

## For Immediate Release

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### ***Elf* cast spreads Christmas cheer by singing loud for all to hear**

#### ***Rose Theater announces cast, adds performances for Elf the Musical***

(OMAHA, Nebr.) Bringing Christmas cheer to Omaha via The Rose Theater, ***Elf the Musical***, a musical based on the cherished holiday film, features a heartwarming story and delightful dancing to bring light to the holiday season. The show will run at The Rose, Nov. 30 through Dec. 23, 2018. Due to popular demand, the theater has added three more performances to the previously announced schedule.

Buddy the Elf constantly finds himself at odds with his colleagues at the North Pole -- and his significant height difference doesn't help matters. When Santa admits that he and the elves found Buddy after he mistakenly crawled into his bag of gifts and that Buddy is actually a human being, Buddy decides to head off to New York City in search of his father, Walter Hobbs. Faced with the harsh reality that Walter is on the naughty list and his son, Michael, doesn't even believe in Santa, Buddy is determined to win over his birth family and help New York City remember the true meaning of Christmas.

Dan Chevalier plays Buddy. A Rose favorite, Chevalier has been seen in *Wonderland: Alice's Rock & Roll Adventure*, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, and *Honk! the Musical*, among several other Rose productions. Zach Kloppenborg adds Santa to his Rose Theater credits, which also include *Judy Moody & Stink* and *Honk! the Musical*. Anthony Clark-Kaczmarek returns to The Rose stage as Buddy's father, Walter Hobbs, after directing The Rose's 2017 holiday musical, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. His wife, Emily Hobbs, will be played by Rose newcomer Melissa King. Rose student Josiah Hydeon plays Buddy's step-brother Michael Hobbs. Hydeon was last seen in The Rose's production of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*.

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## ***Elf the Musical* - Cast Announcement**

**The Rose Theater**

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In New York, Buddy encounters a wide range of individuals where his unusually upbeat, childlike cheer has a powerful effect on everyone he meets -- with sometimes disastrous results! When he meets Jovie at a department store Santa display, Buddy is truly smitten. Jovie is played by Regina Palmer, an alumna of The Rose's educational program. Palmer previously performed as Pinocchio in The Rose's production of *Shrek the Musical*.

The cast of ***Elf the Musical*** features adult and student actors as characters at both the North Pole and New York City. Fourteen students are a part of the cast, ranging in age from 11 to 17 years old. In addition to their roles as elves and various citizens of NYC, at one point during the show, multiple Santas will fill the stage in a musical number. Another highlight of the show will be a depiction of Rockefeller Center, with the ensemble skating live on stage.

***Elf*** is based on the motion picture by the same name, which burst onto the holiday scene in 2003. The fantasy comedy film (directed by Jon Favreau, written by David Berenbaum and produced by New Line Cinema) follows the story of one of Santa's elves who learns he is actually a human and goes to New York City to meet his biological father, spreading Christmas cheer in a world of cynics as he goes. The movie featured an all-star cast including Will Ferrell, James Caan, Zooey Deschanel, Mary Steenburgen, Daniel Tay, Ed Asner, and Bob Newhart. In 2010, the movie was adapted for Broadway, with a score by Matthew Sklar and Chad Beguelin, and book by Bob Martin and Thomas Meehan. The musical ran on Broadway in the Christmas seasons of 2010-11 and 2012-13, and also toured the U.S. in 2012 and 2014. The Rose production marks the first time the show has been produced in the Omaha area.

***Elf the Musical*** is directed by Rose Artistic Director Matthew Gutschick. His original play, *Van Gogh & Me*, was featured during the previous Rose season. His Rose directing credits include *The Meaning of Maggie*, *Babe the Sheep Pig*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Peter & The Starcatcher*, *A Christmas Story*, *Mary Poppins*, *Robin Hood* and *Ramona Quimby*. His plays have been workshopped/produced by Wordsmyth Theatre Company, Horse Trade Theater Group (NYC), Reverie Productions (NYC), Tri Sate Actors' Theatre, and Magic Chicago. His work for MagicMouth Theatre won a New Horizons Playwriting Award and the company premiered a new magic-theatre piece, *A Christmas Carol In Prose* with Parallel 45 in Traverse City, MI. He is the former artistic director of the Children's Theatre of Winston-Salem and completed a fellowship with the Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis. Gutschick is a former Managing Director of the Yale Cabaret where he produced over 14 world premieres. He is also the recipient of a Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation Fellowship in Entrepreneurship, a member of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab, and a graduate of the School at Steppenwolf. He holds a BA in Theater from Wake Forest University and received an MFA in Theater Management from the Yale School of Drama. Gutschick is in his sixth season as artistic director of The Rose.

