

## For Immediate Release

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***A Bucket of Blessings*** is magical journey of imagination at The Rose  
*Play for very young audiences designed to introduce children to the theater*

(OMAHA, Nebr.) Playful animals, a sweet story and dynamic dancing combine to introduce very young children to theater in The Rose's First Stage production, ***A Bucket of Blessings***, playing Oct. 12 - Nov. 3 on the Hitchcock Stage.

***A Bucket of Blessings*** is based on the book of the same name by Surishtha and Kabir Sehgal and adapted for the stage by Madhuri Shekar. It tells the story of a traditional Indian myth about a young Monkey determined to bring water back to the village. The 30-minute participatory production is filled with visual delights (but without any abrupt sounds or full blackouts) that is especially suited for children over age two. The show combines a fun and playful story with traditional Indian dance to convey its message of friendship and perseverance.

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***A Bucket of Blessings at***

**The Rose Theater**

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“What is so wonderful about Theater for the Very Young productions, especially here at The Rose Theater, is that we try to make them appeal to all five senses: you are seeing the glowing water, you feel the water and mist through the area, how cold the ground is, all these wonderful things,” says director Hayley Greenstreet. Audience members will even get involved in the action by finding felt peacock feathers strewn about the space and bringing them to the characters at specific parts of the play.

Adding to the sense of play is the fantastic set designed by Lauren Crabtree, which Greenstreet describes as essentially a jungle gym, complete with a slide, tunnels and more. The apparatus sits beneath a gigantic fabric tree that hangs from the ceiling to create the setting of an Indian jungle.

In ***A Bucket of Blessings***, Monkey has noticed that the rain hasn’t fallen in the rainforest for many weeks. She remembers a legend about a dancing peacock that can bring the rains. Together with her friend Baby Elephant, Monkey tries a rain dance of her own making, but nothing happens. She decides she must go on a quest to find the magical Peacock and return water to the jungle.

When Monkey and Baby Elephant finally find Peacock high on the mountain, Peacock explains that her magic can only work if Monkey can bring her a bucket full of water. Monkey and Elephant go on the hunt for water, finally finding a small mount in a cave.

“When Monkey and Elephant find the water, it has this magical element to it. All of a sudden, there is this glowing, supernatural aspect to water that we haven’t really noticed before because water is so easily and readily available to us, but to them, it is not,” says Greenstreet.

As the friends journey back to Peacock, unknown to either of the creatures, the water spills out through a hole in the bottom of the pail. When the pair presents the bucket to Peacock, they are dismayed to see that the pail is nearly empty, but Peacock graciously accepts the gift of the flowers that have bloomed along their path and summons the rain.

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The dances incorporated into ***A Bucket of Blessings*** include traditional Indian choreography. “Because of the story’s ties to Indian traditions, we wanted to be sure that we were appreciative of that culture. We have a cultural consultant who attends Creighton University named Nethra Viswaroopan who has guided us throughout the rehearsal process. The script has quite a bit of Hindi language, and she taught us how to properly pronounce everything and make sure we were honoring the Indian culture,” explains Greenstreet. “We also have been working with a woman named Mallika Jayanti, who is our traditional Indian choreographer, and all of the dances you see, she choreographed. The choreography has a lot of actual cultural significance, and incorporate certain gestures and movements that correspond to the animals we are portraying.”

While ***A Bucket of Blessings*** presents young people with a charming legend from another culture, Greenstreet feels it also brings forward an important global issue. “Yes, the show is full of play, and hide-and-seek and jump rope, but it is also straddling this line of a very serious issue. Not only can they not find water, but it is affecting the entire community and environment around them,” she says. The book’s authors had partnered with Charity Water, a non-profit organization whose mission is to bring clean, safe drinking water to people in developing countries. A donation box will be available in The Rose lobby for anyone who wishes to contribute to Charity Water.

With its playful characters and interactive elements, ***A Bucket of Blessings*** is ideal for young children and for children on the autism spectrum. The show has been designed specifically for first-time theater-goers with simple scenes and an abundance of physical action.

***A Bucket of Blessings*** is recommended for families of children ages two and up. The show is approximately 30 minutes long without an intermission. It is presented on The Rose’s Hitchcock Stage, the black box-style theater on the theater’s fourth floor.

The show runs Oct. 12 through Nov. 3, 2019, with performances on Saturdays and Sundays at 9:30 and 11:00 am. Contact The Rose Box Office at (402) 345-4849 for more information.

Author Surishtha Sehgal will be available for a meet-and-greet session and autographs at the performances on Saturday, Oct. 12.

Tickets for ***A Bucket of Blessings*** are \$12. Members of The Rose receive discounted tickets to the production. ***A Bucket of Blessings*** is a part of the First Stage+ package; package-holders receive four free tickets to the show.

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