

# MetroSpective

VOL. XVII NO. 1

THE NEWSLETTER OF METRO THEATER COMPANY

FALL 2007

## Metro Theater Company Celebrates 35 Years! Lively Activity Planned Throughout St. Louis this Season

**A** **St. Louis premiere!** New play readings! Touring productions for schools! Classroom residencies! Professional development for educators! Summer programs for young people! It all adds up to a full year of anniversary festivity as Metro Theater Company celebrates thirty-five years of professional theater for young people, for all people, for YOU!

*Go, Dog. Go!* is the centerpiece of our season. P.D. Eastman's fanciful illustrations leap off the page in the Steven Dietz/Allison Gregory adaptation which enjoys its St. Louis premiere. To the funky rhythms of Michael Koerner's score, dogs roller skate, drive cars, wield jack hammers, play baseball, and sail by the light of the moon. The grand finale pulls out all the stops with a party at the top of a tree!

The cast of six features Seattle musician, Rob Witmer, who performs on a custom-built, button accordion. Suzanne Costello, co-artistic director of Stuart Pimsler Dance & Theatre in Minneapolis (and Metro Theater Company ensemble member 1977-79) returns to St. Louis to choreograph and co-direct with Metro's own Carol North. The talented cast of St. Louis professional actors is Christine Brooks, Joshua Cook, Briston Ashe, Nicholas Kryah, Roxanne McWilliams, and Stephanie Strohmman.

Metro Theater Company thanks **Emerson** for stepping up as the production's lead sponsor.



## Go, Dog. Go!

### *Moby:* A New Play-in-Development

In the South Pacific in 1815 a giant sperm whale repeatedly rammed and sank the whaling ship, Essex, in a series of deliberate, frontal attacks. Herman Melville's American classic, *Moby Dick*, grew from his own fascination with this incident. Metro Theater Company now takes its own look into the story, in an imaginative tale from the depths of the sea.

Watch the evolution of an original theater piece, and help us shape the work for its world premiere. See *Moby* story on page 4 for more details.

### *Go, Dog. Go!*

Choose the venue nearest you!

At COCA: January 16-27, 2008

At the Theatre at the  
West County Family YMCA:  
January 30-February 10, 2008

Offering weekday school matinees &  
weekend performances for families

For information, call 314-997-6777 or  
visit [www.metrotheatercompany.org](http://www.metrotheatercompany.org)

### Education Programs Growing by Leaps and Bounds

Highly valued by schools, Metro Theater Company's education programs are ongoing throughout the season. Demand keeps growing, and we are growing in response. (See article on p. 5) Headed by Emily Petkewich, our Education Department has earned a reputation for being responsive to the needs of our community. We're proud to work closely with program partners at CharacterPLUS, INTERCHANGE, the Des Lee Fine Arts Education Collaborative, Arts Partners, Maryville University and New City School. Is your school or organization interested in developing a partnership with Metro, too?

Contact [Emily@metrotheatercompany.org](mailto:Emily@metrotheatercompany.org)

**OUR MISSION:** Inspired by the intelligence and emotional wisdom of young people, we create professional theater, foster inclusive community, and nurture meaningful learning through the arts.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## GATHERING THE MEANING OF THINGS



How old do we have to be to buy a ticket into the realm of imagination?

I often advocate for a young person's right to that realm—a place full of questions, wonder and curiosity.

Countless times I've heard adults observe after a performance, "I'm not sure the children understood it all, but they certainly were engaged!"

We can all enjoy theater together, whether or not we fully understand it. Entering into and participating in the realm of imagination is what theater is all about. The theater I love most is a sensory feast full of sound, color, images, movement, feeling and ideas that draw me into an experience I can make my own for days after I leave the theater. Sometimes the experience goes on inside me for years.

When I go to the theater, symphony, art museum, or dance concert, no one checks my I.D. at the door to see if I'm adequately prepared with the right set of prerequisites. No one says, "Excuse me, but I think you may too old for this piece of art."

