

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chicago Playworks for Families and Young Audiences Presents: PETER PAN AND WENDY

CHICAGO — The Theatre School at DePaul University will present *Peter Pan and Wendy*, adapted by Doug Rand, from the novel by J.M. Barrie, and directed by Ernie Nolan, as the final installment of the 2015-16 Chicago Playworks for Families and Young Audiences season. The production opens April 21 and runs through May 28, 2016, at DePaul's historic Merle Reskin Theatre. Performances are Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10 AM, and Saturdays 2 PM. Special Friday performances (10 AM) will occur on April 29 and May 13. A Sunday performance will be held on May 22 (2 PM). There is no Saturday performance on May 21.

"*Peter Pan* has been on my bucket list for years," says director **Ernie Nolan**. "Not only has it had a special place in my heart since I was in it as a child performer, but many theatre for young audiences scholars think of it as the first contemporary play for young people. With its child hero, adult villain, fantastic location, sense of enchantment, and audience participation, it set the structure and standard (in 1904) for children's entertainment in the 20th century."

Peter Pan and Wendy is recommended for all ages. "Our production will be a hilarious, magical, on-the-seat-of-your-chair theatrical event—beginning with a classical sensibility," explains **Nolan**. "And as Wendy escapes reality into fantasy, a more contemporary and rebellious edge permeates the world of the play. Peter, the ultimate thrill-seeking bad boy, appears to Wendy right as she is discovering the biggest adventure of all: growing up."

Complimentary Teacher Guides are available online for educators and interested audience members. These include activities and discussions for before and after the performance, which highlight core learning goals. Themes from *Peter Pan and Wendy* include: adventure; believing in something; duty and responsibility; family; fantasy vs. reality; gender roles; growing up; imagination, and storytelling.

The performances on May 12 (10 AM) and May 14 (2 PM) will be interpreted in American Sign Language. Call TTY: 773.325.7975. The performance on May 19 (10 AM) will include a live audio-description of the visual and physical events on-stage, for patrons who are blind or have low-vision. If patrons require wheelchair accessible and/or companion seating, or have any other hearing or vision needs, please let the Box Office staff know when you reserve your tickets, so that the theatre staff can make sure your visit to our theatre is an excellent one.

April 23 is USO of Illinois Day. U.S. Armed Forces personnel and their families, with a valid military ID, can attend the performance for free. Visit www.tixfortroops.org to reserve tickets, or call 312.922.1999 for more information. A post-

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performance autograph session with the cast will be held after the performance on April 23. The performances on May 5 (10 AM) and 22 (2 PM) will be followed by a post-show discussion.

Tickets are \$10. Subscriptions and group rates (15 or more people) are available. DePaul employees, alumni, and college students receive a discount (with ID). Tickets are available online or by calling the Box Office at (312) 922-1999.

DePaul's Merle Reskin Theatre is located at 60 E. Balbo Drive at Michigan Avenue, in Chicago. For information about parking, please contact the Box Office. The theatre is accessible via CTA busses (3-King Drive, 29-State Street, 146-Michigan/ Museums and others), and CTA El stops (Red, Blue, Brown, Green, Orange, Purple and Pink).

The cast features Trevor Bates, Andra Beatty, Nosakhere Cash-O'Bannon, Kayla Raelle Holder, Rebecca Keeshin, Sam Krey, Nicole Lockard, Ian Miller, Carolyn Moore, Samantha Newcomb, David Shea Peterson, Elise Randall, Lily Rosenzweig, Mikey Russo, Sarah Serabian, Michael Stock, Arie DuPree Thompson, Zivon Toplin, and Harrison Weger.

The production team includes scenic design by **Jake Ives**, costume design by **Nicole Foster**, lighting design by **Vada Briceno**, sound design by **Sebastian Woldt**, dramaturgy by **Kaysie Bekkela**, and stage management by **Cat Andrade**.

About the Director: Ernie Nolan is an award-winning director and playwright who received the Illinois Theatre Association's 2014 Award for Excellence in Theatre for Young Audiences. As Producing Artistic Director of Emerald City Theatre in Chicago, he created the ECT Playground, a process to develop new TYA works. His recent Emerald City directing credits include *A Charlie Brown Christmas* at the Broadway Playhouse and *Three Little Kittens*, an interactive/immersive theatre piece for the very young. His work as a playwright has been featured both nationally and internationally at such theatres as The Coterie, First Stage, Walnut Street, Orlando Rep, and Children's Theatre of Charlotte. He has written commissions for Adventure Theatre in Glen Echo, MD, La Jolla Playhouse in CA, and The Milwaukee Zoological Society. Also a resident artist of The Coterie Theatre in Kansas City, MO, he has directed and choreographed world premieres by such Tony-nominated artists as Willy and Rob Reale, Stephen Schwartz, Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens, and Bill Russell and Henry Krieger. For Chicago Playworks he has directed *The BFG*, *The Giver*, *The Witches*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *Number the Stars*, and *The Day John Henry Came to School*. In March 2012, Ernie made his Off-Broadway debut as a choreographer with *Lucky Duck* at the New Victory Theatre. Ernie is an Assistant Professor of Theatre Studies at The Theatre School at DePaul University as well as the Vice President of Theatre for Young Audiences USA. He is a proud graduate of both the University of Michigan Musical Theatre Program (BFA Musical Theatre) and The Theatre School at DePaul University (MFA Directing).

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The Theatre School at DePaul University educates, trains, and inspires students of theatre in a conservatory setting that is rigorous, disciplined, and culturally diverse. The school and its students strive for the highest level of professional skill and artistry. A commitment to diversity and equality in education is central to its mission. As an integral part of the training, The Theatre School produces public programs and performances from a wide repertoire of classic, contemporary, and original plays that challenge, entertain, and stimulate the imagination. The school seeks to enhance the intellectual and cultural life of the university community, the city, and the profession.