

For Immediate Release

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CONTACT: Kori Radloff, korir@rosetheater.org, 402-502-4641

**MISUNDERSTOOD**
*HEROES & VILLAINS****Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains***
is musical exploration of good vs. evil

(OMAHA, Nebr.) The Rose Theater honors celebrates the heroes in our community with a special bonus concert, ***Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains***, running June 4-20. The new addition to The Rose's season features a lineup of diabolically delightful songs in a musical journey of good and evil.

Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains will feature an onstage musical experience themed around favorite heroes and villains. Rose members from both the 2020-21 and 2021-22 season receive free tickets to the event. While the production does not feature a traditional story with a plot, audience will be treated to favorite songs from Broadway, Disney, Pixar, classic rock, Top 40, pop and more, performed with a live band on stage. The Rose's state-of-the-art lighting system is on full display in a spectacular exhibition of visual delights.

"It has all of these elements of a pop concert, Ariana Grande, a Taylor Swift or Beyonce, big stadium concert, but in the space of The Rose Theater," says director Katherine M. Carter.

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The Rose Theater
2001 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68102

t (402) 345-4849
f (402) 344-7255
www.rosetheater.org



Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains

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Audiences to ***Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains*** are invited to dress as their favorite hero or villain as they enjoy renditions of popular songs from Taylor Swift, David Bowie, Katy Perry, Billie Eilish, Justin Timberlake and more, performed by some of Omaha's top talent: Lauren Krupski, Trey Mendlik, Marcel Daly, Roni Shelley Perez and Audrey Saucier.

"We knew we wanted to have pop. We knew we wanted to have musical theater, and we knew we wanted to have Disney, so sort of taking that trifecta," explains Carter. "And the staff at the Rose was incredible, because they came to me with this long list of songs and said, 'If you could have a concert, with anything, what would it be?' So we started with this list of around 150 songs. It took about two months to pare things down and get the different right songs, making sure that we had the right songs and the right cast."

The end result is ***Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains***, an original concert featuring mashups of hits from Disney, Dreamworks, Broadway and more, as well as a tongue-in-cheek tribute to the global pandemic.

"We're taking a bunch of different songs and mashing them up into one longer number," Carter explains. "There's some hit favorites and Disney songs, the songs that people my age will love, Disney songs, you know, songs that my nieces and nephew love. So there's something for everyone across the gamut. And we have a couple brand new musical theater pieces that haven't been heard yet. So it's this really cool, quirky mix."

Unique costumes transform cast members from hero to villain and back again, including a full-length coat made entirely from zip ties. Audience members will enjoy such visual treats as glow-in-the-dark numbers performed in black light and their own glow sticks to wave as they dance in their (socially-distanced) seats.

"We had a lot of fun finding songs that spoke to us," says Carter.

Carter is a New York based director of theatre and opera, and the co-founding Artistic Director of the MITTEN Lab. She has previously worked at Interlochen Arts Academy, Mad Cow Theatre, On Site Opera, Carnegie Mellon University, Santa Fe Opera, Parallel 45 Theatre, Canadian Opera Company, Houston Grand Opera. New School for Drama, Joe's Pub, Westport Country Playhouse, Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theatre, NYMF, 3LD, NYU, and Wolf Trap. Fellowships: New Georges, The Drama League, and Playwrights Horizons. 2019 Honored Finalist for Women in the Arts & Media Coalition with playwright Jacqueline Goldfinger. She will direct The Rose Theater's production of *Disney's Descendants*, opening in September 2021.

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As a token of appreciation, The Rose is giving a free ticket to ***Misunderstood*** to hometown heroes -- educators, school employees, medical professionals and first responders. See The Rose website for details.

The 60-minute production of ***Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains*** will be presented June 4 - 20, 2021 with performances Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 2 and 5 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm. The show is appropriate for children of all ages.

“The feeling of the show is going to be celebratory joy,” says Carter.

Recognizing that children under age 12 are not eligible to receive the COVID vaccine, audience members are required to wear masks while inside the theater. Other safety protocols in place at The Rose include:

- One-way traffic flows, with ticketholders entering on 20th Street and exiting on Farnam. Inside Families will be directed to specific, socially-distant seating areas within the theater
- Fewer tickets are available for each performance, allowing for fewer people inside the building overall.
- The theater will utilize touchless ticketing, checking ticketholders’ names off a list, rather than taking tickets.
- Programs will be available digitally through The Rose website.
- No concessions or boutique items will be sold.
- Booster seats will not be available to borrow, but families are welcome to bring their own.
- The theater has engaged in enhanced cleaning procedures.

Onstage performers have been given the option to be masked or unmasked while onstage, (but wear masks when not on stage.) For several of them, ***Misunderstood*** marks their first time on stage since the beginning of the pandemic. “We’re ready to be on stage again. No way. Yes, I’m probably gonna cry The first time I walk up on the stage. I haven’t been on stage in so long,” says cast member Trey Mendlik.

For additional information on The Rose’s safety protocols, please visit <https://www.rosetheater.org/about/the-rose-experience/the-rose-theater-a-safe-space/>.

Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains is recommended for families with children of all ages and is 60 minutes long without an intermission.

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Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains runs June 4-20, 2021, with performances on Fridays at 7 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 5 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. American Sign Language interpretation for audience members who are deaf or hard of hearing will be offered at the 2 p.m. show on Saturday, June 12. Please contact The Rose Box Office for information.

Tickets for ***Misunderstood: Heroes & Villains*** are available for \$20 by calling The Rose Box Office at (402) 345-4849 or online at www.rosetheater.org. Discount tickets are available at area Hy-Vee stores. 2020-21 and 2021-22 Rose members receive free tickets to the production.

Rose season sponsors are Children's Hospital & Medical Center, Nebraska Furniture Mart, the Nebraska Arts Council, and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Opening night is sponsored by Kiewit Companies.

About The Rose

For more than 70 years, The Rose Theater has been providing Omaha-area families with the best in live theater and arts education. The Omaha Theater Company was one of the first in Omaha to offer classes in the theater arts, and today The Rose stands as a leading program and training ground for young artists interested in pursuing a career in theater.

Students enrolled in classes at The Rose learn from some of the best educators in the region. Rose teachers include professional actors, accomplished dancers, award-winning playwrights, highly-decorated directors, renowned choreographers and more. Rose classes encourage creativity and imagination while enriching the understanding and enjoyment of theater. Many classes offer performance opportunities, and all classes promote ensemble work and skill development. Dance, acting and voice classes emphasize technique and professionalism, giving students the tools they need to succeed in the classroom, their schools, in the community, and on stages around the world.

Onstage, The Rose 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. 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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