“I was just so happy to be included. I am in the group, right?”

– Hannah, The Rest of Year Five


When I was a kid, I definitely wanted to believe that magic was real. I didn't grow up with the books—that-shall-not-be-named (this story isn’t about them), but I did grow up with tales of other magical places, where good triumphed over evil and wizards gave the best advice.

Perhaps you, like me, thought that if only magic was real, we could vanquish the bullies in our lives, or make that special person see just how wonderful we are. Maybe we could magically become better at sports or music or…anything, really. Maybe we could be the most talented, the most popular, the most loved.

A real hero.

Puffs takes us to a world where magic is very real, but even the existence of magic can't fix everyone's problems. The bullies still have power. That special someone starts dating someone else. Not everyone makes the sports team, or the frog choir, and no matter how hard we try—and fail—and try again, someone else will always be just a little bit better.

And that's okay.

Because our desires were never really about being the most talented, the most popular, or even the most loved. We were all just looking for a place to belong.

Some of us still are.

In 2019, the small college where I worked eliminated their theatre program, some of us still are.

But now I find myself once again in a theatre, surrounded by amazing, talented students who have worked so hard to tell the story of the Puffs—a group of underdogs who might never be the most talented, the most popular, or the most loved, but who love and protect each other fiercely. Yes, they are wizards. They have wands. And they can do magic! But more importantly, they take care of one another. They welcome each other into a place where all are loved and accepted exactly as they are. Including you. The Puffs invite all of us to belong.

And the real magic is in the belonging.

-Rachel Luann Strayer, Director

*All cast members will play Death Buddies and other students throughout*

PRODUCTION CONTENT

PUFFS! (One Act Edition) runs 90ish minutes, give or take 30 minutes, without an intermission. Those who are kidding, it runs about two hours. The restrooms are located on the 2nd floor.

Be advised that throughout this production, there is vulgar language, suggestive themes, intimate moments, and some violence and death. There are also moments with loud noises, screaming, and flashing lights that may be sensitive for some audience members.
HISTORY OF PUFFS

Puffs, or Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic and Magic is a one-act comedy based on well… you know. Matt Cox first dreamed up the idea of Puffs on a subway ride. He thought about how some horrible event would happen to a certain boy who lived each year and imagined how a different student might react to living through the experiences. As he pieced together the play using whatever 90s pop culture and subtle (and not-so-subtle) references to the legally distinct source, he wanted to create a story of a wannabe world-changer that he believed everyone could sympathize with.

Following the first reading at the People’s Improv Theater, edits were made, and the play eventually made its premiere on December 3rd, 2015, where it was only expected to run for five days. Despite initial expectations, the show was a hit and ultimately ran for eight months, eventually being chosen to move to the Off-Broadway Elektra Theatre for two years, before the closure of the theater. The play was moved to The New World Stages’ Stage 5 until its final performance on August 18th, 2019. While there, the play broke multiple sales records for the theater, and a livestreamed performance (later uploaded and available to be watched on streaming services) was published.

Matt Cox found it hard to fit seven years into a 90(ish)-minute play. Cox talked about the difficulties in keeping the important parts of the original source material serious and meaningful. He said it was important “that it still had that sense of really true heart to it, … that way it doesn’t just feel like a parody, which would have been very easy to do; that way it’s something that sticks with you, that sense of heart.” “We all come from theater backgrounds,” he said, “and it was the only way to make it feel like it was an actual story in the same way the books and movies are. The reason they’ve lasted this long is because there’s so many relatable things and putting that in and having there be a reason this story is being told.”

LICENSEING

“Puffs (One Act Edition)” is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

Originally Produced Off Broadway by Tilted Windmills Theatricals (John Arthur Pinckard, David Carpenter)

Originally Produced Off-Off Broadway by Stephen Stout and Colin Waitt

PUFFS was developed in part during a residency with the University of Florida School of Theatre + Dance | Jerry Dickey, School Director

THE VIDEO TAPE OR MAKING OF ELECTRONIC OR OTHER AUDIO AND/OR VISUAL RECORDINGS OF THIS PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTING RECORDINGS OR STREAMS IN ANY MEDIUM, INCLUDING THE INTERNET, IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED, A VIOLATION OF THE AUTHOR’S RIGHTS AND-actionable under UNITED STATES COPYRIGHT LAW. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

SPRING 2023

Millersville University Theatre

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time

based on the novel by Mark Haddon, adapted by Simon Stephens

March 30 – April 8, 2023 | directed by Jonathan Strayer

Please continue supporting student performances with ACMO, the All Campus Musical Organization, as they produce:

The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical

based on the novel by Rick Riordan, book by Joe Tracz with music and lyrics by Rob Rocco | March 16-19, 2023 | directed by Kat Thorpe