Perhaps Aristotle sheds light on this question. In his *Poetics*, he writes: "...to be learning something is the greatest of pleasures not only to the philosopher but also to the rest of mankind, however small their capacity of it...the reason of the delight...is gathering the meaning of things."

*Go, Dog. Go!* is truly a reason for delight this season, our 35<sup>th</sup>. Dance, music and transformational magic fill a world that is populated by a diverse community who just happen to be dogs. Metro Theater Company embraces the joyous realm of imagination and play this season. It's for everyone age four to ninety-four. Are you old enough to come? I'll be there to welcome you!

*Carol North*  
 Carol North, Artistic Director

## BOARD NEWS AND NOTES

### Hearty welcomes...

Metro Theater Company has recently elected two new members to its Board of Directors: **Dr. Sam Hausfather**, Dean of the School of Education at Maryville University, and **Ken Jones**, an independent business consultant. Former Board President **Janet Schoedinger** has been elected a Board Member Emerita.

"Our Board of Directors is pleased to welcome Sam and Ken into the fold this year; they have much to add to the collective passion and commitment of our diverse group," said Katy Homar, Managing Director. Ellen L. Livingston, Board President, added, "The Board welcomes Janet to Emeritus status and is pleased that she may inspire renewed activity amongst her fellow emeritus members."

### Heartfelt farewells...

Metro Theater Company recognizes two dedicated board members whose service has recently come to an end: **Dan Jay**, CFO at Christner Inc., who concluded 11 years of faithful board service in June 2007, and **Phyllis Kim**, Principal of Brigantine Communications Group, who after 3 years on the Board, is moving to Washington D.C.

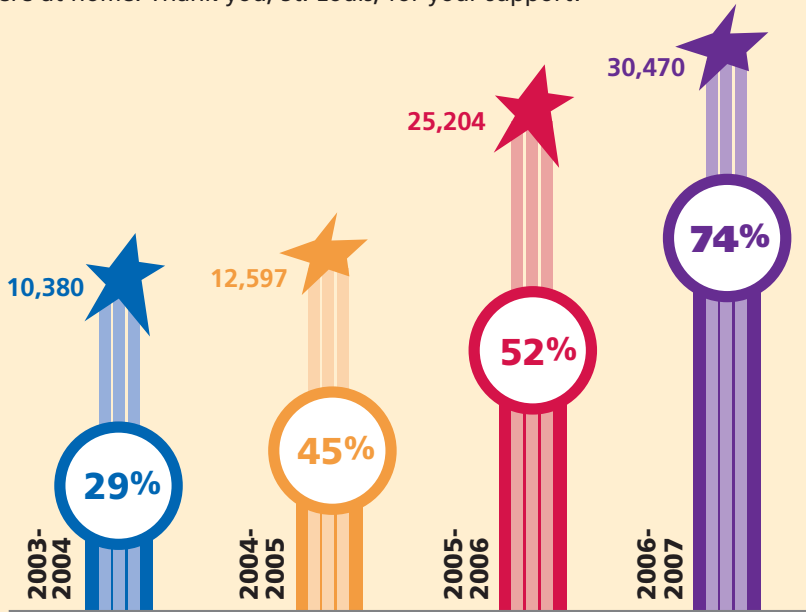
"Dan and Phyllis both made a tremendous impact on Metro Theater Company during their board service, and will be missed for their leadership, insight, and courage," said Carol North, Artistic Director.

### And cheers!

Congratulations to board member **Candice Smith** of the Boeing Company who has been honored as one of the "30 Under 30" by the St. Louis Business Journal. We join the Journal in celebrating Candice's achievements!

# SERVICE TO ST. LOUIS GROWS!

Metro Theater Company is pleased to share the news that our programs increasingly serve St. Louis audiences. Activity in our own community has increased, and more than ever before, our audiences are right here at home. Thank you, St. Louis, for your support!



