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**ROALD DAHL'S MATILDA THE MUSICAL RECEIVES RESIDENT
REGIONAL PREMIERE AT OLNEY THEATRE**

**Tony-winner based on children's classic features 10-year-old actress selected
from over 300 auditioners for the title role**

OLNEY, MD – May 20, 2019 – Olney Theatre Center offers its fourth musical production of the 2018-19 Season on the Mainstage, with the Tony Award-winning **Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical (June 21 - July 21, 2019)**, directed by **Peter Flynn**, fresh off the rave reviews for his acclaimed revival of *Into the Woods* at Ford's Theatre. Invited Press Night is Thursday, June 27 at 8:00pm.

Says Olney Theatre Center's Artistic Director, Jason Loewith, "I'm so proud to be producing the Resident Premiere of Roald Dahl's seriously hilarious, hilariously serious *Matilda*. And I'm honored to finally partner with director Peter Flynn, whose work in the DC-area has truly raised the bar for musical theater in town."

Based on the classic **Roald Dahl** book, our hero is born to parents who prize their own ignorance and disdain books, learning, and any information they can't get from television. Still, Matilda somehow manages to emerge...a genius. Maybe even a magical one. However, she and the rest of the school are under the tyrannical rule of a deliciously devious villain, principal Agatha Trunchbull. *Matilda* embraces the fearful and terrifying moments of childhood with humor, hard-earned optimism, and astoundingly witty musical numbers. Songs like "Miracle," "Naughty," and "Revoltin' Children" will ring true to adults and belong in the survival kit of any child making their way through pre-adolescence and beyond.

Emiko Dunn, currently a fourth grader from Brewster, NY was chosen for the title role, following **a lengthy audition period that considered more than 300 young actors** in a process facilitated by McCorkle Casting in New York. For Emiko, the role is one she was born to

play. Her mother, Takami Dunn reports, “She never had a chance to see *Matilda* on Broadway, but it has been a part of her life since she was little. She sang “When I Grow Up” for her first vocal performance in first grade at school and performed it again in second grade in a talent contest up here in Brewster.”

Ms. Dunn joins a top-flight list of DC-based, Helen Hayes Award-winning talent in the cast of *Roald Dahl’s Matilda the Musical* including **Felicia Curry** as the kindly Ms. Honey, **Rayanne Gonzales** (last seen in at Olney in her Helen Hayes Award-winning turn as Abuela in *In The Heights*) as Mrs. Phelps, **Michael Mainwaring** as sibling-from-hell Michael Wormwood, **Tracy Lynn Olivera** as the awful Mrs. Wormwood, **Christopher Michael Richardson** as equally negligent and ignorant Mr. Wormwood and **Tom Story** as the villainous Mrs. Trunchbull. Other members of the ensemble include **Michelle E. Carter**, **Jay Frisby**, **Andre Hinds**, **Ashleigh King**, **Quynh-My Luu**, **Calvin Malone**, **Connor James Reilly** and **Camryn Shegogue**. **Tiziano D’Affuso** serves as a swing.

Two ensembles of children join the “grown-ups”: **Elizabeth Coffey** and **Nina Brothers** as Amanda and understudies for Matilda, **Sawyer Makl** and **Sebastian Gervase** as Eric, **Kai Mansell** and **Hudson Prymak** as Nigel, **Ella Coulson** and **Eliza Prymak** as Hortensia, **Ainsley Deegan** and **Camiel Warren-Taylor** as Lavender, **Patrick Ford** and **Jack St. Pierre** as Bruce.

Christopher Youstra, fresh off his star turn in *Once*, returns to the pit to Music Direct and conduct the 8-piece orchestra. **Byron Easley**, currently Head of Dance at NYU’s Tisch School pairs as choreographer. **Milagros Ponce De León** and **Clint Allen**, design sets and projections, respectively, for the production following their acclaimed work for Mr. Flynn’s *Into the Woods*. **Pei Lee** returns to Olney Theatre for the first time since *My Fair Lady* to design costumes as do Olney veterans **Nancy Schertler** to design lights and **Roc Lee** to design sound. **Ali Pohanka**, whose work most recently appeared in the currently running *Mary Stuart* is the production’s wig designer. **John Keith Hall** is the Stage Manager, assisted by **Rebecca Silva**.

