



Presents

Crockett Johnson's



A Family Favorite!

Adapted by Jennifer Blatchley Smith, Landis Smith and Leslie Reidel

Music by
Charles Gilbert

Director/Choreographer
Leslie Reidel

Animation Designer
Robbie Molinari

Lighting Designer
David O'Connor

Scenic Designer
Dirk Durossette

Animation Consultants
Nicholas Hussong, James Lanius

Puppet Design
Dirk Durossette, David Russell,
Brian Strachan

Costume Designer
Brian Strachan

Technical Director
Ray Sabb

Associate Director
Terry Brennen

Mask Designer
Jonathan K. Becker

Dance Sequences choreographed by Heather Fox

THE ENSEMBLE

Daniel Burgess: Puppeteer
Áse R-W: Puppeteer
Chelsea Aubert: Puppeteer, Little Girl
Rebecca Jay Caplan: Harold
Joshua Spaugh: Puppeteer
Charles Gilbert: Narrator

This adaptation and performance based on the book series, Harold and the Purple Crayon, is presented with the permission of the Estate of Ruth Krauss.

This production has been made possible in part by funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Daniel Burgess (Ensemble: *he/him*) is entering his second tour with Enchantment Theatre Company and is more than excited to share another beautiful story full of costumes, props, and especially ... magic! Daniel is happily enchanted by *The Adventures of Harold and The Purple Crayon* and hopes to shed some light on the wonders of theatrical creation. He will be playing many of the funky characters that Harold creates to guide them through the story. Daniel's only request is that "You better be sharp on your ABC's! If not, you've come to the right place."

Áse R-W (Ensemble: *they/them*) from Atlanta, Georgia holds onto their experience in theatre, social dance and church gatherings as inspiration for work they produce. This shows up by intentionally only involving themselves in environments that encourage inclusive, creative, community building. Áse has grown interest in dance/theatre as liberation, expression, and healing. They love exploring the beauty in the unknown through their personal artistry. Their "Happy Place" is on stage, and they feel blessed to have opportunities to perform.

Chelsea Aubert (Little Girl: *she/her*) is a Vocalist, Actor, and Teacher from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is pleased to be performing again with Enchantment Theatre Company after their last national tour, *Peter Rabbit Tales*, where she played Benjamin Bunny. Chelsea has performed in regional theatre plays, musicals, operettas and actively sings at restaurants and in the recording studio. Her vocals can be found in collaboration on multiple albums. Chelsea teaches voice, music, and theatre to little ones as young as two years old all the way to adults. Through her creative ventures, Chelsea strives to create a nurturing environment and a lifelong curiosity for self-expression through the performing arts.

Rebecca Jay Caplan (Harold: *she/they*) is a Philadelphia based actor, and movement artist who specializes in dance, acrobatics, aerial work, and stunts. Her recent work includes the role of Harold in *The Governess*, an immersive horror ballet with Santa Mira Studios. The role of Pan in *Genie's Secret Bazaar* with Fever Originals, and the role of Lyle in *Lyle The Crocodile* at the LICM Theater. Rebecca is beyond thrilled to be in her first production with Enchantment Theatre Company. And so honored to get to share this story of *Harold and The Purple Crayon* that had such a strong presence and meaning in her own childhood

Joshua Spagh (Ensemble: *he/him*) was born in Atlanta GA, where he learned from a young age to throw things up in the air with style. Otherwise known as juggling! Years later he sought out higher education in the form of Circadium School of Contemporary Circus Arts. Graduating from the three-year program in 2022, he now aims to create surreal and downright strange circus/theater shows with his juggling/partner acrobatics partner Erin. This is Josh's first show with Enchantment Theatre Company, and he is so excited to be piloting many of the major puppets in the show!

Ray Sabb (Technical Director: *he/him*) grew up in his home state of Connecticut where he attended high school before graduating and eventually moving to Philadelphia to pursue a career in the arts. Ray was the Designer for the *Wings of Paper* stage production of *Cock and Fixed/Atrytone* for the Philadelphia Fringe Festival. In his free time Ray is a digital artist who specializes in using programs such as Blender3D and Photoshop to produce Paleo-art

(artist depictions of prehistoric scenes and animals). Ray is excited to now be going on tour with Enchantment Theatre Company's production of *The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon* as their Technical Director.

Jonathan Becker (Mask Designer) began sculpting masks twenty years ago while living and studying in Paris. His masks have been seen in Enchantment Theatre Company's productions of *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *Scheherazade*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Cinderella*, *The Snow Queen*, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, *The Firebird*, and *Pinocchio*, as well as productions throughout the United States. As a performer, Jonathan has toured Europe, Asia and the United States with Enchantment Theatre Company.

Dirk Durosette (Set Designer) has been designing in Philadelphia for the past ten years. He has designed scenery for Temple Opera, Villanova University, University of the Arts, Drexel University, Act II Playhouse, Azuka Theater, Gas and Electric Arts, Amaryllis Theater Co., Luna Theater, New City Stage Company, Interact Theater Co., Lantern Theater Co., and Philadelphia Young Playwrights, to name a few.

