one of the largest incubators of theater for kids and families, the team strives to create shows that are delightful, educational and provide a foundation for a life-long appreciation of the performing arts for audiences of all ages.

Learn more about ***Elephant & Piggie's We Are in A Play!*** on the [New Victory website](#).

Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play! is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International, New York, NY.

Public Performance Schedule:

Saturday, January 28 at 11am / 3pm / 7pm
Sunday, January 29 at 11am / 3pm**
Saturday, February 4 at 11am / 3pm* / 7pm*
Sunday, February 5 at 11am / 3pm***

*Mo Willems is scheduled to participate in a post-show talk back after the 3pm performance and an autograph signing after the 7pm performance on Saturday, February 4.

**sign-interpreted performance

***sensory-friendly performance

Elephant & Piggie's We Are in A Play! has a running time of 60 minutes with no intermission, and is recommended for ages 4-7.

Ticket Information

Tickets for ***Elephant & Piggie's We Are in A Play!*** at The New Victory Theater (209 West 42nd Street) are \$17 for Members and \$25 at full price. Tickets are available online (NewVictory.org) and by telephone (646.223.3010). The New Victory Theater box office (209 West 42nd Street) is open Sunday and Monday from 11am-5pm, and Tuesday through Saturday from 12pm-7pm.

Membership

Theatergoers who buy tickets for three or more New Victory shows qualify for free Membership benefits, including locked-in discount ticket prices, free unlimited exchanges (up to 48 hours in advance) and access to a first-look purchase period for newly added performances.

About The New Victory Theater

The New Victory Theater brings kids to the arts and the arts to kids as New York City's premier theater devoted to the highest quality performing arts for kids and families. Serving the city in all its diversity, The New Victory Theater on 42nd Street presents theater, dance, circus, opera and music from around the world at affordable ticket prices. In addition to its public performances, the New Vic is also the largest provider of live performance to NYC school kids, serving 40,000 students in grades Pre-K - 12 from more than 200 schools, after school programs and day camps each year. The New Victory Theater's contributions to the cultural landscape of the city have been honored by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities with the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, a national Arts Education Award from Americans for the Arts and a Drama Desk Award for "providing enchanting, sophisticated children's theater that appeals to the child in all of us, and for nurturing a love of theater in young people."

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