Beauty and the Beast
by Amelia M. Rogocka

Directing Beauty and the Beast has truly been one of the greatest honors. The last time All-of-us Express produced this show – somewhere around 2007 – I was cast in my first lead role within the company; Beauty. That role spurred most of my want to follow theatre as a profession, so to be able to be involved with the revival as a director was impossible to turn down.

When I agreed to direct, I was unsure of who would be stage managing for me – originally I said I would do both because I’m just that crazy sometimes. Over the past year however, I have heard nothing but praise for Fiona Breen – a youth participant who has earned her master badge in the Stage Management Guild – and when I realized that there was no way I could do what I do as a stage manager and direct a show, I asked her to be my stage manager. Boy am I glad (and very, very lucky) she said yes! This is Fiona’s first time being a stage manager since earning her master badge and she handled everything that came her way like a pro. She didn’t even blink an eye when she lost her assistant and had to do everything by herself. Throughout our tech week she has been working tirelessly to call the 150+ tech cues perfectly – so be sure to appreciate all the lights and sounds!! She might not know it now, but she could very easily have a very successful career as a professional stage manager if she wanted it. Being a stage manager requires exceptional initiative, creative problem solving, and a dedication that is unwavering – Fiona has all that and she’s only 14. (Continued on Page 3)
29th Season Productions

**The Giver**
One Night Only!!!
Friday, May 11th
7:00 pm

**Willy Wonka Jr.**
July 27-29
August 3-5

**Auditions:**
May 17-19
Beauty and the Beast

(Continued from Page 1)

If I talked about why I am proud of all the actors in this show this article could very easily become a novel. There are however, a few actors who I would like to mention:

Jenna Downs is making her acting debut as Beauty in this show. She has previously been involved with All-of-us Express, but always as a crew member backstage. She auditioned with the genuine honesty that I saw in the character of Beauty and I guarantee that you will quickly fall in love with her straightforward and quirky character.

Blake Weil brings an energy to stage that you can’t help but be in awe of. Each night he is running around in almost every scene in heavy furry pants, a long wig, a beard, and a long prince jacket – he even does a fight scene in all that gear! He never breaks character, never complains, and is willingly going to stand for pictures for an additional half hour after each show in that costume. He has been very dedicated to bettering himself as an actor during this show, and I am so lucky I got to be his director.

Craig and Duncan Darnell will have you falling out of your seats with their brotherly antics. They make the perfect pair of greedy, grasping people who only want to be rich. Craig brings his character to life as a fantastic, conniving villain you will want to hide all your treasure from. Duncan compliments him perfectly as the bumbling villain who seems to have just gotten wrapped up in all the wrong situations.

During this show, I worked these actors pretty hard. They only had two weeks to learn all their lines and I have been making them embrace the hilarity and comedic aspects of all their characters. As an actor, it can be very challenging to be able to let yourself go onstage and create characters that are over dramatic and act like fools, but they have put in the work and created the most amazing characters that blow me out of the water each and every time I watch the show. The ENTIRE cast gives this show 110% and they are all absolutely phenomenal. I am so proud of all the work they have done, and I hope they are too.
Bridge to Terabithia— A Director’s Reflection

By Shannon Bowen

Bridge to Terabithia first came into my life when I was in the fifth grade, through a reading curriculum at school. Like Jesse and Leslie, the two fifth-graders at the center of the story, I was a child who was inspired by the books and stories of my youth to create imaginary worlds for myself and my friends to play in. I loved the story of two friends who are brought together by play and who were bonded together through recognizing the challenges they each faced in their lives, finding comfort in the escape that only an imaginary world can provide.

Just like the novel by Katherine Paterson that the play is based on, the story of Bridge to Terabithia is still relevant today, 40 years after its initial publication. During the rehearsal process, I would be asked what show I was working on, and as I divulged the name, I was always met with a nostalgic sigh— “I loved that story growing up!”