 Local Audience Served    
  Local Audience as % of Total Audience

# 2006-2007 SERVICE TO SCHOOLS

## ST. LOUIS AREA DISTRICTS:

- Aftton
- Brentwood
- Clayton
- Ferguson-Florissant
- Francis Howell
- Hazelwood
- Kirkwood
- Ladue
- Mehlville
- Normandy
- Parkway
- Pattonville
- Ritenour
- Rockwood
- St. Louis Public Schools
- Special School District
- University City
- Valley Park
- Webster Groves

## GREATER MISSOURI & ILLINOIS DISTRICTS:

- Bowling Green R-I
- Canton R-V
- Columbia 93
- Edwardsville IL
- Ft. Zumwalt R-II
- Fox C-6
- Hillsboro R-III
- Jersey Consolidated #100
- Montgomery County R-II
- Northwest R-I
- Pike County R-III
- Poplar Bluff R-I
- Republic R-III
- Springfield R-XII
- Warren County R-III
- Wentzville R-IV

## OTHER CATEGORIES:

- Archdiocese Schools
- Charter Schools
- Day Care Centers
- Home School Networks
- Independent Schools
- Jewish Schools & Hebrew Academies
- Lutheran Schools



Teaching artist Andrea Palazzolo leads a movement exercise for 4 and 5-year olds at ArtsINTERsection in August. A section for 4-5 year olds and a session in August were both new features of ArtsINTERsection this summer.

## MOBY: THE TALE OF A WHALE

Ever give birth to a whale? Well, Metro Theater Company will try to do just that, in a way, this season as it develops an original theater piece titled *Moby*, inspired by Herman Melville's American classic. Two weeks of new work development are planned in 2007-2008, along with two staged readings of the work-in-progress, open to the public. A dual commission of local writer Patricia Corrigan and composer Greg Bolin, *Moby* is slated for full production in 2008-2009.

The project was prompted by a conversation between Corrigan and Artistic Director Carol North about North's quest to develop a literature-based theater piece stimulating to middle and high school students. An avid fan of whales, Corrigan asked, "What about *Moby Dick* from the whale's perspective?"

The question endured. In July 2006, Metro Theater Company asked Corrigan to write



rough scenarios, character sketches and sample dialogue. A series of choreopoems with rich potential for theatrical treatment emerged from this early development period. To explore the theatrical potential of these poems, Metro Theater Company hosted a four-day workshop in May 2007 with actors, dancers and composer Greg Bolin. Also in May, the Jordan Charitable Foundation came on board with funding for

the early development phase.

The team will come together for another week of development in October 2007. During that time, the creative process will engage young adults at the Hogan Street Youth Detention Facility, through the Prison Performing Arts (PPA) Program. Young men, ages 12-18, will meet Corrigan and Bolin, study and interpret the text with PPA's

You're invited to see *MOBY* emerge!

STAGED READING:

Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m.

At Third Baptist Church in Grand Center

Please call 314-997-6777 for more information.

founder Agnes Wilcox, observe director Emily Petkewich working with actors, and participate in the staged reading this fall. Another week of development is scheduled for April 2008.

*Moby* has good company as it grows and develops into a full-fledged theater piece. Since 1973, Metro Theater Company has created and developed 31 original productions, many of which have gone on to be produced by other theaters around the country and are considered to be among the best examples of dramatic literature for young people.

Metro Theater Company thanks the Jordan Charitable Foundation for funding *Moby* in its early development phases.

## A NEW PARTNER IN GRAND CENTER

Metro Theater Company is pleased to announce a new collaborative partner in Third Baptist Church in Grand Center. Metro will team up with Third Baptist in two ways this season.

In October, the Church will host the first of two staged readings planned for 2007-2008 around *Moby*, a new work in development inspired by Herman Melville's American classic. With the congregation, the entire St. Louis community is welcome to come and observe the birth of this new theater piece. [See story above for more details.]

Then, in March 2008, Metro Theater Company will present a community performance of *Long Road to Freedom*, by Jan Lucas.