John Benson, Bill Gastrock, and Chris Garvin (System Design, Show Controls & Animation Production Management) *Harold* is egwrk's first collaboration with Enchantment Theater and we were excited for the opportunity to design a custom system for coordinating video projection with the set design, score and actors. egwrk is a partnership of John Benson, Chris Garvin and Bill Gastrock. They have created award-winning work: websites, embedded interfaces, content management systems, video projections, and motion graphics for a variety of clients. We have created works for the Annenberg Center, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, World Cafe Live, The University of the Arts, The Wilma Theater, Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra, Syracuse University, New Paradise Laboratories, PA Ballet, Infiniti, and W Hotels around the country. www.egwrk.com.

Charles Gilbert (Composer) is Director of the Ira Brind School of Theater Arts at The University of the Arts. He created musical arrangements and additional music for Enchantment Theater Company's production of *The Velveteen Rabbit* in 2007. *Gemini the Musical*, for which he wrote music and lyrics, premiered at the Prince Music Theater in 2003 and received a Barrymore nomination for Outstanding Original Music; it was subsequently produced in the 2007 New York Musical Theater Festival. Other works for the musical stage include *Assassins* (source of the idea for the Tony-Award winning Stephen Sondheim musical of the same name), *A Tiny Miracle*, *Watch the Birdie* (Philly Music Theater Works, 2008) and *Realities*. Charlie was Musical Theater Coordinator for Kevin Smith's film *Jersey Girl* and has directed and/or music directed productions at the Prince, the Arden, People's Light, PART, Opera Delaware and the National Music Theater Network. www.chasgilbert.com

Robbie Molinari (Animation Director) is a recent graduate of the Media Arts Program at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Born on a small, exotic island off the coast of luxurious Atlantic City, he started to traverse the world but ended up lost in Philadelphia. After half a decade in the catacombs of University of the Arts, he decided to become a professional animator but settled as a moderate one with a great set of mutton chops. This upstanding citizen now takes odd jobs making pictures that move and helping old ladies mostly across crowded

intersections. He can now be found under troll-riddled bridges with a jetpack, flannel bindle and a cardboard sign that reads, “Will animate something funny for small and/or large change.”

David O’Connor (Lighting Designer) is a lighting designer, director and teacher based in Philadelphia. He is a two time Barrymore nominee, a CT Critics Circle Nominee and a semifinalist for the F. Otto Haas emerging artist award. He is husband to theatre manager Karyn Lyman, and father to baby Zachary. Thanks to Landis, Jennifer and Leslie for an opportunity to help bring these great stories to life. You can reach David at dmocl@mac.com.

Brian Strachan (Costume Designer) is the director of costume for the University of the Arts Dance Department in Philadelphia, PA. He is responsible for all aspects of costume within the department where he also teaches costume design. Brian has designed costumes for The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theater, Lantern Theater, Ego Po Theater Company, The Upper Darby Performing Arts Center, Montgomery Theater, The Idiopathic Ridiculopathy Consortium, New City Stage, Sharp Dance Company, City of Maples Repertory Theater, Ursinus College, Temple University, and Burlington County Community College as well as many other dance companies and theaters in the country. Brian holds a B.A. in Dance from Point Park College in Pittsburgh, PA and a B.A. in Art from the University of Maine in Orono, Maine. He also has a M.F.A. in costume design from Temple University, Philadelphia, PA.

Leslie Reidel (Co-Artistic Director, Director, Choreographer) has dedicated his professional life to the exploration of classical theatre and the development of theatre pieces for young audiences. He holds a bachelor’s degree from Muhlenberg College and a Masters of Fine Arts from Temple University. He served as a member of the MFA faculty at Temple University and was a founding member of the Professional Theatre Training Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the University of Delaware. His directorial credits include The Walnut Street Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Madison Civic Rep, the Utah, Colorado Fort Worth and Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festivals, and 12 years as the resident director of the Great American Children’s Theatre. His most recent creations with Enchantment Theatre Company are *Scheherazade*, which premiered with The Cleveland Orchestra in October 2008 and *The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon*, which premiered in Philadelphia in December of 2009 and is touring nationally 2009-2011. Leslie is Professor of Theatre at the University of Delaware where his recent projects have included Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*, Shaw’s *You Never Can Tell*, Ibsen’s *A Doll House* and Pinter’s *The Homecoming*. Last year, he received his fourth grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to take a group of teachers from all over America to Stratford, England to study Shakespeare in performance during the summer of 2009. He is a member of The International Shakespeare Conference.

