

MANUAL CINEMA LEONARDO! A WONDERFUL SHOW ABOUT A TERRIBLE MONSTER

Saturday, February 17, 2024, at 10am Tryon Festival Theatre

# **PROGRAM**

# MANUAL CINEMA

# LEONARDO! A WONDERFUL SHOW ABOUT A TERRIBLE MONSTER

Created by Manual Cinema

Inspired by the books Leonardo, the Terrible Monster and Sam, The Most Scaredy-Cat Kid in the Whole World by Mo Willems

DIRECTOR

Sarah Fornace

**MUSIC, LYRICS & SOUND DESIGN** 

Ben Kauffman and Kyle Vegter

**2D PUPPET DESIGN** 

Drew Dir

HAND & ROD PUPPET DESIGN

Lizi Breit

**COSTUME & WIG DESIGN** 

Mieka Van der Ploeg

LIGHTING DESIGN

Trey Brazeal with Nick Chamernik

**DRAMATURG** 

Megan Alrutz

STAGE MANAGER, BOARD OPERATOR

Maydi Díaz

## **ABOUT THE SHOW**

Leonardo! A Wonderful Show About a Terrible Monster is inspired by two books by author Mo Willems: Leonardo, the Terrible Monster and Sam, the Most Scaredy-Cat Kid in the Whole World. The production was created by Manual Cinema, a Chicago-based performance collective specializing in cinematic shadow puppetry and original music. Leonardo! was originally commissioned by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts through the Education Artist-in-Residency of Mo Willems. Leonardo! A Wonderful Show About a Terrible Monster uses hundreds of illustrated paper puppets, book pages, two-dimensional props, furry monster puppets, and original songs to bring Mo's books to life. Manual Cinema wanted to recreate the experience of holding one of Mo's book pages, which are big, bold, colorful, and full of visual rhythm, with a playful use of scale. Like all Manual Cinema productions, you're invited to watch the big screen like a traditional movie, or to watch the artists below as they create the story in real time. (There is no wrong way to watch the show!)

This performance will be presented without an intermission.

Commissioned by The Kennedy Center for Performing Arts with additional commissioning support from Utah Presents

Special thanks to David Kilpatrick, Chicago Children's Theatre, and Laura Colby

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# **CAST**

Leah Casey

Kerry, Puppeteer

Lily Emerson

Narrator, Character Voices, Vocals

Julia Miller

Sam, Puppeteer

**Lindsey Noel Whiting** 

Leonardo, Voice and Puppeteer





# **PROFILES**

Leah Casey (Kerry, Puppeteer) is a Chicago-based actress, dancer, and writer. When not onstage, she can be found lending her voice to all manner of audiobooks, or with the cast of *Project STELLAR*, a science fiction podcast about a group of crazy kids who have close encounters of the awesome kind. Chicago credits: *Murder on the Orient Express, GrPease, Cinderella* (Drury Lane); *A Christmas Carol* (Writers Theatre/Manual Cinema); *Leonardo and Sam* (Chicago Children's Theatre/Manual Cinema); *Frankenstein* (Court Theatre/Manual Cinema); For Colored Girls . . . (Court Theatre); *Romeo and Juliet* (Teatro Vista); *STORM* (Walkabout/Moonfool). Leah is represented by the dedicated team at Shirley Hamilton.

Maydi Díaz (Tour Manager, Video Mixing, and Live Sound Effects) is a Chicago-based stage manager. Since completing a BA in arts management from Columbia College Chicago and an MA in theatre production from the National University of Ireland Galway, Maydi has worked on multiple areas of technical theatre. Her stage management credits include Caucasian Chalk Circle (Mick Lally Theatre), Back in the Day (UrbanTheater Company), The Delicate Tears of the Waning Moon and La Peor de Todas (Water People Theater), Kiev (Aguijón Theater Co), and various shows with PlayMakers Laboratory. When she's not at the theatre, you can find Maydi folk dancing or doing calligraphy.

**Lily Emerson** (Narrator, Musician) is a multifaceted performer, producer, collaborator, and all-around creative weirdo. Lily is the cocreator of Adventure Sandwich, a Chicagobased group that produces family-friendly video, music, live performances, and events. She served as the artistic director of Opera-Matic, an

interdisciplinary arts organization that produces participatory art experiences in the parks, from 2018–2020. She is also the founder of Lucid Street Theatre, a performance collective that created original works from 2007–2011. Lily has performed throughout the US, Belarus, the Czech Republic, and France, and has been recognized with various awards and residencies, including the Lisa Dershin LinkUP Residency, the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum's Artist in Residence, and the Chicago Digital Media Production Fund. More information about Lily can be found at creative-weirdo.com.

Julia Miller (Co-Artistic Director, Sam) is a director, puppeteer, and puppet designer. With Manual Cinema she has directed Mementos Mori and The End of TV as well as created original roles in Frankenstein (The Creature/Elizabeth), Ada/Ava (Ada), Lula del Ray (Lula's Mother), The Magic City (Helen), and Hansel und Gretel (Hansel). In Chicago, she has worked as a performer and puppeteer with Redmoon Theatre and Blair Thomas and Co. She spent several years training in devised theatre, clown and mask with Double Edge Theatre, Carlos García Estevez, and at the Accademia dell'Arte in Arezzo, Italy.

