Spookley the Square Pumpkin

OCT 6 thru OCT 29, 2023

Stage play by Joe Troiano
Based on the film Spookley the Square Pumpkin by Joe Troiano and Tom Hughes and the book The Legend of Spookley the Square Pumpkin by Joe Troiano
Lyrics by Joe Troiano
Music composed and arranged by Jeffrey Zahn

Directed by
Cody R. Braudt

Addica Sharbono who plays Spookley
ABOUT STAGES THEATRE COMPANY

Since our founding in 1984 Stages Theatre Company has put the well-being and growth of youth in the center of everything we do—on stage, backstage, in the audience, and in the classroom. When a youth enters any of our spaces, they are the center of not only why we do what we do, but how we do it.

Through our Productions, our Education Programming, our Fundraising Initiatives, the Development of New Work for the TYA Stage, and our Mentorship Programs we strive to center youth in the stories we tell, the plays we create, the curriculum we develop, the activities we initiate, and the decisions we make. As a company and a community of artists and teachers, the youth and families we serve drive what we do first, last, and always.
MEET THE CAST

CECILIA ANDERSON
Little Tom’s Leaf & Farmhand & u/s Hay & Hue

EMMYLOU BAHAM
Crew & u/s Farmhand

LYLA BOUCHARD
Poe

ABIGAIL CHAGOLLA
Bobo

ANNA DASARI
Edgar

CORR FREEMAN
Hue & Farmhand & u/s Spookley, Mimi, Lala

DAVID GAMACHE
Big Tom & Little Tom

KIRA LEE
Allen

VIVIAN NIELSEN
Mimi & u/s Jack Scarecrow and Bobo

MATT OUREN
Jack Scarecrow

ELLA SCHUMACHER
Hay & Farmhand & u/s Edgar & Allen

ADICA SHARBONO
Spookley

LOUISA TUTTLE-MAGEE
Lala & u/s Spookley

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THE CREATIVE TEAM + CREW

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Sandy Boren-Barrett
DIRECTOR - Cody R. Braudt
MUSIC DIRECTOR - JC Lippold
SET DESIGNER - Sarah Brandner
COSTUMES & MAKE-UP DESIGNER - Christa Ludwig
LIGHTING DESIGNER - Karin Olson
ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER - Shannon Elliot
PROPS DESIGNER - Marc Berg
SOUND DESIGNER - Gretchen Katt
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR - Trevor Zapiecki
RESIDENT COSTUME DESIGNER - Christa Ludwig
PRODUCTION MANAGER - Melanie Salmon-Peterson
PUPPET MAINTENANCE - David Gamache
STAGE MANAGER - Anna Pladson
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER - Kendra Gilsdorf
SOUND BOARD OPERATOR - Sayer Keeley
LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR - Rhys Nelson & Emmylou Baham
SCENIC ARTIST - Cinde Ashley
SCENIC PAINTER - Yvonne Ring
Our story begins just before Halloween in the Holiday Hill Farm Pumpkin Patch with Jack Scarecrow and Big Tom, Little Tom, and Bobo all pumpkins, and the Honeydoos, a duo of singing melons. Everyone is excited for the upcoming holiday. Soon they hear a small voice, and Jack discovers Spookley, a square pumpkin, under a large leaf. He is excited to find Spookley and tells him he could be the Pick of the Patch this year. The other pumpkins, however, don’t like the fact that Spookley looks different from them. As Jack leaves to finish some chores on the farm, he tells the other pumpkins to be nice to Spookley. Once Jack leaves, however, Little Tom insults Spookley and tells him that he is going to ruin Halloween because he is not a real pumpkin as real pumpkins are round.

Spookley is left alone, and becomes very sad and worries that he will ruin Halloween for everyone. Suddenly, three spiders appear and introduce themselves as Edgar, Allan and Poe. They tell Spookley that he can’t worry about what the other pumpkins say and encourage him to believe in himself. Spookley still isn’t convinced and only remembers Little Tom telling him he’s different. Edgar reminds Spookley that everyone and everything is different. Being different isn’t a bad thing. Edgar tells Spookley he can be the Pick of the Patch if he sets his mind to it.

