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For Immediate Release

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MEDIA RELEASE

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**The Coterie's 42nd Season Features
Four Premiere Plays & Musicals and
One Highly-Anticipated Postponed Favorite (Finally!!!)**

ALL TICKETS & GROUP RESERVATIONS
ON SALE SEPT. 17
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Kansas City, MO – Nationally-recognized as one of the nation's leading producers of new works of theatre for young people and their families, The Coterie Theatre's 42nd Season will offer new multiple new plays and musicals created to entertain, engage, and serve as memorable experiences for all ages and every generation of the family.

OPENING WITH *ELECTRIC POE 2021*

Back by popular demand, The Coterie's 2021-2022 Season begins in September with the return special engagement of Union Cemetery's Historical Society (UCHS)'s ***Electric Poe***, performed outdoors at sunset in one of Kansas City's hidden gems, Union Cemetery, through Halloween for families with ages ten and older. ***Electric Poe 2021*** features new adaptations of two classic stories from Edgar Allan Poe. In 'The Pit and the Pendulum,' a man is sentenced by The Inquisition to various unspeakable tortures in a diabolical chamber of horrors, while 'The Tomb of Ligeia' envisions Poe's twist on reanimating the dead.

"The stories in ***Electric Poe 2021*** are different from last year's production," explains The Coterie's Production Artistic Director, Jeff Church, who adapted Poe's work for graveside storytelling again this year. "We're really excited to give audiences the literary hit 'Pit and the Pendulum,' with the rats

and the torture table and everything, as well as 'Tomb of Ligeia' which allows us to add a female character, played by Alisa Lynn. We are also adding a tribute poem about Poe written by H.P. Lovecraft. What will be the same is the atmospheric electric guitar underscoring by Rex Hobart and R.H. Wilhoit as the main characters in each of the pieces. We will continue to have the successful question and answer session after each show with a Union Cemetery historian -- which was so fun last year. This year, patrons bring their own chairs or we can provide and reserve one for them."

Hailed as "haunting... Wilhoit, in the style of an 1850's orator, is magnificent bringing to life two masterpieces by the wizard of the macabre... an outstanding performance" by *BroadwayWorld* and "creative... gripping... genuinely creepy (Hobart's leering guitar chords are a major part of the chill)" by *ThePitchKC*, Wilhoit and Hobart will once again utilize suspenseful storytelling in front of Union Cemetery's "Holding Vault," built circa 1857, to bring the stories to life. Also new this year, audiences have the opportunity to learn about the historical significance of Union Cemetery and the many important figures in Kansas City history that are buried there with **guided, pre-performance tours**. Led by a member of the UCHS, 60-minute walking tours are available on September 17, 18, 19, 25 and 26. A portion of each show and tour combination ticket will benefit UCHS and their efforts to preserve Kansas City's oldest public cemetery.

LATER IN THE SEASON – BACK ON THE MAINSTAGE

Beginning in November, The Coterie will move back indoors to its mainstage in Crown Center for the world premiere of the new Theatre for Young Audiences version of *The SpongeBob Musical*. Adapted from the hit Broadway show by Church through The Coterie's Lab for New Family Musicals program, *The SpongeBob Musical for Young Audiences* uses the music of a legendary roster of Grammy Award winners to turn one of the world's most beloved and unforgettable characters loose on stage in the undersea town of Bikini Bottom! The ever-optimistic yellow sea sponge named SpongeBob shows everybody that he is not "just a simple sponge" by proving to one and all that optimism really can save the world.

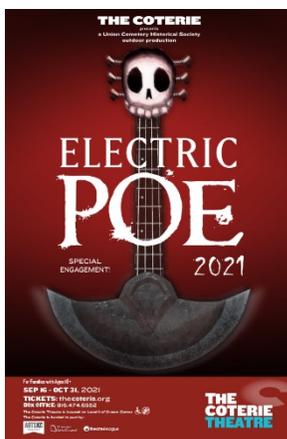
In February 2022, The Coterie will shine a spotlight on little known Kansas City history with the world premiere of *Only One Day a Year*, a new play commissioned by The Coterie and written by Michelle Tyrene Johnson, a fourth generation Kansas City, KS native and former KCUR reporter. This National Endowment for the Arts award-winning play intertwines present day with the last segregated days of Fairyland amusement park, formerly located at 75th and Prospect in Kansas City, MO, which, in the 1960s, allowed African Americans to enter only one day annually. Intertwining a story from the past with one in the present, *Only One Day a Year* shows a young girl today using her talent and grandmother's spirit to shine a light on an injustice at her school.