Roald Dahl’s Matilda the Musical

Book by Dennis Kelly

Music and Lyrics by Tim Minchin

Based on the book *Matilda* by Roald Dahl

Music Direction by Christopher Youstra

Choreographed by Byron Easley

Directed by Peter Flynn

June 21 - July 21, 2019

Press Opening: Thursday, June 27, 2019 at 8:00 pm

Regular performances are Wednesday-Saturday at 8:00 pm; matinees on Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 pm; and Wednesday matinees at 2:00 pm on June 26, July 10, and 17. No Saturday matinee on June 22.

Special Sensory Friendly performance for those on the Autism spectrum and their families, will be on Tuesday, July 9 at 11:00 am. Tickets for this performance may only be purchased directly from the Box Office, either in-person or on the phone.

There will be an Audio-described performance for the blind and visually impaired on Wednesday, July 10 at 8:00 pm and a sign-interpreted performance on Thursday, July 18 at 8:00 pm. Audience members who wish to use these services should contact Julie Via, Patron Services Manager (jvia@olneytheatre.org) to confirm.

Tickets begin at \$42. Discounts available for groups, seniors, military, and students.

Special Events:

● **Behind-the-Scenes: Making *Matilda***

Sunday, June 23; 11:30am-12:30pm

\$10/Free for Olney Theatre Center Members

Join director Peter Flynn and members of his team to discuss how they brought the magical world of *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical* to life. We'll talk about the inspirations behind the designs, the stagecraft of *Matilda's* powers, and how to cast the right actors to populate a Dahlian world.

● **Meet the *Matilda* Cast at the Olney Library**

3500 Olney Laytonsville Rd, Olney, MD 20832

Saturday, July 13 at 11:00am

Free

No reservations required

Join us at the Olney Library for a special storytime and performance with members of the cast of *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*. Bring your own copy of *Matilda* and follow along as we read an excerpt from the novel. Then sit back and enjoy a special performance straight from our stage.

- *Afterwords* discussions with the cast and crew take place following most Saturday matinee performances.

ABOUT OLNEY THEATRE CENTER

Mission

Olney Theatre Center for the Arts produces, presents and tours extraordinary performances for a diversity of audiences, and educates and inspires the next generation of theater-makers.

Vision

We strive every day to unleash the creative potential of our artists and audiences, and in so doing, become a nationally-prominent destination for the most impactful theater performance and education.

History

Once a summer stock retreat in rural Maryland, Olney Theatre Center is now an award-winning, year-round regional theatre surrounded in a 15-mile radius by 1.6 million people representing three of the most ethnically diverse counties in America. Since our founding in 1938, some of the biggest names in theatre have appeared on our stages: from "Golden Era" stars like Helen Hayes and Tallulah Bankhead to contemporary artists like Sir Ian McKellen, Robin De Jesús, and many others. OTC welcomed Artistic Director Jason Loewith and Managing Director Debbie Ellinghaus in 2013 and 2014, respectively, who established a new artistic strategy to broaden programming with the goal of nurturing a diversity of voices and audiences. Olney Theatre Center now produces musicals and plays under the three rubrics of Classic, Contemporary and Family programming. Since 2013 Olney Theatre Center has twice won the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Musical Production, the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play and presented six world premieres. Complementing this work, OTC fulfills its mission as a teaching theater with educational programs like the Our Play program in local 5th grade classrooms, a summer camp and a year-round professional apprentice program. National Players, now in its 70th Season, is the hallmark outreach program of OTC, a unique ensemble touring innovative theater to communities large and small across the United States.

For more information, please visit olneytheatre.org.

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