Meanwhile, the other pumpkins are getting ready for Halloween and all think they will be chosen as Pick of the Patch. Jack returns and lines everyone up for the Pick of the Patch. He says something nice about everyone. But, suddenly, a storm starts up! Everyone is blown around by the wind and rain toward the dangerous river, except for Spookley. He decides to help the other pumpkins and blocks a large hole in the fence with his body. The pumpkins and Jack are blown toward him and all pile up in front of the broken fence until Spookley cannot be seen anymore. After the storm passes, Spookley doesn't wake up and everyone is worried, even the pumpkins that made fun of him. Luckily though, he opens his eyes and smiles, letting everyone know he's okay. Jack tells Spookley that he is quite the hero. All the other pumpkins apologize to Spookley for bullying him because of his differences; even Little Tom. Farmer Hill arrives to choose the Pick of the Patch and picks...Spookley! He loves the fact that Spookley is square. Finally, everyone celebrates Halloween together in the patch.

Addica Sharbono who plays Spookley
The Play & Its History

The book, The Legend of Spookley the Square Pumpkin by Joe Troiano was first published in 2003. In 2005 the author teamed up with composer, Jeff Zahn to create the animated television musical movie Spookley the Square Pumpkin. In 2015, First Stage Milwaukee teamed up with Holiday Hill Enterprises to create the stage version, which premiered in October 2015 at First Stage. This October, Stages Theatre Company brings back by popular demand this lovely story to life in our Jaycee Studio through music, puppetry and imagination. Spookley’s story is about embracing what makes us unique and we hope it helps our young audiences embrace everything that makes them and those around them special.

Photos from the Stages Theatre Company’s 2019 production of Spookley the Square Pumpkin. Photos by Fischeye Films.
The Creators

The Author

Joe Troiano is the award winning author of more than a dozen children’s books including: The Legend of Spookley the Square Pumpkin; Spookley the Square Pumpkin, A Family to be Thankful For; The Legend of Mistletoe and The Christmas Kittens; The Legend of JellyBean and the Unbreakable Egg; The Legend of Beacon the Bright Little Firefly; Spookley’s Costume Party; Spookley’s Colors and Numbers; Halloween Fun with Spookley the Square Pumpkin; It’s Halloween with Spookley the Square Pumpkin; It’s Your Cloud; and The Legend of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. Joe is also an accomplished lyricist, having written songs for film, records, and television. In addition, Joe co-wrote the script and songs for the animated musical: Spookley the Square Pumpkin.

The Composer

Jeff Zahn is a specialist in the world of kid’s music and TV. He has supervised the music for over 50 TV series and has composed over 400 songs for TV and Film. He has produced projects for: The Backstreet Boys, Wyclef Jean, Ray Charles, Ziggy Marley, Art Garfunkel, Taj Mahal, Debra Harry, Celine Dion, Josh Redmon, and Yo Yo Ma. A few years ago, Jeff turned to producing TV and Film content. He developed and produced the CGI animated feature film “Spookley the Square Pumpkin” for Lionsgate which has been released in over 30 countries and plays annually on the Disney Channel. He currently is music supervisor for NBC/Universal’s new series “Norman Picklestripes” and just produced a feature TV movie for the Disney Channel - “Spookley and the Christmas Kittens” - which was a huge success reaching 14.5 million views.

As a musician, Jeff was an original member of the Broadway show “Cats” and he has performed with Burt Bacharach, Frank Sinatra, Diana Ross, Gladys Knight, Tina Turner, Sammy Davis Jr, Johnny Mathis, Michel Legrand, Henry Mancini, Earth, Wind and Fire, Dionne Warwick, Barbra Streisand and many other artists.
INFORMATION
How does a pumpkin grow?

