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For Immediate Release

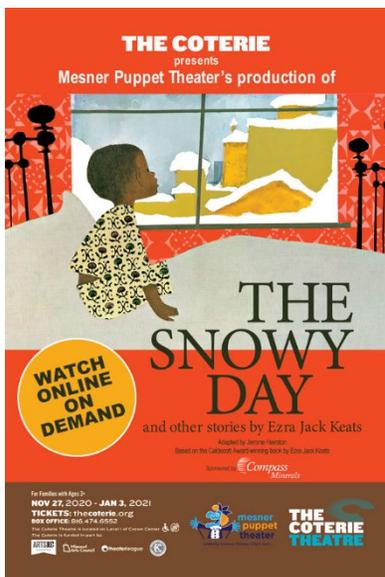
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**The Coterie Celebrates Winter with
Mesner Puppet Theater's Production of
Award-Winning Children's Book
Now Streaming On Demand**

***The Snowy Day*
and other stories by Ezra Jack Keats**

Sponsored by



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OVERVIEW:

WHAT: *The Snowy Day and other stories by Ezra Jack Keats*

Adapted by Jerome Hairston

Based on the Caldecott Award-winning book by Ezra Jack Keats

WHEN: Watch anytime On Demand through January 3, 2021

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

PRICE: \$25.00 - \$45.00 for families; \$65.00 for classrooms

INFO / VIEW NOW: www.thecoterie.org

Kansas City, MO – This winter, The Coterie presents Mesner Puppet Theater's production of ***The Snowy Day and other stories by Ezra Jack Keats***, an endearing adaptation of Ezra Jack Keats' award-winning book. ***The Snowy Day*** is streaming online now for families and virtual field trips through January 3, 2021.

ABOUT THE PLAY

The Snowy Day and other stories by Ezra Jack Keats celebrates the magic and boundless possibilities of the first snowfall. The story follows Peter and his friends as they romp and play, starting snowball fights, and making snow angels in this uplifting musical play about childhood joys and living life to the fullest each day. Told through inventive puppetry and charming songs, Keats' little boy in the red coat comes to life for families with ages three and older in a collection of the stories *Whistle for Willie*, *Goggles!*, *A Letter to Amy*, and *The Snowy Day*, all originally written by children's author and illustrator, Ezra Jack Keats.

Keats' *The Snowy Day* was originally published in 1962 as a children's picture book that featured Peter, a young African American boy exploring his neighborhood as the season's first snowfall signals the beginning of winter. The book received the 1963 Caldecott Medal for Keats' collage artwork, making *The Snowy Day* the first picture book with an African American protagonist to win a major children's award. In 2016, Jerome Hairston created a captivating stage adaptation featuring puppets that received its world premiere at Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis, MN. *Star Tribune* hailed the show as, "a quiet joy." Subsequent productions around the country have been called, "...delightful... the comforting and fun-loving songs create a sense of home..." (*DCTheatreScene*) and have been credited for "...bring[ing] Keats' characters and stories to life with imagination and heartfelt emotion that endures..." (*BroadwayWorld.com-Nashville*). The Coterie's producing artistic director Jeff Church says, "In 2017, Mesner Puppet Theater mounted an irresistible version of ***The Snowy Day*** -- so we are excited to invite them to remount the show for Coterie audiences this winter."

The Snowy Day and other stories by Ezra Jack Keats runs approximately 45 minutes and is recommended for ages three and older. The Coterie is funded in part by Missouri Arts Council, ArtsKC Fund, Theater League, and Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund. The production is sponsored by Compass Minerals, which can be found online at www.compassminerals.com.

WATCH ANYTIME ON DEMAND

The Snowy Day and other stories by Ezra Jack Keats may be viewed online anytime through January 3, 2021. Available to families and as virtual field trips for PreK - 3rd grades, each purchase includes a unique link that allows streaming the performance for 48 hours, beginning upon first use of the link. The convenience of watching on demand offers families and educators the ability to enjoy ***The Snowy Day*** from the comfort and safety of home and on any schedule.

Admission to ***The Snowy Day*** is \$25.00 for small households, \$45.00 for large households (4 or more viewers), and \$65.00 for classrooms. A limited number of special gift packages are also available for \$100.00 that includes access to view the performance on demand; a Willie the Dog plush animal; the books of *Whistle for Willie*, *Goggles*, and *The Snowy Day*; a Make-Your-Own

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Willie Puppet Kit (including glue stick, masking tape and crayons) created by Mesner Puppet Theater; Plush Snowballs (for indoor snowball fights); and free delivery within 30 miles of The Coterie in Crown Center. Purchase admission and gift packages at www.thecoterie.org.

THE ARTISTS

The cast of *The Snowy Day and other stories by Ezra Jack Keats* features puppeteers Zachery Garner and Shawna Peña-Downing. The artistic and production company includes Meghann Henry (producing artistic director, Mesner Puppet Theater); Mike Horner (director of puppetry arts, Mesner Puppet Theater); Rita Sobbing (stage manager); Scott Hobart (scenic designer/technical director); Jarrett Bertoncin (lighting designer); David Kiehl (sound & projection designer/engineer); Mike Horner, Erika Baker, DaLene DePriest, Annie Kalahurka, Tab Treml, Elizabeth McManus, Hannah Rosenthal (puppet construction), and Mark Titus (videographer).



THE COTERIE

The Coterie Theatre was designated by *TIME* magazine in the top three theaters for young audiences in Nov. 2004, calling it “groundbreaking... one of the nation’s most respected.” The Coterie, located in Kansas City, Missouri, has been at the forefront of commissioning new works or adaptations that contribute to the field of theatre for young audiences. More than 50 world or

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American premieres for all ages have been produced by The Coterie over the last 25 years, during Artistic Director Jeff Church's tenure, including hosting multiple major Broadway composers and lyricists to shape quality musicals for youth and families. The Coterie is interested in intergenerational conversation, and consistently includes teen programming in its season and outreach efforts. The Coterie's community programming redefines traditional notions of work for young audiences with its unique dramatic writing programs, teen LGBTQ work, as well as its AIDS/STD education/prevention program, free of charge to 8,000 teens per year, overseen by Executive Director Joette Pelster and a dedicated staff. All these components serve an average of 80,000 per year through over 350 performances. The Coterie Theatre School has drama class locations throughout greater Kansas City. Donate at www.thecoterie.org.

MESNER PUPPET THEATER

Internationally recognized puppeteer, Paul Mesner, established Mesner Puppet Theater (MPT) in 1987 to provide, "Innovative storytelling that captures children's imagination and inspires communities." Over the past 3 decades, the organization has captivated nearly two million people through their productions and educational programming. Audiences delight in the craftsmanship of the puppets, which range from glove puppets to marionettes, to innovative shadow and object based puppetry. MPT holds the distinction of receiving three Union Internationale de la Marionette (UNIMA-USA) Citations of Excellence, which was created by Jim Henson to promote high quality puppetry in the United States and is considered the "Academy Award" of puppetry. MPT uses humor and heart to present stories that connect to the complex social-emotional experiences of our young audience. Each year the company engages more than 30,000 young people and adults in its programs. The organization is currently led by Producing Artistic Director, Meghann Henry; Mike Horner, Director of Puppetry Arts; and Alex Espy, Director of Education. This team's knowledge and experience in theatre for young audiences, puppetry, and arts integration is ensuring MPT's history of excellence will continue while they evolve to meet and inspire today's audiences. Find out more at www.mesnerpuppets.org.

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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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