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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)



**Beloved Characters from  
Iconic Kids' Author  
Mo Willems  
Return to The Coterie for  
Anniversary Season Finale**

***Elephant & Piggie's  
"We are in a Play!"***

**OVERVIEW:**

**WHAT:** *Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*

Script and Lyrics by Mo Willems

Music by Deborah Wicks La Puma

Directed by Shanara Gabrielle

**WHEN:** June 11 – August 4, 2019

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, June 14, 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 concludes its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season by celebrating the joy and whimsy of friendship with the return of one of its best-selling and most popular productions, the charming family musical, *Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*. Adapted for the stage by

creator Mo Willems from his own award-winning book series, ***Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*** is directed by Shanara Gabrielle, with musical direction by Anthony T. Edwards and choreography by Marc Wayne, and will be performed live on The Coterie's stage, June 11 – August 4, 2019.

## THE PLAY

When “bestus” friends Elephant and Piggie get together, anything is possible. They might learn a crazy new dance, spend the day playing ping-pong in silly hats, or even even get invited to a fancy pool costume party. Well, they do all that and more in this high-energy musical - and the audience is invited to join them. Together with their delightfully nutty back-up singers, the Squirrelles, Elephant & Piggie soon discover the fun of being in a play, all the while encouraging the audience to join in for some interactive fun.

Using catchy, jazz- and Broadway-inspired melodies to bring the story to life on stage, author Mo Willems transports his simple – yet endearingly fanciful – look at friendship into a musical message that resonates with every age in the family. It's the same message about the endurance of friendship that has propelled the Elephant and Piggie books to become one of the best-selling and most beloved young reader series of the past decade. The 25-book series, which debuted in 2007, has twice been awarded the Theodor Seuss Geisel Medal and had two titles appear on *TIME* magazine's Top 10 Children's Books of the Year.

The author of numerous popular children's books such as *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale*, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, and *Cat the Cat*, Mo Willems has received many of the highest honors for literature, including the Caldecott Medal, the Carnegie Medal, and the Irma Black Award Honor. He served for nine years as an animator for Sesame Street before creating several animated series for Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network. ***Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*** marks Willems' second stage adaptation with composer Deborah Wicks La Puma, who also worked on Willems' musical adaptation of *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Musical* at the Kennedy Center.

The Coterie's production of ***Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*** will run approximately 60 minutes with no intermission and is perfect for families with all ages. The production is funded in part by the Missouri Arts Council, ArtsKC Fund, Theater League, and the Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund.

## THE ARTISTS

The cast of ***Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*** features Jake Walker (as Elephant) and Shon Ruffin (as Piggie), with Kimberly Horner, Roan Ricker, and Catera Combs Marx (as The Squirrelles). The artistic and production company includes Shanara Gabrielle (director), Anthony T. Edwards (musical director), Danielle Renee (Coterie resident stage manager), Zoë Still (set

designer), Shane Rowse (lighting designer), Georgianna Londré Buchanan (costume designer), David Kiehl (sound designer), Kelli Harrod (properties), Scott Hobart (technical director), and Emily White-Winter (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 *Elephant & Piggie’s “We are in a Play!”* June 11 – August 4, 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, June 14, 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).



Pictured: Jake Walker (as Elephant) and Shon Ruffin (as Piggie) in *Elephant and Piggie’s “We are in a Play!”*. Photo by J. Robert Schraeder.

Performance Calendar

**ELEPHANT & PIGGIE'S  
"WE ARE IN A PLAY!"**

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

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

**NOTABLE PERFORMANCE EXTRAS**

During the run of *Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*, The Coterie invites audiences to take advantage of these special, free performance extras (with paid admission):

- **Friday, June 14, 7:00 p.m.: Opening Night Celebration.** A free post-performance reception with the director, company, staff, and board of directors.
- **Saturday, June 15 and Sunday, June 16, 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, June 21, 28, July 5, 12, 19, 26, and August 2, 7:00 p.m.: Friday Family Fun Night.** Post-performance autograph session and photo op with cast members.
- **Saturday, June 29, 2:00 p.m.: Interpreted performance** in American Sign Language.

*Elephant and Piggie's "We are in a Play!"* was commissioned by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and was first produced at the Kennedy Center during the 2013-2014 season. The Coterie's production is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI, New York, NY, Tel: 212-541-4684. Fax: 212-397-4684. [www.MTIShows.com](http://www.MTIShows.com)