



ROBIN KLINGER ENTERTAINMENT
presents a production of
Children's Theatre of Charlotte and Experiential Theater Company

GRIMMZ Fairy Tales

Developers' Notes

The world can sometimes be a cruel or unreasonable place, and the challenges we face ask us to decide how we will respond. "Whatchoo 'gon do?" This is the anthem of our play. "Step up and deliver or stand there and shiver? Be a taker or a giver, a watcher or a liver?" It's easy to decide what others should do, but when it comes our time and opportunity to speak up for someone or stand beside someone, how will we act? Each of the stories/songs we have chosen to bring to life for you today is a twist on a familiar classic set in a time and place just as relevant as any other. In today's modern times and with some of today's music known for rhymes and storytelling and raw, intense content, our Will and Jay Grimmz want to get this stage hoppin' and all of you stompin' to a whole new world of fairy tales.

Let the lyric poetry of hip hop celebrate the oneness we all hope for in our community, a place where we can come together to face the challenges so many of us face every day, especially in our urban landscapes. Let the life lessons of these stories be the start of a conversation we have

with to find the people we can trust to be with us in times of difficulty and help us to believe in ourselves. Let's be the flowers that grow from the concrete. Let's find joy where people don't expect it to be. Let's transform like the caterpillar, who just when he thought it was the end, became the butterfly. Hip hop is for everyone. Theater is for everyone. Let's celebrate that together!

Rahsheem Shabazz, Christopher Parks, and Ron Lee McGill
GRIMMZ Developers

Cast

Jay Grimmz.....Rahsheem Shabazz
Will Grimmz.....Ron Lee McGill
Player 1.....Octavia Hall
Player 2.....Renee Welsh-Noel
Player 3.....Isabel Gonzalez

Creative Team

Co-Developer..... Rahsheem Shabazz
Co-Developer.....Christopher Parks
Co-Developer..... Ron Lee McGill
Director.....Christopher Parks
Music Director.....Kofi Osei Williams
Composer.....Charles Vincent Burwell
Composer.....Kofi Osei Williams
Choreographer.....Rahsheem Shabazz

Cast and creative team

Rahsheem Shabazz (Jay Grimmz, Co-Developer) is thrilled to hit the stage at Children's Theatre of Charlotte in this world premiere. His previous roles include (Jace's Dad) Liars, (Dr. Bird) Bob Marley's Three Little Birds and (King Julian) Madagascar: A Musical Adventure. He has appeared on CBS's Under The Dome, as well as many productions at the Actor's Theatre of Charlotte. This talented young man is also a Charlotte Hornets hip hop dancer with the Hive Hip Hop Crew. He would like to give a special shout out, much love and thanks to all cast and crew at Children's Theatre of Charlotte for all the love and support in the development and creation of this special piece. Thank you, LET'S ROCK!!!

Ron Lee McGill (Will Grimmz, Co-Developer) is beyond grateful to be apart of this production with the Children's Theatre of Charlotte. He previously performed in Judy Moody

and Stink: The Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Treasure Hunt, Last Stop on Market Street, and The Snowy Day and Other Stories. Ron can also be seen in the national advertisement for Meals on Wheels. He would like to thank cast and crew for their trust in bringing this world to life.

Octavia Hall (Diva Lá Queen, Rapunzel's Momma, Witch, Cinderella's New Sister) appears on Children's Theatre of Charlotte's stage for the first time in this role, and she couldn't be more excited for her debut. Octavia is a native of Anderson, SC and a graduate of Anderson University, where she received her Bachelor of Music Degree in Vocal Performance. She currently resides in Charlotte, NC and a recent graduate of the University of North Carolina Charlotte, where she received her graduate certification in Special Education. Octavia has toured internationally performing with her college and the Glory Gospel Singers. Octavia had the opportunity of performing in the 2016 Spoleto Festival as an ensemble member in Porgy and Bess. She currently performs with the Charlotte Contemporary Ensemble and recently played the role of Sophia, in their stage performance of The Color Purple. Octavia will also be making her debut with Opera Carolina this spring, in the amazing show of I Dream by Douglas Tappin. Octavia loves being on stage, and the remarkable joy of being able to share her voice and passion on stage with her audience.

Renee Welsh-Noel (Snow White, Rapunzel, Cinderella's New Mother) is a performer and choreographer based in Charlotte, NC. With a BA in Dance from UNC Charlotte, she teaches ballet and Broadway dance styles with the School of Theatre Training at Children's Theatre of Charlotte and is the choreographer for the theatre department at East Mecklenburg High School. Most recently she choreographed their production of Rent. This year, she made her Central Piedmont Community College Summer Theatre debut in Show Boat and Jekyll and Hyde and her Children's Theatre of Charlotte debut in their production of Peter Pan (Peter Pan). Renee has also made appearances on the Actor's Theatre of Charlotte stage in American Idiot (Libby), Stick Fly (Cheryl), Passing Strange (Edwina/Mariana/Sudabey) and The Great American Trailer Park Christmas Musical (Linoleum). She is thrilled to be returning to the Children's Theatre of Charlotte stage for GRIMMZ.