Lindsey Noel Whiting (Leonardo, Voice and Puppeteer) is a Chicago-based performer and teaching artist. Her theatrical credits include Lookingglass Alice, Mr. and Mrs. Pennyworth, and The Great Fire at Lookingglass Theatre; A Christmas Carol and Dracula at Actors Theatre of Louisville; The Snow Queen at Victory Gardens; and The Year I Didn't Go to School with Chicago Children's Theatre. She has also appeared in numerous shows with Redmoon Theatre, including the world premiere of The Cabinet and

Once Upon a Time. Additionally, Lindsey is an associate artist with The Actor's Gymnasiums, where she has performed in over ten original circus productions.

Mo Willems is an author, illustrator, animator, playwright, and the inaugural Kennedy Center Education Artist-in-Residence, where he collaborates in creating fun new stuff involving classical music, opera, comedy concerts, dance, painting, and digital works with the National Symphony Orchestra, Ben Folds, Yo-Yo Ma, and others. Willems is best known for his #1 New York Times bestselling picture books, which have been awarded three Caldecott Honors (Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!, Knuffle Bunny, Knuffle Bunny Too), two Theodor Geisel Medals, and five Geisel Honors (The Elephant & Piggie series).

Mo's art has been exhibited around the world, including major solo retrospectives at the High Museum (Atlanta) and the New-York Historical Society (New York City). Over the last decade, Willems has become the most produced playwright of theatre for young audiences in America, having written or co-written four musicals based on his books.

He began his career as a writer and animator on PBS' Sesame Street, where he garnered six Emmy Awards (writing). Other television work includes two series on Cartoon Network: Sheep in the Big City (creator and head writer) and Codename: Kids Next Door (head writer). Mo is creating new TV projects for Max, where his live action comedy special Don't Let the Pigeon Do Storytime! currently streams.

His papers reside at Yale University's Beinecke Library.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The University of Illinois System carries out its mission in its namesake state, which includes the traditional territory of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

As a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them.

This acknowledgment and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward.

Krannert Center affirms the commitment by the university to move beyond these statements, toward building deeper relationships and taking actions that uphold and preserve Indigenous rights and cultural equity.

As we gather to experience this performance, we have an opportunity to reflect on the ways that systems of oppression have shaped our society. We can work together to create systems that support human dignity, establish equity, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and draw upon the creative capacity of all people that make up this community, state, nation, and world.

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Together, we can ensure that students and the greater community continue to have access to transformative performing arts experiences.

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The Youth Series features daytime performances, online media created by performing artists, and educational activities designed especially for pre-K through high-school-aged students.

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The University of Illinois, the College of Fine and Applied Arts, and Krannert Center are profoundly grateful for the commitment of Krannert Society members. Through donations, pledges, and residual gifts of \$1 million or more, these open-hearted visionaries help build a thriving community and encourage cross-cultural understanding. Their support sustains the extraordinary vision of Herman and Ellnora Krannert to create a vibrant gathering place like no other.



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Demonstrating their steadfast dedication to the arts, members of the Foellinger Society have donated or pledged \$500,000 to \$999,999. Because of their generosity, everyone in this community can unite in joyful and engaging experiences. These magnanimous arts lovers celebrate the spirit of Helene Foellinger, whose memorial gift honored her sister, Loretta Foellinger Teeple, and established the Marquee Performance Endowment.



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Bree Brock, Production Coordinator for Events

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# WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE AT THE CENTER

We work to create the best possible setting for the experiences you seek and find here.

#### **NECESSARIES**

Restrooms are located in the foyers of Foellinger Great Hall, Tryon Festival Theatre, and Colwell Playhouse; the east entrances on the Lobby level; and in each elevator lobby on Level 1 and Level 3. Lobby restrooms and one restroom in each elevator lobby are fully accessible and contain baby-changing stations.

Ushers will be happy to provide you cough drops courtesy of St. Joseph Apothecary, or disposable foam earplugs if the place starts rockin'.

If you or a companion needs medical assistance, contact an usher or other staff member.

Please take a moment before the performance to note the theatre exits nearest to you. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the theatre, please remain calm, follow the instructions of the house staff, and exit in an orderly fashion to the appropriate safe meeting location, which will be announced to you.

## **PHONES AND DEVICES**

The use of cell phones, cameras, and recording devices during performances is prohibited unless otherwise announced from the stage.

#### LATE ARRIVALS

As a courtesy to performers and audience members, latecomers will be seated only at times selected in advance by the artist. Should you find that you've arrived late to a performance, our Patron Services staff will keep you informed about the earliest seating opportunity.

#### **LOST ITEMS**

If you are in need of Lost and Found, please visit the Patron Services counter. We will do our best to reunite object and owner!

#### **TICKET RETURNS**

If you find you can't attend a performance, please contact the Ticket Office in advance, preferably by 6pm the day before the performance (kran-tix@illinois.edu). We never charge a handling fee on ticket transactions.

# **ACCESSIBILITY**

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts is committed to making experiences accessible for all patrons, and we are delighted to provide a number of services to assist you. Krannert Center is equipped with an assisted listening system, wheelchair-accessible and no-step/few-step seating, and large-print programs, Braille programs, and American Sign Language interpreters are available with three weeks' advance notice.

For assistance regarding your visit, please email:

Para ayuda en relación con su visita, favor de enviar un email a:

Pour vous aider dans votre visite, prière de nous envoyer un courriel à:

欢迎! 如若您对您的造访需要帮助, 请发送电子邮件至: स्वागत हे! अगर आपको अपने रहने के लिए मदद चाहिए, ईमेल कीजिए: 환영합니다! 방문에 관해 도움이 필요하실 때에는... 에게 이메일로 문의하시기 바랍니다:

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