

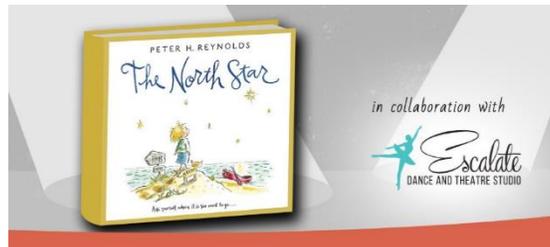
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Stages Theatre Company and Escalate Dance collaborate in World Premiere dance-inspired production of **THE NORTH STAR**

HOPKINS, Minn., January 5, 2022- Stages Theatre Company (STC) kicks off 2022 with [THE NORTH STAR](#) marking the ninth season collaborating with Escalate Dance. This gentle coming-of-age fable is filled with self-determination, creativity, and hope. Adapted from the book by Peter H. Reynolds, award-winning author of *The Dot* and *Ish*, [THE NORTH STAR](#) features a young person embarking on the journey of a lifetime. As the journey begins the directions are confusing, pulling our protagonist every which way, but with the help of some animal friends they meet along the way and the guiding hand of their North Star, they discover that the direction to take is all their own. Directed by STC Artistic Director Sandy Boren-Barrett and Escalate Dance Artistic Director Ann Marie Omeish.

“The North Star is a children’s book with a message for ALL of us. The music and dance, specifically crafted for young audiences, amplifies the beauty of the story, creating a world where everything is possible. Our collaboration with Escalate Dance allows us to tell stories in a unique way – through dance. For many of our audiences, it is the first time they have seen a story told in this way, and witnessing their reactions is beautiful.” said Boren-Barrett. *What we hope audiences take away from the production is that YOUR journey is simply that, all YOURS and is not like any other”*

Tickets begin at \$14 for this ALL-AGES dance-inspired production. Performances run January 14-February 13, 2022 and the STC safety protocols are being continued throughout the run.

The cast of [THE NORTH STAR](#) features: **Kenza Ahmed** (Mosquito), **Marie Chouinard** (Cat), **Anne Marie Cline** (Tree Dancer), **Maggie Cronan** (Tree Dancer & North Star Dancer), **Allie Foster** (Tree Dancer & North Star Dancer), **Abby Horter** (North Star Soloist & Tree Dancer), **Annaliese Leab** (Oak Leaf Dancer), **Jacob Marckel** (Rabbit), **Elinor Mulhern** (Sign Dancer), **Aida Patrick** (Mosquito), **Yasemin Pillay** (Bird), **Alice Pinney** (The Child), **Eva Poppe** (Sign Dancer), **Finley Ring** (Mosquito), **Kaley Ruotsinoja** (Oakleaf Dancer), **Cecilia Samadani** (Oakleaf Soloist), **Mira Samadani** (Oakleaf Dancer), **Paloma Samadani** (Mosquito), **Ella Schumacher** (Sign Dancer), **Adrienne Shurts** (Sign Dancer), **Elizabeth**

Shurts (Oakleaf Dancer), **Savannah Noelle Switzer** (Frog), **Cecelia Williams** (Mosquito), **Evie Wright** (Sign Dancer).

Savannah Noelle Switzer (Frog) is returning for her fifth production at STC. *"I am excited to convey the message the story brings,"* says Switzer. *"My character is content at where she is which is something most people struggle with, especially this year. Everyone's journey is always in motion, but sometimes you just have to appreciate where you are right now."* Previous STC credits include Down on the Farm, Twas the Night, On the Railroad, and Swimmy.

Tickets are \$16 for adults; \$14 for seniors (60+); \$14 for children/students (ages 2-17). Lap passes are available in lieu of a designated seat for \$5 (ages 3-4) and free (ages 0-2). Group pricing is available for groups of 10 or more to all productions. To purchase individual tickets, visit www.stagestheatre.org or call the Box Office at (952) 979-1111, option 4, Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 6:00 pm.

Accessible Performances: Sunday January 16: Pay What You Can (PWYC), Saturday January 29: ASL Interpreted and Audio Described (ASL/AD), Saturday February 5: Sensory Friendly (SF).

Creative team for THE NORTH STAR: **Sandy Boren-Barrett** (Artistic Director STC & Co-Director), **Ann Marie Omeish** (Artistic Director Escalate & Co-Director), **Katie Barron** (Choreographer), **Anna Esposito** (Choreographer), **Halle Audette** (Choreographer), **Sarah Hohenstein Burk** (Music Director), **Caroline van Vliet** (Stage Manager), **Tiffany Fier** (Set Designer), **Kim Ford** (Props Designer), **Gretchen Katt** (Sound Designer), **James Lekatz** (Composer & Sequencing), **Christa Ludwig** (Resident Costumer), **Grant E. Merges** (Lighting Designer), **Stacey Palmer** (Costume & Make Up Designer), **Melanie Salmon-Peterson** (Production Manager), **Trevor Zapiecki** (Technical Director).

Based on a book THE NORTH STAR by award-winning author of *The Dot* and *Ish*, Peter H. Reynolds. Originally published by Candlewick Press. Used with permission of Pippin Properties, Inc. Script and Lyrics by Jennifer Kirkeby. Music by James Lekatz. In collaboration with Escalate Dance.

Stages Theatre Company is committed to following the recommendations and requirements from the CDC and State of MN at the time of the events. **THE NORTH STAR**: is currently selling to a limited capacity and is requiring all audience members 18+ to provide proof of vaccination OR a lab certified negative test result (taken within 72 hours of the performance) AND a photo ID. At-home tests will not be accepted. Masks are required for all patrons 3+. Complete detail on STC's safety procedures and protocols: <https://www.stagestheatre.org/covid/>

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Stages Theatre Company was founded in 1984 and since then has grown to become one of the largest professional theatres for young audiences in the country. We engage young artists with themes relevant to their lives and involve them in creating magical works featuring young people in meaningful roles. Through on-stage productions, education

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