A heartwarming and thoughtful story about two characters who befriend each other as a result of the Underground Railroad, *Long Road to Freedom* has been touring in Metro's repertoire for two seasons already.

The partnership with Third Baptist Church is one of many community partnerships that Metro Theater Company nurtures. Ongoing collaborative partners for a range of programs include Maryville University, the Girl Scouts, OASIS, Arts Partners, INTERCHANGE, the Des Lee Fine Arts Education Collaborative, and New City School, among many others. These broad-ranging partnerships reflect Metro Theater Company's authentic commitment to community.

### *Long Road to Freedom*

Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>

At Third Baptist Church in Grand Center

Metro Theater Company is pleased for Third Baptist Church to host the first public performance of this show for the St. Louis community! The performance will be preceded by a supper, and proceeds from the evening will support programs at Carver Elementary School, also in the Grand Center neighborhood.

Please call 314-997-6777 for more information.

# PROGRAMS EXPAND IN WEBSTER GROVES SCHOOL DISTRICT

Heading into the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, Metro Theater Company is honored—and proud—to have served nearly 2 million people through performances, tours, and education programs. Now, in a special partnership with the Webster Groves School District, Metro Theater Company is building community and creating awareness of social justice among some 600 fifth and sixth grade students.

During the 2006-2007 school year, every fifth grader in the district read Karen Levine's book *Hana's Suitcase* and saw Metro's production of Emil Sher's play of the same name. Those 300 students, enrolled in six different schools, also participated in Metro's "A Place for Everyone: Building Community through Drama," a five-week classroom residency with Education Director/Artistic Associate Emily Petkewich.

In the coming school year, fifth graders in the Webster Groves School District will take part in that program again, minus, of course, the experience of seeing the play. In addition, Petkewich will be reunited with last year's students at "Middle School Transition," a new residency at the Steger Sixth Grade Center. The program will focus on two important questions: How will I choose to define myself within my new school community? How will I make a positive contribution to a safe and welcoming school community?

"We are delighted with this opportunity to follow up with the students," said Petkewich. "Sixth grade is a dangerous time for kids, a time when they so much want to fit in. Along with the district, we want the students to develop strong self identities."

Each student was allowed to discover the true meaning of tolerance, and they discovered it is not OK to stand on the sidelines when something is happening to someone else.

-Donna Williamson, fifth grade teacher at Hudson Elementary School



Playwright Emil Sher addresses students' questions about *Hana's Suitcase* as a part of last year's partnership with Webster Groves School District.

"Once again, we will explore a young person's responsibility to act in the face of intolerance in their school or neighborhood, but we also will work with personal expression," said Petkewich. "Through theater, storytelling, and visual art activities, the students will discover each others' stories, find common ground, and learn to get beyond surface judgments."

"The program is unique," says Petkewich, "because it is student-driven. The students lead the discussion, and talk about what works and what doesn't. We call this 'Rehearsal for Real Life'—a chance to practice while in a safe place."

Sarah Riss, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction in the Webster Groves School District, is eager for Steger students to build on the common learning experience provided by Metro Theater Company last year. "We wanted to continue their learning in the area of tolerance as they start to mold as the Class of 2014," said Riss. "In fact, we want them to go beyond tolerance, to acceptance."

The five-week residency at Steger will begin September 17. Kristin Denbow, Steger's principal, and Assistant Principal Montize Aaron both will be actively involved with "Middle School Transition." Teachers, counselors, and staff members at the school also will take part in a related professional development workshop.

The program is unique, because it is student-driven.

-Emily Petkewich, Education Director/Artistic Associate

At the end of the residency, the entire school will attend Metro Theater Company's touring production of *New Kid* by Dennis Foon, which tells the story of Nick, a young immigrant from the fictitious country of "Homeland." The target of name-calling and bullying, Nick struggles to fit in at his new school. "This is especially appropriate," said Petkewich, "because every student at Steger is new to the school."