What drew me to this project was two-fold. First, I was immediately reminded of the impact the book had on my life, at a particularly pivotal moment as I was not quite a kid but still not a teenager; where you struggled to know whether you were too old to still carry a Care Bears lunch box but didn’t quite want to retire it for a brown bag to bring to school; where toys were still littered throughout your room but you felt like you were supposed to put them in the closet and hide them when friends came to hang out. Parents, teachers, siblings didn’t always get you, but boy, there was always at least one friend who made you feel really ok in your own skin. (Continued on Page 4)
**Introducing AECT Commemorative Show Buttons**

By Katie Brewer

The AECT Board is excited to introduce limited edition, commemorative show buttons. We will introducing a new button for each show. The buttons are a great way to show off your AECT pride and a fun thing to collect! The buttons will be for sale for $2.00 each during rehearsals (at the sign out table) and before and after shows at the AECT Board merchandise table. All profits will go to supporting the AECT program.

We currently have two pins available: the rose from Beauty and the Beast and the Classic AECT logo. Don’t miss the chance to start your collection!

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**Bridge to Terabithia— A Director’s Reflection**

(Continued from Page 4)

The second draw to this project was the chance to work with the young artists of AECT. This organization has done nothing but astonish and humble me as I’ve navigated my way through this production, thanks to the creative efforts of participants and adult leaders in the organization who have made paying tribute to a particularly defining moment in my youth a joy to experience.

I hope that Jesse and Leslie’s Story helps you to recall a special friend who you shared wonderful memories with, and maybe, provokes you to conjure more magic in your day.
30th Season Productions

Audition & Show Dates to be Announced

Fall

Winter

Spring

Summer
The Picture Page — Pinocchio Edition
Want to help All-of-us Express, but don’t have time to volunteer?
Bring a small item to show your support!
*We will provide a tax donation letter, should it be desired.

**Wish List**

Makeup Remover Wipes
  Kleenex
Paper Towel
Hair Ties
Bobby Pins
Cotton Squares
Popsicle Sticks
Hex-Head Screws
  Drill Bits
Electric Tape
Elastic (all sizes!)
  Interfacing
Scotch Tape
Wide (& Standard) Masking Tape
Disinfectant Wipes
Sewing Needles (hand and machine)
  Drawing Paper
Seam Rippers
Good-Quality Colored Pencils
Fabric Scissors
Large Fabric Pieces (no scraps)
Men’s Boots (black and brown)
Men’s Dress Shoes (sizes 9+)
  Women’s Dress Shoes
Women’s Shoes (sizes 9+)
  Button-down Shirts

**The BIG Gifts**

  Vise
  Cutting Table
Home Depot Gift Card (doesn’t have to be big)
  Joann’s Gift Card (doesn’t have to be big)
All-of-us Express Children’s Theatre
Donation Appeal Form

Thank you for supporting All-of-us Express Children’s Theatre donation appeal. Your gift will help ensure that youth participants of all background, cultures, and lifestyles have opportunities to produce professional quality plays, study many aspects of the dramatic arts, and develop valuable life skills while providing outstanding entertainment to the community.

Please consider sponsoring one of the following:

_____ $25  -  Will sponsor a family of four to attend a show without means to otherwise attend
_____ $50  -  Will sponsor the cost of tech supplies for one show
_____ $100  -  Will sponsor a child's participation fees for one show
_____ $150  -  Will sponsor the cost of advertising for one show
_____ $200  -  Will sponsor the cost of props for four shows
_____ $250  -  Will sponsor the cost of costumes for one show
_____ $500  -  Will help sponsor the cost of royalties for one show
_____ $1000 - Will help sponsor the cost of the theatre rental for one show run

Name ______________________________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________

City _______________________________ State______ Zip_________________

I/We would like our gift to be in honor/memory of: (circle one)

Name: ______________________________________________________________

_____ I/We would like our gift to remain anonymous.

Donations can be mailed to: AECT, P.O. Box 1871, East Lansing, MI 48826-1871

All-of-us Express Children’s Theatre is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your donation is tax deductible.
BINGALA

AECT BINGO NIGHT FUNDRAISER
Friday, June 22, 2018  7-9 PM
at Hannah Community Center

Tickets $10 at the door and includes 10 bingo cards, souvenir glass, 2 drink tickets, & snacks

Cash bar

All proceeds benefit All-of-Us Express Children’s Theatre