

Cirque du Soleil

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'Inside Broadway' to Present 'Creating the Magic' on Broadway May 29

By Reva Cooper

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"Inside Broadway," which recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, and has introduced over 750 thousand New York City children to musical theatre, will present Creating The Magic, its unique annual free public Broadway educational event, on Thursday May 29 at 10:30 AM. The event will demonstrate the process of creating a Broadway production, with the cast and company of the Tony Award-winning musical "Hairspray" at the Neil Simon Theatre, 250 West 52nd Street (between 7th-8th Avenue), New York, NY.

Open to school and senior groups, and to the public, Creating the Magic will feature performances by and interviews with cast members and a display of technical stage effects. Last season's Creating the Magic, at the Winter Garden Theatre, featured the casts of The Lion King, Mamma Mia and Wicked.

Michael Presser, the group's founder, executive director and moderator of the Creating the Magic series, said: "Everyone would like to go behind the scenes on Broadway. We give them an insider's look at how the magic of theatre is created and introduce some of the important people who create that magic. It's entertaining as well as educational, a perfect combination."

Founded and directed by Michael Presser, Inside Broadway currently has several major New York City-wide arts education programs in process, including:

1) The Magic Of Broadway, 18 four-month free senior arts programs in senior centers around New York, part of the new New York City-funded "Seniors Meet the Arts" initiative. Members of senior programs are working with professional theatre teaching artists to jointly create their own mini-musicals. The program is funded by the New York City Department For the Aging, the Department of Cultural Affairs and the New York City Council.

2) The 2008 schools tour of You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown, which Inside Broadway presented Off-Broadway five seasons ago at the Lucile Lortel Theatre. The tour is covering over 30 schools throughout the city.

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3) Build A Musical: Teaching artists are working with children in more than 70 schools in the city to help them create their own musicals and develop their creativity.

Inside Broadway, which created the first Broadway student theatre ticket program in New York, in 1982 for Cats, presents professional 50-minute versions of Broadway musicals, directed for children. Its Richard Rodgers' Broadway caused the New York Times to say "Rodgers continues to enchant and entertain, and he couldn't ask for better cheerleaders, in all senses of the word". Other productions of Inside Broadway have included the 50th anniversary production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella, Bye Bye Birdie, On the Town, The Pirates of Penzance, Kiss Me, Kate, Smokey Joe's Cafe, Sophisticated Ladies, Irving Berlin's Land That I Love and Free to Be You and Me. All shows provide student study guides and teacher lesson plans

Inside Broadway receives substantial and ongoing funding from several government agencies including the New York City Department of Education; New York State Office of Children and Family Services; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York City Department For the Aging; New York City Department of Youth and Community Development; New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and New York State Department of Education; New York City Council: Christine Quinn, Speaker, Domenic Recchia, Chair Cultural Affairs Committee and Council Members Joseph Addabbo, Jr., Tony Avella, Erik Martin Dilan, Lew Fidler, Dan Garodnick, Eric Gioia, Vincent Gentile, Sara Gonzalez, Vincent Ignizio, Melinda Katz, Darlene Mealy, Michael McMahon, Annabel Palma, Joel Rivera, Larry Seabrook, Helen Sears, James Vacca and Thomas White, Jr. New York State Assembly Members Peter Abbate, Michael Benedetto, Adriano Espaillat, Michael Gianaris, Richard Gottfried, Brian Kavanagh, Linda Rosenthal, Michele Titus, Mark Weprin and Ellen Young; New York State Senators Andrew Lanza, John Flanagan, George Onorato, Tom Duane and Martin Golden.

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