Next spring, Petkewich will work again with fifth grade students in the Webster Groves elementary schools. Donna Williamson, a fifth grade teacher at Hudson Elementary School, had this to say about last year's program: "Each student was allowed to discover the true meaning of tolerance, and they discovered it is not OK to stand on the sidelines when something is happening to someone else."

Artistic Director Carol North is thrilled with the enthusiastic commitment from the Webster Groves School District. "Part of Metro's mission is to support meaningful learning through the arts," said North, "and we know that theater is a particularly potent tool to investigate and understand the complexities of human behavior."

## Metro Theater Company Celebrates 35 Years!

### THE COMPANY'S ROOTS

It all began with the vision of Zaro Weil and Lynn Rubright, whose dream of creating imaginative theater for young people was born in St. Louis in the spring of 1973. They called it Metro Theater 'Circus' then. The title of their first show revealed the playful spirit of the founders: *The Second Greatest Show on Earth*. Music, movement, drama, and visual surprises combined to delight everyone in the audience. Thirty-five years later, Zaro's and Lynn's vision lives on, energized daily by playful spirit and the clear purpose of our mission.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Metro Theater Company is the third oldest professional theater in the St. Louis region! The Munny in Forest Park, founded in 1919, is the granddaddy, of course. The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis (1966) takes second place with longevity. Metro Theater Company (1973) runs a close third, just ahead of Opera Theatre of St. Louis and St. Louis Black Repertory Company, both established in 1976.

## 3 PLAYS on Tour This Season

Metro Theater Company serves schools by taking professional theater directly to them. Three pieces will be on tour in the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season.



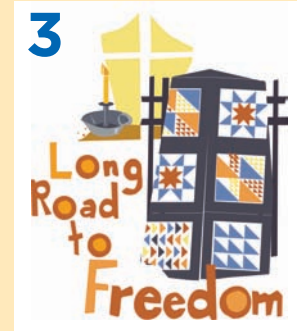
Touring fall and spring is Dennis Foon's *New Kid*, which invites audiences to take a close look at the challenges faced by newcomers to our community.

September–November 2007  
February–March 2008



Back by popular demand next spring is Nicholas Kryah's pointed, yet touching *Stix & Stonz*.

March–April 2008



And for one final season, Jan Lucas's beautiful play, *Long Road to Freedom*, will have limited performances. Set in 1850, it tells the story of two girls who become friends, and then are torn apart because of the color of their skin.

Limited engagements in February and March 2008

For more information contact  
Nancy@metrotheatercompany.org

## Supporting Metro Theater Company just got a little easier!

### SUPPORT US WHEN YOU SEARCH THE NET...

GoodSearch.com is a new search engine that donates half its revenue to the charities its users designate. Set GoodSearch as your homepage or add it to your toolbar, and GoodSearch will make a small contribution to Metro Theater Company every time you browse the web.



Simply visit [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and select Metro Theater Company as the charity you want to support today!

For more information about these and other opportunities to contribute, contact us at:

**METRO THEATER COMPANY**  
8308 Olive Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63132  
314-997-6777  
[www.metrotheatercompany.org](http://www.metrotheatercompany.org)

### AND SUPPORT US WHEN YOU SHOP FOR FOOD...

Metro Theater Company now participates in Schnucks eScrip Community Card program. And it's easy for YOU to participate too:



- On your next visit to Schnucks, request an eScrip Community card.
- Activate your card by calling 1-800-931-6258 or visiting [www.escrip.com/schnucks.jsp](http://www.escrip.com/schnucks.jsp).
- Identify Metro Theater Company as your charity of choice. (Our address is 8308 Olive Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63132.)
- Then, ask the cashier to scan your eScrip Community Card every time you shop!

\* For every dollar you spend, Schnucks will contribute up to 3% of your purchase to Metro Theater Company!

## A SEASON OF ANNIVERSARIES!

Metro Theater Company is celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007-2008, but that occasion is not the only one to celebrate! Artistic Director Carol North marks her 30<sup>th</sup> season with the Company this year, and Resident Artist Nicholas Kryah reached his 30-year milestone last season. In their time with the Company, both Carol and Nick have made an immeasurable impact.