1. Leafy vines grow from pumpkin seeds.
2. Yellow-orange flowers bloom on the pumpkin vine, then wither.
3. The flowers’ ovaries (at the base of the flower) swell and become tiny green pumpkins.
4. The pumpkins grow larger and change color
5. About four months after planting, they’re ready to harvest.

*from https://www.seedsandspades.com/pumpkin-growing-stages/
National Bullying Prevention Month is an important time to educate your children about anti-bullying. The month is dedicated to raising awareness about the harmful effects that bullying has on kids and adults. The lessons your students will learn during National Bullying Prevention Month about conflict resolution, understanding others, and treating people with kindness will help them in school and beyond.

The first Anti-Bullying Day was founded in Canada on February 27, 2007. The UN declared May 4th the official Anti-Bullying Day, beginning in 2012.

But the official National Bullying Prevention Month was created in 2006 by the PACER National Bullying Prevention Center. It initially started as a week of awareness rather than a month, where many groups such as the National PTA and the NCPIE came together to campaign, release resources and aids, and highlight the issue of bullying. It later evolved into a month-long observation in the 2010s.
According to the Centers for Disease Control (2019), students who are bullied have an increased risk of mental health issues such as depression or anxiety. This can lead to sleeping problems and impact their academic progress. During a study by the National Center for Education Statistics (2019), it was discovered that one in five kids between the ages of 12 to 18 have been bullied during the school year. The Anti-Defamation League (2019) concluded that people are less likely to report an incident of bullying as they get older. From bystanders to victims, only 39% of high schoolers notified an adult or teacher of bullying.

Unity Day is a key event of National Bullying Prevention Month, which occurs on the third or fourth Wednesday in October. People can participate in Unity Day by wearing orange to unite together and show their support for anti-bullying. You can commemorate this day in schools, businesses, and as individuals.

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You can show your young people this video to begin a conversation about what bullying is and how to talk about it! https://youtu.be/ffzIhWoi5ac
ACTIVITIES

Track Spookley’s feelings

Have the young people draw three pictures of Spookley and color them in. Then ask them to describe how Spookley is feeling at the beginning, middle and end of the play (and or book) using the three different pictures they have created. How do Spookley’s emotions change? Why do you think they are changing?

Teasing Is Tough!

1. Give each young person two paper circles and a crayon. Demonstrate how to draw a happy face on one circle, and an angry face on the other.

2. Each time you describe a situation, ask students to hold up the appropriate face to show how they would feel. Here are some examples:

   - How would you feel if your best friend invited you to a party?
   - How would you feel if no one would let you use the swing?
   - How would you feel if you and your friends built a beautiful sandcastle together?
   - How would you feel if some kids started teasing you by saying you were a baby?

3. Ask your young people: What can you do or say when someone teases you? Write down their ideas on paper. After gathering suggestions, you may want to simplify ideas into a three-step approach.

   For example:
   - Say: Please stop it. I don’t like it.
   - Say: I’m going to tell a teacher/parent.
   - Tell the teacher/parent

*Taken from: http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/credits.html
ACTIVITIES

Making Up

1. Brainstorm with your young people different ways that friends can "make up" after hurting each other's feelings (e.g., apologizing, inviting someone to join a game, making a card or picture). On poster board, make a list of positive ways to resolve conflicts and show you're sorry. Include sentence starters for expressing feelings, like:

I felt _____ when you _____
I apologize for _____

2. Share with them a story that involves a dispute between two friends. (You can use a story from a book, or one that you make up.) Stop the story before there is a resolution.

3. Let them create their own ending to the story. They can write it out, draw pictures, or just tell you out loud. Encourage them to use their list of positive ways to express feelings and resolve conflict.

4. Have students practice acting out this new ending to the story.

5. Share the original ending to the story. Discuss how the characters felt, and why their feelings caused them to act as they did.

*Taken from:
http://pbskids.org/arthur/parentsteachers/activities/credits.htm
Discussion Questions

1. Spookley uses his differences to save the other pumpkins in the patch. How are you unique? What are some of your special qualities? How can you use your uniqueness to help others? What are some of the special qualities of those you know—parents, siblings, cousins, grandparents, friends, teachers, etc.? Why do you think these qualities are unique or special? How do they help people? Why is it important to embrace what makes us special or unique?

