

CHILDSPLAY THEATRE

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CHILDSPLAY THEATRE SPINS THE TALE OF CHARLOTTE'S WEB TO OPEN 42ND SEASON



**The Herberger Theater Center, 222 E. Monroe St., Phoenix
Weekends, Sept. 2 through Oct. 14, 2018**

(Tempe, Ariz.) Childsplay Theatre opens its 42nd season of theatre for young audiences and families with the beloved adaptation of *Charlotte's Web*. The production will also mark the company's first production back at The Herberger Theater Center as one of its resident companies.

The story of *Charlotte's Web* is a timeless one about life, empathy and the power of friendship. This will be the fifth time Childsplay has produced the show, introducing brand new audiences to Wilbur, the endearing piglet trying to make his way in the world, and the wise and winsome spider who becomes his true friend.

"*Charlotte's Web* is one of our audiences all-time favorite shows," said Childsplay Artistic Director Dwayne Hartford. "It's a beautiful story that we happen to tell very well. It felt right to celebrate the move to The Herberger Theater Center with a production of this fantastic play."

Tickets start at \$12 and are on sale now at www.childsplayaz.org or at the Herberger Theater Center Box Office (602) 252-8497. The play is recommended for ages 5 and up. The Herberger Center is located at 222 E. Monroe St., Phoenix, AZ 85004.

"I think audiences will love the story of friendship and giving," said Thomas Strawser, the actor who plays Wilbur. "They are going to love the characters either for the first time or all over again. And they will definitely love the playfulness and heart that everyone brings to the show."

While this is Strawser's first time playing Wilbur, longtime Childsplay Associate Artist Debra K. Stevens, will be reprising the role of Charlotte for the fifth time for this production.

"I love portraying Charlotte as she is so ingenious and creative--she is a problem solver. She is a 'terrific' and fiercely loyal friend, which is something I value very highly in my own life," said Stevens. "I love being able to communicate that sentiment to our audiences."

The 4 p.m. performance on Sunday, Sept. 2 is a special \$12 Storybook Preview performance, sponsored by The Steele Foundation. Each family that attends this General Admission preview performance will receive a free book. The American Sign Language performance is Sun., Oct. 14 at 1pm.

Charlotte's Web features Debra K. Stevens as *Charlotte*, Katie McFadzen as *Goose/Mrs. Arable*, Jon Gentry as *Templeton/Mr. Arable*, Thomas Strawser as *Wilbur*, Kate Haas as *Sheep/Edith Zuckerman*, Tony Latham as *Avery Able*, Sedona Urias-Ramonett as *Fern Arable*, and Nathan Alfred as *Homer Zuckerman/Uncle*.

Director: David Saar

Scenic Design: Douglas Clarke

Costume Design: Adriana Diaz

Lighting Design: Rick Paulsen

Sound Design: Christopher Neumeyer
Stage Manager: Rebekah Carriere

Charlotte's Web was written by Joseph Robinette, based on the book by E.B. White. This production is sponsored by APS.

For interviews or media appearances, please contact Samantha Johnstone at (480) 921-5703 or sjohnstone@childsplayaz.org. High-resolution images are available for download from Childsplay's website at www.childsplayaz.org/press.

About Childsplay:

Childsplay, Inc. is a nonprofit theatre company of professional, adult artists who perform for and teach young audiences and their families. The mission of Childsplay is "to create theatre so strikingly original in form, content or both, that it instills in young people an enduring awe, love and respect for the medium, thus preserving imagination and wonder, the hallmarks of childhood which are keys to the future." For more information, visit www.childsplayaz.org.

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