Carol joined Metro Theater Company in 1977 as an actor, and in 1980 succeeded the founder as the Company's second artistic director. She has directed most of Metro Theater Company's acclaimed repertory works since that time, and served as a guest director for theaters in this country and in the Netherlands. Nationally recognized as a leader in the field of theater for young audiences, Carol has earned numerous honors, including the 2003 Visionary Award presented by Grand Center for "Outstanding Arts Professional," the 2003 Frederick H. Laas Award for Arts Education presented by Missouri Citizens for the Arts, and the 2006 Mickey Miners Award for Lifetime Achievement presented by the International Producers and Presenters of Theater For Young Audiences (IPAY).

Nick joined the Company in 1976 and has become an integral part of every production—in one way or another—since that time. In addition to acting in nearly every production the Company has mounted during his tenure and designing sets for most of those productions as well, he wrote Metro's acclaimed adaptation of *Beowulf* in 1990, *Iceman* in 2000, and *Stix & Stonz* in 2005. His solo performance piece, *A Short Hike on a Long Trail*, presented in 2003, recounted his adventure on the Appalachian Trail. Amazingly, Nick has appeared in over 4,600 performances for Metro Theater Company during his 30 years.

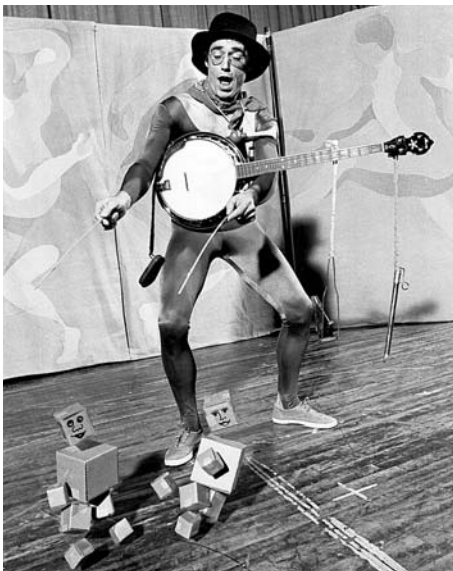
Metro Theater Company would not be what it is today without the daily dedication of Carol and Nick. Indeed, celebrating a 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary season as an organization is not a matter of happenstance. Alongside of Carol and Nick, and those who preceded them, a group of committed artists, board members, donors, and funding partners have worked with dedication for over three decades to deliver Metro Theater Company to this occasion. What has always grounded their efforts is the mission. Beyond them, a community of



Nick and Carol demonstrate a teaching technique for educators in this summer's professional development institute.

teachers, schools, presenters, and audience members has embraced the programs derived from the mission, and has asked for more.

If you're reading this, chances are that you have played some part, large or small, in helping Metro Theater Company arrive at this season of anniversaries. Thank you. We hope you'll forge into the future with Metro Theater Company too!



Nick in *Do You Love Me Still (or Do You Love Me Moving)?* in 1980.



Carol (on the right) with Zaro Weil in *Arm in Arm* in 1978.

### DID YOU KNOW

**Metro**  
**T**heater  
**C**ompany

- Is a non-profit organization with 503(c)3 tax-exempt status?
- Earns below 40% of its annual budget from touring fees and ticket sales?
- Relies on contributed support for over 60% of its annual budget?
- Gratefully accepts donations of all sizes from people like you!?

Tax-deductible contributions can be mailed to Metro Theater Company at 8308 Olive Boulevard, St. Louis MO 63132. Thanks to all our donors for your support!



# THANK YOU! METRO THEATER COMPANY GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE

This listing represents support from July 1, 2006 through July 26, 2007. We apologize if we have omitted anyone who should have been included or spelled any names incorrectly. Please let us know so we can correct future listings. Thank you!

