

August 7, 2015

For Immediate Release

**THE  
COTERIE**  
no small characters.



Press Contact:  
David Golston  
Director of Marketing & Public Relations  
Office: (816) 994-8839 Cell: (785) 217-8222  
Email: [dgolston@coterietheatre.org](mailto:dgolston@coterietheatre.org)

## PRESS RELEASE

.....  
**Kansas City's The Coterie among first  
to produce new *Madagascar* musical,  
*A Charlie Brown Christmas* live on stage,  
Sendak's *Wild Things* and more  
in upcoming 2015/16 Season**

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

.....

**Kansas City, MO** - At The Coterie, where there are no small characters, only big ideas and massive talent, the 2015/2016 season of plays selected by Producing Artistic Director Jeff Church aims to deliver engagement for family members of any age. One of the national leaders in producing theatre for youth and family audiences, The Coterie also enriches curriculum for schools looking for excellence in arts education. This coming season, The Coterie will have several productions where young theatre-goers will interact and participate during the performances.

According to Church, "The season has been designed to appeal to families as well as school groups. Families have a chance to see the new adaptation of DreamWorks' *Madagascar*, now made into a Theatre for Young Audiences musical, as well as a production of the wonderful *A Charlie Brown Christmas* with a live jazz trio on stage to celebrate its landmark 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are proud to be among the first theatres in the country to produce these newly available shows that will speak to every generation of the family."

The Coterie's season also includes plays for preteens and teens. Church notes, "The true story of Helen Keller and Annie Sullivan in *The Miracle Worker* remains the best teacher/student play ever

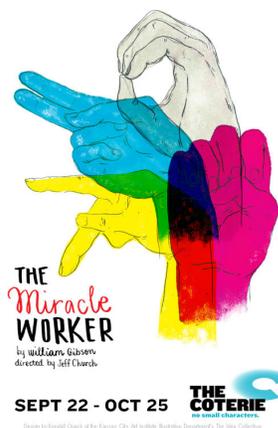
- more -

written. We will also produce *And Justice for Some*, a fascinating look at the historical 1858 trial and the ensuing abolitionist riot around a former slave captured in Boston, despite being in the free state of Massachusetts. Audiences will be asked to act as State Senators after the trial in this co-production with UMKC Theatre.”

As a special highlight of upcoming season, The Coterie will host Presentation House Theatre's production of *Where the Wild Things Are* from Vancouver. Church explains, “This acclaimed production was created as an interactive experience ideal for ages three to eight, by the only licensed company allowed to produce the famed Maurice Sendak story.” Also for elementary school ages, The Coterie will produce the migrant worker story, *Tomás and the Library Lady* [*Tomás y la Señora de la Biblioteca*], an inspiring true tale that features bilingual aspects to its production.

To assist schools where transportation costs may preclude them from attending a production, The Coterie will offer *Your Ticket to Ride*, a new program providing transportation funding for school groups. Available on a first come, first served basis, the program will reimburse up to three dollars per student to defray transportation costs for any K-12 school bringing a group of twenty or more students to see a Coterie show. Church explains, “Last year, we held a series of educator salons where we discussed the barriers they experience to bringing their students to a live arts event. One of their biggest hurdles we learned was the cost of busing students to the theater. So, we launched *Your Ticket to Ride* for those schools that may be able to afford the price of tickets but might not be able to manage the transportation expense. It was a great success amongst teachers and administrators, so we're thrilled to continue the program in order to help make The Coterie accessible to as many young people as possible.”

## THE COTERIE'S 2015/2016 SEASON



### ***The Miracle Worker***

**September 22 – October 25, 2015**

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, September 25 at 7:00 p.m.**

By William Gibson

Directed by Jeff Church

An American story of perseverance is turned into art with a multi-ethnic cast, starring Vanessa Severo, Walter Coppage, and Jennifer Mays. Helen Keller is a child who has been deafblind since infancy. She's alone in a secret world. She's disobedient and wild. But Annie, a recent graduate from an institute for the blind, senses Helen's curiosity and cleverly opens her world to language. Together, they show us that even the most overwhelming obstacles can be overcome. The play will have American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation and audio description during each performance.

For families with AGES 10+ | Approximate running time: 75 minutes



**A Charlie Brown Christmas**

**November 17, 2015 – January 3, 2016**

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, November 20 at 7:00 p.m.**

By Charles M. Schulz

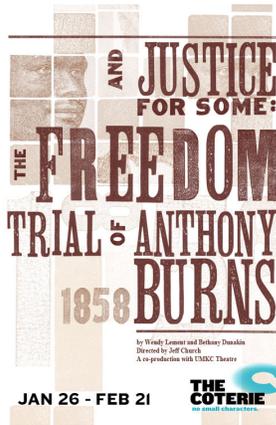
Based on the television special by Bill Melendez and Lee Mendelson

Directed by Jeff Church

2015 is the 65th anniversary of the Peanuts comic strip and 50th anniversary of “A Charlie Brown Christmas” special. Join the celebration and see this animated classic come alive with a real jazz trio playing the original Vince Guaraldi arrangements. It’s Christmas season, and everyone is acting materialistic, including Snoopy. Charlie Brown wants a deeper meaning, though. We join him on a quirky journey as he tries to direct the school Christmas pageant and restore the holiday spirit with a ragged little fir tree. When these gestures don’t work, Charlie Brown turns to Linus to learn the season’s real meaning.