In March 2022, The Coterie will bring the highly-anticipated musical adaptation of ***Pete the Cat*** to its mainstage, after postponing the production in 2019. With its Beach Boys musical vibe and '60s feel, ***Pete the Cat*** will have everyone in the family strumming and strutting when the grooviest, guitar-slinging cat in town meets the Biddles family and rocks their world.

For an extra special Summer 2022, The Coterie will produce the world premiere of the new musical, ***Alice's Wonderland***, adapted from Lewis Carroll's classic story and featuring an original score inspired by hip-hop, pop, gospel, and contemporary musical theater co-written by J. Quinton Johnson and Julia Riew based on a treatment by Linda Chichester and David Coffman. In ***Alice's Wonderland***, brilliant teen-coder Alice dreams of changing the world with her new video game, Wonderland, but when a rabbit suddenly emerges from the screen and offers her an escape from reality, Alice takes the leap - and lands in her own virtual world.

In addition to the season's stage productions, The Coterie will also continue the many **educational and community outreach programs** it undertakes each year: year-round acting classes for ages Pre-K through 12 grades at multiple locations around the K.C. metro; teen playwriting programs; a free acting troupe for LGBTQ teens and their allies; the award-winning Dramatic HIV/STD Project, which tours free to high schools all over the region teaching teens about STD prevention; and Project Daylight, a new free presentation that offers 6th-8th Grade students tactics for improving mental health.

THE COTERIE'S 2021/2022 SEASON



[Electric Poe 2021](#)

September 16 – October 31, 2021

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

Performed at Union Cemetery, 227 E 28 Terr, Kansas City, MO

Performed outdoors in Kansas City's hidden gem, a return special engagement featuring two new Poe stories this year. In 'The Pit and the Pendulum' - a man is sentenced by The Inquisition to various unspeakable tortures in a diabolical chamber of horrors. In 'The Tomb of Ligeia,' we have Poe's twist on reanimating the dead. Treat yourself and your family to superb acting accompanied by atmospheric electric guitar underscoring in front of Union Cemetery's "Holding Vault," circa 1857.

For Families with AGES 10+ | Approximate running time: 45 minutes



[NICKELODEON's](#)
[The SpongeBob Musical](#)
[for Young Audiences](#)

The Theatre for Young Audiences World Premiere

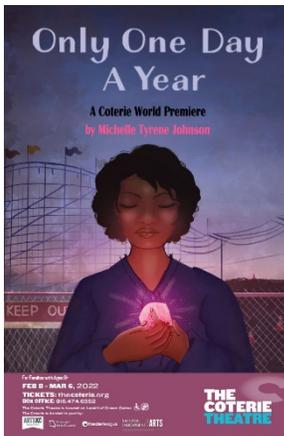
November 4, 2021 - January 2, 2022

Press / Opening Night: Saturday, November 6 at 7:00 p.m.

A legendary roster of Grammy Award winners... One of the world's most beloved and unforgettable characters... Turn them loose on stage and what do you get? The undersea town of Bikini Bottom! Inhabited by an ever-optimistic yellow sea sponge named SpongeBob and his equally quirky circle of friend and neighbors: Patrick, Sandy, Squidward, Mr. Krabs, and even Plankton! Their pleasant existence is interrupted when it is discovered that Mt. Humongous will erupt within the next 48 hours and obliterate Bikini Bottom. SpongeBob powerfully proves to one and all that optimism really can save the

world, and shows everybody that he is not "just a simple sponge."

For Families with AGES 5+ | Approximate running time: 60 minutes



[Only One Day a Year](#)

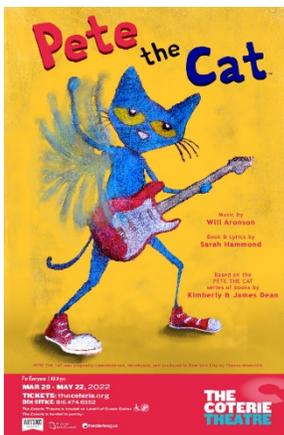
A World Premiere Commissioned by The Coterie

February 8 - March 6, 2022

Press / Opening Night: Friday, February 11 at 7:00 p.m.

