

March 1, 2019

For Immediate Release

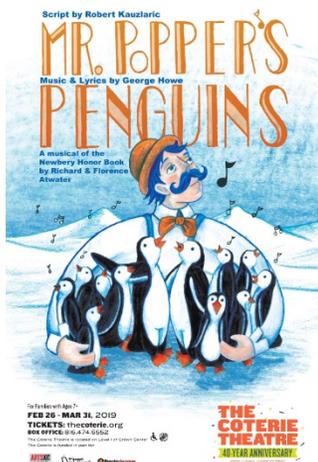
Press Contact:

David Golston

Director of Marketing & Public Relations

Office: (816) 994-8839 Cell: (785) 217-8222

Email: [dgolston@coterietheatre.org](mailto:dgolston@coterietheatre.org)



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## The Coterie Brings South Pole to Kansas City with Musical of Beloved Children's Book

*Mr. Popper's Penguins*

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### OVERVIEW:

WHAT: ***Mr. Popper's Penguins***

Script by Robert Kazlaric

Music & Lyrics by George Howe

A musical of the Newbery Honor Book by Richard & Florence Atwater

Directed by Heidi Van

WHEN: February 26 – March 31, 2019

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, March 1, at 7:00 p.m.**

WHERE: The Coterie, Level one of Crown Center, 2450 Grand Blvd., Kansas City, MO

PRICE: \$13.00 for youth under 18, full-time students, and seniors age 60+;

\$17.00 for adults; \$5.00 - \$8.00 for Groups of 20 or more

INFO / RESERVATIONS: The Coterie Box Office

Phone: (816) 474-6552

Online: [www.thecoterie.org](http://www.thecoterie.org)

**Kansas City, MO** – The Coterie Theatre continues its 40<sup>th</sup> season of live theatre for families and young audiences with the musical adaptation of the beloved book, ***Mr. Popper's Penguins***, for families with ages seven and older. It tells the adventures of Mr. & Mrs. Popper when a mysterious box on their doorstep leads to a house full of penguins and worldwide adventures. ***Mr. Popper's Penguins*** is directed by Heidi Van and will be performed live on The Coterie's stage, February 26 – March 31, 2019.

## THE PLAY

In this charming musical adaptation of the beloved book, Mr. Popper longs to see the world, have fantastic adventures, find undiscovered continents, and to study penguins. But life for Mr. and Mrs. Popper takes on more adventure than they ever expected when an unexpected box arrives on their doorstep courtesy of Admiral Drake, the world famous explorer. Inside the box is none other than a penguin – a penguin sent from the South Pole that they name Captain Cook and let sleep in their refrigerator. However, with penguins being the social creatures they are, the local aquarium sends over a female penguin and soon the Poppers are hearing the patter of 20 little feet. When the Popper house goes from one penguin living in the icebox to a whole family of penguins who all have to be fed, they form a touring act and take "Popper's Performing Penguins" on the road! What begins for Mr. & Mrs. Popper as a giant bill for canned shrimp leads to an imaginative journey from Vaudeville to the Antarctic.

***Mr. Popper's Penguins*** is adapted from the best-selling children's novel by Richard & Florence Atwater first published in 1938. Since winning the prestigious Newbery Honor Award, given for excellence in children's literature, in 1939, the book has become a classic of family reading and has now been adapted to a delightful stage musical with book by Robert Kauzlaric and music and lyrics by George Howe. This new whimsical take on the popular story made its premiere in 2015 at Lifeline Theatre in Chicago and features showtunes and puppets to bring the south pole wildlife to life on stage. In its review of the premiere production, the *Chicago Reader* raved, "... [an] endearing and enduring tale... This charming and funny hour-long family show, which uses life-size puppets to represent the birds, emphasizes the loving partnership of Mr. Popper and his improbably patient and supportive wife... [a] witty script and [a] bouncy score..."

***Mr. Popper's Penguins*** will run approximately 65 minutes with no intermission and can be enjoyed by families with ages seven and older. The Coterie is funded in part by the Missouri Arts Council, ArtsKC Fund, and Theater League.