Jennifer Blatchley Smith (Co-Artistic Director, Dramaturge) studied writing and theater at Bennington College. For the last twenty-five years, Jennifer has co-created and performed in eighteen original productions that have been presented around the United States and abroad. As a founding member of Enchantment Theatre Company, Jennifer has created roles as diverse as the Broom in *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice* to Beauty in *Beauty and the Beast*. She has performed in Enchantment productions at Lincoln Center and the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York and at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., as well as at the Annenberg Center, the

Kimmel Center, and the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. She has traveled to Asia six times with Enchantment productions. Her most recent roles have been as an ensemble player in Enchantment's symphony productions: *Scheherazade* and *The Firebird*. Her recent co-creations with Enchantment's artistic team have been *The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon*, touring nationally 2009-2011, and the symphonic production of *Scheherazade* which premiered with The Cleveland Orchestra October 2008.

Landis Smith (Co-Artistic Director, Producing Director) studied theater with Jewel Walker at Carnegie-Mellon University and with Jacobina Caro at Webster University Conservatory in St. Louis. He began performing magic at the age of six and studied violin and voice beginning at the age of nine. His love of theater, music and the art of illusion led to the founding of Enchantment Theatre Company in 1979. As a founder and performer with Enchantment, Landis has created, produced and performed in productions in America and in the Far East. In 1985, Landis and Enchantment collaborated with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra to premiere *The Symphony and the Sorcerer*, the first of a whole series of programs introducing young people to the magic of symphonic music. Since then, Landis has appeared with major orchestras nationwide, including the recent premiere of Enchantment's theatrical adaptation of Stravinsky's *The Firebird* with The Philadelphia Orchestra. Landis has appeared with the Boston Pops on their annual holiday PBS television special, which aired for five years nationally. Most recently, Landis has appeared on stage in Enchantment's newest symphony production, *Scheherazade*, and has collaborated in the creation of the Company's most recent national touring production of *The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon*. He has toured in the Far East six times with Enchantment, performing in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore.

Bradley K. Wrenn (Associate Director) is a Philadelphia-based theater maker who trained at Drew University and the British American Drama Academy. He has performed with many companies in Philadelphia including Mum Puppet Theatre, Mauckingbird Theatre Company and the Walnut Street Theatre. Brad has been working with Enchantment for more than four years and has performed and helped develop six symphony and fully staged shows.

About the Author: Crockett Johnson

Crockett Johnson was born, David Johnson Leisk, on October 20, 1906 in New York City. Johnson grew up in Elmhurst, Queens, studying art at Cooper Union in 1924, and at New York University in 1925. Affectionately nicknamed “Crockett” as a child, he arrived at his well-known pseudonym, Crockett Johnson.

In the early stages of his career, Johnson art-edited for several magazines, contributed to others, wrote political cartoons for the *New Masses* (1934-1940), and drew a weekly comic strip, “The Little Man with the Eyes,” for *Collier’s* (1940-1943). In 1942, Johnson’s beloved “Barnaby” first appeared in *PM* and was later syndicated in 52 newspapers across the country. America fell in love with the comic’s child-protagonist, Barnaby Baxter, and his bumbling Fairy Godfather, Mr. O’Malley. Johnson wrote “Barnaby” daily until 1946 when cartoonists Jack Morely and Ted Ferro took over, and on February 2, 1952, Johnson returned to pen the final episode.

Having garnered acclaim as a comic strip writer, Johnson transitioned easily into an author and illustrator of children’s books. Johnson wrote and illustrated over twenty books for children in his lifetime. He illustrated seven others, including *The Carrot Seed* (1945), written by his wife (whom he married in 1939) and well-known author of children’s literature, Ruth Krauss. His style of illustration is minimal, using simple lines and few colors to clearly tell the story without distraction. Johnson’s best-known works regale the adventures of Harold, a small boy, whose trusty purple crayon leads him on a series of fantastic adventures. Harold was introduced as the protagonist in *Harold and the Purple Crayon* (1955), a book so popular it inspired a series:

Harold and the Purple Crayon (1955)

Harold’s Circus (1959)

Harold’s Fairy Tale (1956)

A Picture for Harold’s Room (1960)

Harold’s Trip to the Sky (1957)

Harold’s ABC (1963)

Harold at the North Pole (1958)

In 1965, Johnson began exploring the aesthetic values of right triangles and Euclidian geometry yielding about one hundred large, vivid paintings of geometric shapes. His work was abstract, representing Johnson’s own mathematical ideas. He was recognized in 1974 by *British Mathematical Journal* and contributed original mathematical theorems to *Mathematical Gazette* in Art, Science and Industry (Bridgeport, Connecticut) in 1970; the IBM Gallery (Yorktown Heights, New York) in 1975; and the Smithsonian’s Museum of History and Technology (Washington, DC) in 1980.

Crockett Johnson died of lung cancer on July 11, 1975 at the age of 68. Ruth Krauss continued writing stories for children and poem-plays for adults until she died on July 10, 1993.

*Visit us at enchantmenttheatre.org for a full itinerary of the National Tour of *The Adventures of Harold and the Purple Crayon**