This NEA award-winning play intertwines present day with the last segregated days of Fairyland amusement park. Inspired by overlooked Kansas City history. Two stories told in tandem: In the early 1960s in Kansas City, Rose James uses smarts and determination to try to defeat the racial segregation policy that allowed blacks to visit Fairyland Park only one day each year. Years later, Rose's granddaughter, Ella, uses her talent and grandmother's spirit to shine a light on an injustice at her school. Rose and Ella tap into "black girl magic" and empowerment to bring about meaningful change to their lives.

For Families with AGES 9+ | Approximate running time: 60 minutes



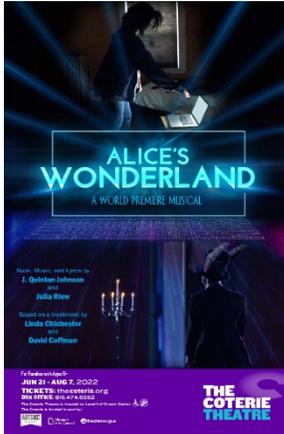
[Pete the Cat](#)

March 29 - May 22, 2022

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

The grooviest, guitar-slinging cat in town meets the Biddles and rocks their world. Pete, who normally lives in a VW bus, has been sent to the Biddle's to learn some manners, much to the annoyance of Jimmy (the world's most organized grade schooler). But it doesn't take long before Pete turns house arrest into a crusade to help Jimmy pass second grade and take him on the inspirational road trip of a lifetime! The whole family will love Pete's hilarious, jazzy antics in this toe-tapping musical.

For Families with AGES 5+ | Approximate running time: 55 minutes



[Alice's Wonderland](#)

A World Premiere Musical

June 21 - August 7, 2022

Press / Opening Night: Friday, June 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Brilliant teen-coder Alice dreams of changing the world with her new video game, Wonderland. When Rabbit suddenly emerges from the screen and offers her an escape from reality, Alice takes the leap - and lands in her own virtual world. Adapted from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll and featuring an original score inspired by Hip-Hop, Pop, Gospel, and contemporary musical theater, Alice's Wonderland is a new musical for all ages.

For Families with AGES 5+ | Approximate running time: 60 minutes

ALSO THIS SEASON



[The Coterie Theatre School Drama Classes](#)

Fall Semester begins in September; Winter in January; Spring in April; Summer in June

The Coterie's acting classes strive to introduce students, age 3 through high school, to the joy and excitement of theatre while building self-esteem and confidence and refining their creativity, active listening, and concentration skills. School year classes are held at multiple Kansas City metro locations.



[Project Pride](#)

A group of LGBTQ and straight allied teens give voice to their experiences in a collection of hilarious and thought-provoking scenes that challenge assumptions and celebrate the diversity of the artists and the audience.

Intended for TEENS & ADULTS



[Young Playwrights' Festival](#)

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 works forged into an ambitious festival of script-in-hand readings staged by professional artists utilizing students from The Coterie's

Master class program and professional directors.

Intended for TEENS & ADULTS



[The Dramatic STD/HIV Project](#)

Touring schools in the Kansas City area FREE OF CHARGE

An award-winning collaboration between The Coterie, UMKC Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing & Health Studies, and KU Medical Center School of Nursing to educate teens about the transmission and prevention of STDs and HIV/AIDS.

Professional actors and health professional 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.



Project Daylight

Touring schools in the Kansas City area FREE OF CHARGE

An innovative, interactive collaboration between The Coterie Theatre and UMKC School of Social Work to introduce 6th and 7th Graders to mental wellness concepts, with the goals of de-stigmatizing asking for help, opening dialogue, providing resiliency tools, and supporting mental wellness for Kansas City area pre-teens and teens.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for The Coterie's special engagement of *Electric Poe 2021* in Union Cemetery are on sale now. Tickets and group reservations for all shows in The Coterie's 2021/2022 mainstage season go on sale Friday, September 17. Call The Coterie's box office at **816.474.6552** or visit www.thecoterie.org.

- **Individual Tickets:** Tickets are \$12.00-\$16.00 for youth under 18, students, and seniors age 60 and older, and \$15.00-\$20.00 for adults, depending on performance date.
- **Group Pricing:** The Coterie offers groups of 20 or more special rates ranging from \$5.50 - \$13.00 per person, depending on performance date.
- COVID-19 safety protocols and additional important information for patrons is available at www.thecoterie.org.

OUR FUNDERS

The Coterie is generously funded, in part, by National Endowment for the Arts, Missouri Arts Council, ArtsKC Fund, and Theater League.



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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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