## THE ARTISTS

The cast of ***Mr. Popper's Penguins*** will feature Seth Jones (as Mr. Popper), Elise Poehling (as Mrs. Popper), Roan Ricker (as Mr. Johnson, Admiral Drake, Delivery Guy, Barber, Reporter, Policeman, Bus Driver, Theatre Manager, Sven Svenson), Antonia Washington (as Mrs. Callahan, Gentleman, Curator, Passenger, Mr. Greenbaum, Cab Driver, Copper), and Faith "Phoenix" Johnson and Ashley Elliott-Rowe (as Penguin Puppeteers). The artistic and production company includes Heidi Van (director), Danielle Renee (production stage manager), Scott Hobart (set designer, technical director), Jarrett Bertoncin (lighting designer), Georgianna Londré Buchanan (costume designer), David Kiehl (sound designer), Joyce Merrill (properties/set dressing), and Taylor Jene Sullivan (production assistant).

## SHOW DATES, TIMES & TICKETS

The Coterie, now in its 40th Season and named "One of the Five Best Theaters for Young Audiences in the U.S." by *TIME* magazine, will perform **Mr. Popper's Penguins** February 26 – March 31, 2019, in The Coterie Theatre, located on level one of the Crown Center shops in Kansas City, MO. Press Night will be held on Friday, March 1, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.

**Individual Tickets:** Tickets are \$13.00 for youth under 18, students, and seniors age 60 and older; and \$17.00 for adults.

**Subscriptions:** In lieu of season subscriptions, The Coterie offers the Spotlight Pass, which works like a season ticket without committing to a set schedule. Spotlight Pass holders pay \$110.00 for a flexible pass that includes 10 tickets that can be used for any show or combination of the shows remaining in the 2018/2019 Season.

**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. After preview week, groups pay only \$5.00 - \$8.00 per person depending on performance date.

All tickets and Spotlight Passes are on sale now and may be purchased by calling The Coterie's box office at (816) 474-6552, dropping by the box office on level one of the Crown Center Shops, or by visiting [www.thecoterie.org](http://www.thecoterie.org).

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Copies of the novel MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS by Richard and Florence Atwater are available in print from Little Brown and in eBook from Open Road Media.

PUPPETS originally designed by Brian Hull for Nashville Children's Theatre.  
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Pictured: Left: Seth Jones (as Mr. Popper) and Elise Poehling (as Mrs. Popper). Right: Roan Ricker (as Admiral Drake), Elise Poehling (as Mrs. Popper), Seth Jones (as Mr. Popper), and Antonia Washington (as Mr. Greenbaum). Photos by J. Robert Schraeder.

Performance Calendar  
**MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS**

FEBRUARY 26 - MARCH 31, 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		26 10 am	27 10 am	28 10 am 12 pm	1 10 am 12 pm 7 pm 	2 2 pm 
3 2 pm 	4	5 10 am 12 pm	6 10 am 12 pm	7 10 am 12 pm	8 10 am 12 pm 7 pm 	9 2 pm
10 2 pm	11	12 10 am 12 pm	13 10 am 12 pm	14 10 am 12 pm	15 10 am 12 pm 7 pm 	16 2 pm 
17 2 pm	18	19 10 am 12 pm	20 10 am 12 pm	21 10 am 12 pm	22 10 am 12 pm 7 pm 	23 2 pm
24 2 pm	25	26 10 am 12 pm	27 10 am 12 pm	28 10 am 12 pm	29 10 am 12 pm 7 pm 	30 2 pm
31 2 pm						

**CALENDAR LEGEND**

**Opening Night**

**Friday Family Fun Night** featuring post-performance autograph session and photo op with cast members

Post-performance **Question and Answer session** with the company

**Interpreted performance** in American Sign Language

**NOTABLE PERFORMANCE EXTRAS**

During the run of *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, The Coterie invites audiences to take advantage of these special, free performance extras (with paid admission):

- **Friday, January 25 9, 7:00 p.m.: Opening Night Celebration.** A free post-performance reception with the director, company, staff, and board of directors.
- **Saturday, March 2, and Sunday, March 3, 2:00 p.m.: Question & Answer session.** A free Q&A with members of The Coterie's staff and artistic company will immediately follow the performance.
- **Fridays, March 8, 15, 22, and 29, 7:00 p.m.: Friday Family Fun Night.** Post-performance autograph session and photo op with cast members.
- **Saturday, February 2, 2:00 p.m.: Interpreted performance** in American Sign Language.

Production photos are available online at:

[www.thecoterie.org/press-room](http://www.thecoterie.org/press-room)

**THE REMAINING 2018/2019 SEASON**

Following *Mr. Popper's Penguins* The Coterie's 2018/2019 Season continues a musical based on the Netflix Original Series, *Beat Bugs: A Musical Adventure*, April 16th – May 19th, 2019; and a crowd favorite returning, *Elephant and Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*, June 11th – August 4th, 2019.

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