2. When Little Tom teases Spookley, Big Tom and Bobo go along with it and don’t stop him from being mean to Spookley. Have you ever seen someone being teased? How can you stand up to a bully, even if you aren’t the one being made fun of?

3. The three spiders, Edgar, Allan and Poe are good friends to Spookley because they encourage him even when he is feeling sad. What are qualities of a good friend? Do you have an example of when you were a good friend to someone? What is an example of someone being a good friend to you?
Online Resources

UNICEF https://www.unicef.org/
Kid Power - https://www.kidpower.org/

Stomp Out Bullying - https://www.stompoutbullying.org/
For ages 13-24 Free & Confidential
The STOMP Out Bullying™ HelpChat Crisis Line is a free and confidential online chat that helps youth ages 13-24 with issues around bullying and cyberbullying; as well as providing support to youths who may be at risk of suicide.

Further Reading

By Joe Troiano:
- The Legend of JellyBean and the Unbreakable Egg
- The Legend of Mistletoe and the Christmas Kittens
- The Legend of Lyla the Lovesick Ladybug
- The Legend of Beacon the Bright Little Firefly
- It's Your Cloud

Children’s Books That Address Bullying:
- Coat Of Many Colors by Dolly Parton
- Bird Boy by Matthew Burgess
- Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovell
- Swimmy by Leo Lionni
- Llama Llama and the Bully Goat by Regan McMahon
- Stick and Stone by Jan Carr

Addica Sharbono who plays Spookley
General Information

**Ticket Policy:** Ticket orders will not be processed without full payment. We do not issue refunds. Exchanges can be made up to 24 hours prior to a scheduled performance. Exchanges can only be made for another performance of the SAME TITLE. Subject to availability.

**Box Office Hours:** Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6 p.m. and one hour prior to all performances.
Mainstage: Unless otherwise noted, performances take place in the mainstage theatre. Seating is reserved and begins 30 minutes prior to showtime.

**Jaycees Studio:** All performances of Spookley the Square Pumpkin, The Name Jar and The Dandelion Seed will be in the Jaycees Studio, a versatile space located in the Hopkins Center for the Arts. Seating is general admission and begins 30 minutes prior to show time. Come early for the most seating options!

**Land Acknowledgment**

Stages Theatre Company acknowledges with respect and gratitude that the land on which we live and work is the unceded, traditional land of the Dakota Nation. We are committed to learning from the past and critically examining the implications of colonial histories in our day to day lives.

To honor the traditional custodians of this land, complimentary tickets to every performance are available specifically for our indigenous community. We hope these resources can move us in taking collective action towards land repatriation. Please call our box office at (952) 979-1111 to secure these complimentary tickets.

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.
Accessibility

At Stages Theatre Company we believe that theatre experiences are for everyone! We are working towards a fully inclusive environment where all programs and performances are accessible to all.

Sensory-Friendly Performances
Relaxed performances designed for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Sensory Processing Disorder, or others with sensory sensitivities.

American Sign Language (ASL)
Interpreted Performances
American Sign Language interpretation by certified interpreters for patrons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Audio Described (AD) Performances
Audio Description services are intended to enhance the understanding of and access to visual information primarily for but not limited to people who are blind or have low vision.

Pay What You Can Performances (PWYC)
These performances have no minimum price, and patrons are asked to “pay what you can” the day of the show to support the theatre’s programming.

Open Door Program
The Open Door Program provides free and reduced cost tickets, bus subsidies, and tuition assistance to families, schools, and social service agencies. An application and further information can be found on our website: stagestheatre.org/access

Additional Services Available
- Assisted Listening Devices are available for all Stages Theatre Company’s Mainstage productions.
- Wheelchair Accessible Seating is available at every Stages Theatre Company performance.
- Accessible Parking and Accessible Restrooms are available at the Hopkins Center of the Arts.

Accessibility Performances are available for all season subscription options.