For ALL AGES | Approximate running time: 55 minutes

Peanuts © 2015 Peanuts Worldwide LLC. All Rights Reserved



**And Justice for Some:**

**The Freedom Trial of Anthony Burns [1858]**

**January 26 – February 21, 2016**

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, January 29 at 7:00 p.m.**

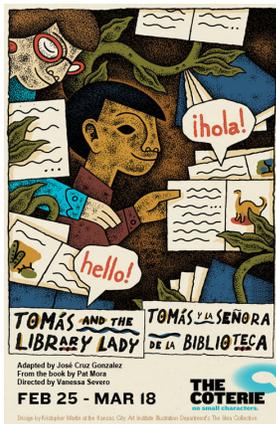
By Wendy Lement and Bethany Dunakin

Directed by Jeff Church

Co-produced with UMKC Theatre

Anthony Burns escaped slavery. Despite a fierce defense at trial, he was returned to his Southern master. This powerful case helped create the party that propelled Lincoln to the White House. In a unique twist at the end of the play, theatre-goers participate as 1858 Massachusetts State Senators.

For families with AGES 11+ | Approximate running time: 70 minutes



**Tomás and the Library Lady / Tomás y la Señora de la Biblioteca**

**February 25 – March 18, 2016**

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, February 26 at 7:00 p.m.**

Adapted by José Cruz González from the book by Pat Mora

Directed by Vanessa Severo

In this inspiring true tale of how reading and stories help us all escape, young Tomás Rivera and his family are migrant workers who pick farmers’ crops. It’s hard work. It’s even rougher for Tomás because the family moves constantly to find new crops. But one summer, Tomás visits the library. He discovers worlds filled with dinosaurs and tigers, and a great new friend.

For families with AGES 8+ | Approximate running time: 55 minutes



**Where the Wild Things Are**

**March 21 – May 7, 2016**

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, March 25 at 7:00 p.m.**

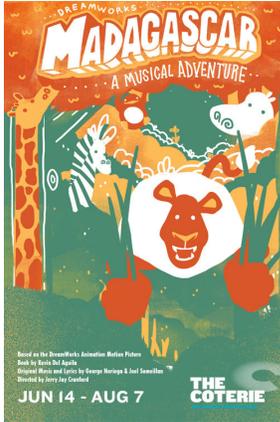
From Presentation House Theatre, Vancouver

Directed by Kim Selody

This is a journey to remember in an acclaimed interactive adaptation of Sendak’s beloved classic. Audiences become part of the story as they transform Max’s bedroom into a forest, wear masks to become Wild Things that befriend Max, and help to “let the Wild Rumpus begin.” Ages 3-8 will participate with Max on his journey! For details, call The Coterie box office at 816.474.6552 and ask about Max’s Adventure Tickets.

For families with AGES 3-8 | Approximate running time: 60 minutes

- more -



**Madagascar – A Musical Adventure**

**June 14 – August 7, 2016**

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, June 17 at 7:00 p.m.**

Based on the DreamWorks Animation Motion Picture

Book by Kevin Del Aguila

Original Music and Lyrics by George Noriega & Joel Someillan

Directed by Jerry Jay Cranford with music direction by Anthony Edwards

It's a new musical adventure for all ages (yes, even parents) in what will be one of the first productions of the much-loved madcap journey from New York's Central Park Zoo to the beaches of Madagascar. See Alex the Lion, Marty the Zebra, Melman the Giraffe, Gloria the Hippo and the always-plotting penguins. Their journey goes from the wilderness to just plain wild with King Julien. Join these crack-a-lackin' friends and get ready to MOVE IT MOVE IT.

**For ALL AGES | Approximate running time: 75 minutes**

Madagascar © 2011, 2015 DreamWorks Animation LLC. All Rights Reserved.

- **2016 Young Playwrights Festival  
May 1, 2016**

Rich and varied theatrical writings evolve from a year-long process by our city's most gifted young playwrights who have emerged from The Coterie's Young Playwrights Roundtable. See a collection of new plays forged into an ambitious festival of script-in-hand readings staged by professional artists.

A Coterie Writes production intended FOR TEENS & ADULTS

- **The Dramatic Health Education Project: STDs/HIV**

Touring schools in the Kansas City area FREE OF CHARGE

An award-winning collaboration between The Coterie, UMKC Schools of Medicine and Pharmacy, and KU Medical Center School of Nursing to educate teens about the transmission and prevention of STDs and HIV/AIDS. Professional actors, medical students, and nursing students trained as peer educators, employ hard hitting monologues, slides, and music to present stories of HIV+ teenagers and how STDs are transmitted. Highly lauded for its balanced message, the program is followed by an intensive question and answer period.

**TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets and Spotlight Club Passes are on sale now and are available by calling The Coterie's box office at **816.474.6552** or visiting [www.thecoterie.org](http://www.thecoterie.org). Groups may reserve anytime by calling **816.474.6552**.

**Subscriptions:** In lieu of season subscriptions, The Coterie offers the Spotlight Club Pass, which works like season tickets without committing to a set schedule. Spotlight Club members pay \$100.00 for a flexible pass that includes 10 tickets - a savings of 40% off individual ticket prices - that can be used for any show or combination of shows in the 2015/2016 Season.

**Individual Tickets:** Tickets are \$11.00 for youth under 18, students, and seniors age 60 and older, and \$15.00 for adults. Prices for the musical productions, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and *Madagascar – A Musical Adventure*, are \$12.00 for youth, students, and seniors, and \$17.00 for adults.

**Group Pricing:** The Coterie offers groups of 20 or more a special preview rate of \$5.00 per person the first week of each production (*A Charlie Brown Christmas* excluded). After preview week, groups pay only \$5.50 per person on weekdays and \$6.50 per person on weekends (Friday nights, Saturdays and Sundays). Group prices for the musical productions, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and *Madagascar – A Musical Adventure*, are \$6.00 per person on weekdays and \$7.00 per person on weekends.

.....  
Due to the nature of live theatre, play selection, performance schedule and casting are subject to change.  
.....

**###**