Isabel Gonzalez (Gretel, Nance, Cinderella) is a recent graduate from The University of North Carolina at Charlotte and is delighted to be back for her second show here at Children's Theatre of Charlotte! Her first show at Children's Theatre of Charlotte was The Invisible Boy (Sophie) this past fall. Other recent credits come from Actors Theatre of Charlotte, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Piedmont Players, and Old Courthouse Theatre. A memorable role for her was in Hairspray (Jail Matron) which earned her a 2014 Blumey Nomination for Best Featured Performer. She would like to thank everyone for supporting her journey thus far! Her next adventure you ask?! Dragons Love Tacos here at Children's Theatre of Charlotte!

Christopher Parks (Director, Co-Developer) is delighted to return to Children's Theatre of Charlotte. Past productions here include Director/ Playwright for Journey to Oz, Director for Last Stop on Market Street, Book Writer and Lyricist for The Invisible Boy, and director/playwright for Sunjata Kamalenya, presented here in 2014. Other theater for young audiences work he has written and/ or directed has been seen at Trike Theatre (Bear State of Mind, The Odyssey Experience, Escaramuza Eréndra: A Cinderella Rodeo), McCarter Theatre

Center (The Odyssey Experience; Sunjata Kamalenya; Arabian Nights; Romeo and Juliet; The Adventures of Perseus; The Tempest, a Puppet Play; Lucky Girl), Garden State Children's Theater Company (Healthily Ever After, Aesop's Fables), Rose Bruford London (On Us, The Odyssey Experience), Long Island Children's Museum (Journey to Oz, A Christmas Carol), Florida Repertory Theatre (Dream Within a Dream: The Spirit of Poe), Hangar Theater (Playing at Peter Pan), Cleveland Playhouse (Ms. ViVi's Class: Together), and The John F. Kennedy Center: New Visions, New Voices (Our Sunjata). Christopher is the Producing Artistic Director of the Experiential Theater Company who, together with Children's Theater of Charlotte co-produced the national tour of Journey to Oz, which was also an official selection at the International Performing Arts for Youth Festival in 2017. The Experiential Theater Company was the first-ever American theater company to be invited to perform at the prestigious Babaró International Children's Theater Festival in Galway. www.exptheater.org

Kofi Osei Williams (Music Director/Composer) As Chief Executive Officer of Asase Yaa Entertainment Group, LLC, Kofi Osei Williams has ascended to a position of tremendous influence on African Dance, Music and Culture in Brooklyn, New York where he also oversees the creative and business direction of the affiliated Asase Yaa African-American Dance Theater, Asase Yaa School of the Arts, Asase Yaa Children's Arts Camp and the non-profit Asase Yaa Cultural Arts Foundation. Beginning as a drummer, Williams scaled the ranks as a student, historian, touring performer, educator, administrator and company co-founder. He has worked with artists ranging from jazz greats Pharaoh Sanders and Dianne Reeves, new age guru Paul Winters to Djembe Drum innovator M'Bemba Bangoura, soul chanteuse Erykah Badu and conscious hip hop star Talib Kweli. Detailing his role as CEO with Asase Yaa, Williams states, "I develop our programs, curriculum and run most of our day-to-day operations. I also remain a musician for the dance theater and the summer camp. One of our ongoing core missions has been to bring people from Broadway and professional companies into the neighborhood to teach at affordable prices so kids can benefit and flourish in the arts." This year, Kofi wrote the play 'The HBCU Show' for their Summer Camp, which teaches the value of historical black colleges and the culture behind them. Asase Yaa's primary goal in producing the various theater productions is to Children's Theatre of Charlotte create richly impactful learning experiences beyond books that their students can contribute to and share first hand.

Charles Vincent Burwell (Composer) a Congressional Scholar in Leadership, holds a B.S. in Vocal Music Education from Florida A&M University with emphasis in theater, dance, voice, and ethnomusicology and an MFA in Musical Theatre writing from the Tisch School of the Arts (NYU). He has worked for dance companies and arts organization such as the Lincoln Center Institute, New York's City Center Theater, the Katherine Dunham Institute, Trenton Education Dance Institute (TEDI), National Dance Institute, Urban Bush Women, Festival del Caribe (Santiago de Cuba, Cuba), Ile Aiye (Brazil), Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and Bates Dance Festival. He has composed music for the Cairo Opera House Ballet (Cairo, Egypt), National Dance Institute under the Artistic Direction of Jacques d'Amboise (Shanghai, China) as well as the accompanying HBO documentary Jacques D'Amboise in China – THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD. Mr. Burwell has sung at New York's Carnegie Hall and maintains a private studio for vocal instruction while continuing his career as a singer, dancer, actor, and composer



EXPERIENTIAL THEATER COMPANY



CHILDREN'S THEATRE OF CHARLOTTE



ROBIN KLINGER ENTERTAINMENT

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