LEADERSHIP GIFTS (\$15,000+)	DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE (\$1,000+)	COLLABORATORS (\$200+)	
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\* indicates in-kind support





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*In Honor of Ellen L. Livingston*  
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*In Honor of Joan T. Briccetti*  
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 Marcia Kerz  
 Marty & Jim Koch  
 Nancy & Ken Kranzberg  
 Ellen L. Livingston  
 Carolyn & Joseph Losos  
 Ric Louis  
 Charles Mackay  
 Lynn Maupin  
 Margaret McDonald  
 Edwin B. Meissner  
 Monsanto Company  
 Anna Navarro & Harriet Blickenstaff  
 Kathryn Nix & Pat McCandless  
 Carol North & Nicholas Kryah  
 Margaret O'Brien  
 Betul Ozmat & Billy Handmaker  
 Kathe & Edgar Rasch  
 Pat & Les Rich  
 The Rome Group

Geetha & Tim Sant  
 Betty Schaper  
 Janet Schoedinger & Jim Mann  
 Beth Slama & Suzanne Million  
 Susan Slaughter  
 Cynthia Smith  
 Lucie N. Springmeyer  
 Laurie & Rick Steele  
 James & Susan Stepleton  
 Karen Tokarz & JoAnne LaSala  
 Barbara Turkington  
 Lottie Wade  
 Christine Ward  
 John D. & Anabeth C. Weil  
 Joan White  
 Catherine Williamson & Paula Gianino

*In Memory of Claudia Daugherty*  
 Carol North & Nicholas Kryah

*In Honor of Peter Hesel*  
 Ernestina Short

*In Honor of Jack and Robbie Mosinger*  
 Julian E. & B.J. Yudelson

*In Honor of Margaret O'Brien*  
 Tim Buchek



**Metro Theater Company extends a special thanks to the community of donors and audience members who supported our premiere production of *Hana's Suitcase* in January, 2007.**



# MetroSpective

## Metro Theater Company

8308 Olive Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63132-2814  
[www.metrotheatercompany.org](http://www.metrotheatercompany.org)  
(314) 997-6777

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage

**PAID**

St. Louis, MO  
Permit No. 3580



Metro Theater Company is professional theater for young people and families. It is a member of Missouri Citizens for the Arts, Theatre Communications Group, Inc. (the national service organization for non-profit professional theaters), and Theatre for Young Audiences/USA. Metro Theater Company receives financial assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, Missouri Arts Council, a state agency, the Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis, the Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis, numerous corporations, foundations and individuals.



## Go, Dog. Go!

Tickets are available  
thru Metrotix:  
Call 314-534-1111 or go to  
[www.metrotix.com](http://www.metrotix.com)

**MetroTix**  
**.com**

### Join us for... **GO, DOG. GO!**

Story by P.D. Eastman  
Adaptation by Steven Dietz & Allison Gregory  
Music by Michael Koerner

Big dogs, little dogs! Dogs going in! Dogs coming out!  
They're green, red, blue, yellow, black and white! They're climbing  
into the tree top for an unforgettable party and YOU are invited!

**St. Louis  
Premiere!  
2 locations!**

#### COCA (CENTER OF CREATIVE ARTS)

524 Trinity Avenue, University City

Fri., Jan 18: 6:30 pm  
Sat., Jan 19: 11:00 am & 3:30 pm  
Sun., Jan 20: 1:00 & 3:30 pm  
Fri., Jan 25: 6:30 pm  
Sat., Jan 26: 11:00 am & 3:30 pm  
Sun., Jan 27: 1:00 & 3:30 pm

#### WEST COUNTY FAMILY YMCA

6464 Burkhardt Place, Chesterfield

Sat., Feb 2: 11:00 am & 3:30 pm  
Sun., Feb 3: 3:30 pm  
Sat., Feb 9: 11:00 am & 3:30 pm  
Sun., Feb 10: 3:30 pm

\*School matinees are available weekdays at both locations.  
Call Nancy at 314-997-6777 to reserve seats for your school field trip!