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The complete cast of The Rose's production of **Elf** consists of:

Buddy.....	Dan Chevalier
Jovie.....	Regina Palmer
Walter Hobbs.....	Anthony Clark-Kaczmarek
Emily Hobbs.....	Melissa King
Michael Hobbs.....	Josiah Hydeen
Santa Claus.....	Zach Kloppenborg
Greenway/Store Elf.....	Sarah Gibson**
Deb.....	Mary Carrick
Manager.....	Shannon Duke
Sam/Mrs. Claus.....	Sue Gillespie Booton**
Sara/Store Elf/Waitress.....	Kendra Ball
Chadwick/Store Elf.....	Lauren Krupski
Matthews/Store Elf/Fake Santa.....	Christopher Violett
Jim/Store Elf/Fake Santa.....	Fran X. Adrianto**
Businessman/Ensemble/Store Elf/Fake Santa.....	Garrett Griffin**
Charlotte/Elf/Intern/Store Elf.....	Francesca Kerkhofs*
Office Intern/Elf/Store Elf.....	Audrey Persaud*
Office Intern/Elf/Store Elf/Fake Santa.....	Raymond Butler
Police/Fake Santa.....	Noah Fowler
Elf/Police/Fake Santa.....	Matt Kielian
Store Elf/Fake Santa.....	Nate Kielian
Elf 1/NY Sports Fan Kid/Christmas Kid.....	Colin McMahon*
Charlie/Christmas Kid.....	Carson Bishop*
Shawanda/Elf/Christmas Kid.....	Martina Perversi*
Elf 2/Store Elf.....	Camryn Jordan*
Elf 3/Store Elf.....	Emma Wambsgans*
Featured Rockefeller Ice Skater/Customer.....	Rachel M. Radloff*
Featured Rockefeller Ice Skater/Elf/Christmas Kid.....	Sky Radloff*

*\*denotes Rose students*

*\*\* denotes Rose instructors*

**Elf the Musical** is recommended for all ages. The show runs Nov. 30 through Dec. 23, 2018, with performances on Fridays at 7 pm, and Saturdays at 2 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm. Due to popular demand, additional performances will be available at 7 pm on Saturday, Dec. 8, 15 and 22.

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The show is approximately two hours long with an intermission. On Saturday, Dec. 15, the performance will be interpreted for audience members who are deaf or hard of hearing. This performance will also feature audio description for audience members who are blind or have low vision. Call (402) 502-4637 for information on audio description services.

Tickets for ***Elf the Musical*** are \$27 Main Floor and \$22 Balcony. Discount ticket vouchers are available at all area Hy-Vee stores. Members of The Rose receive discounted tickets to the production.

***Elf the Musical*** is sponsored by Children's Hospital & Medical Center, Nebraska Furniture Mart, Hy-Vee, Omaha Steaks, the Nebraska Arts Council and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Special opening night activities are sponsored by Kiewit Companies.

For additional information, or to purchase tickets, visit [www.rosetheater.org](http://www.rosetheater.org) or call The Rose Box Office at (402) 345-4849.

### **About The Rose**

The Rose Theater is one of the largest and most accomplished children's theaters in the nation, with a reputation for enriching the lives of children and families through top-quality professional productions and arts education.

In 2016, American Theatre magazine named The Rose one of the 20 top children's theaters in the United States.

The Rose is committed to making the arts accessible to all children, providing opportunities for thousands of children throughout the community to attend shows and participate in classes each year. Over the course of a year, approximately 70,000 people attend the public performances held at the theater, and nearly 30,000 students attend field trip shows annually.

The theater strives to introduce young people to a mix of both traditional favorites and ground-breaking original productions. A number of plays and musicals have made their world premiere on The Rose stage, including *Van Gogh & Me*, *The Meaning of Maggie*, *Pete the Cat: The Musical*, *Sherlock Holmes & the First Baker Street Irregular*, *Zen Ties*, *Leo Lionni's Frederick*, *A Palette of Possibility*, *Thumbelina*, *Buffalo Bill's Cowboy Band*, and *The Grocer's Goblin & The Little Mermaid*.

We take pride knowing that The Rose is the place where children of all ages experience theater for the first time, and we are dedicated to helping them appreciate theater for a lifetime.

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