



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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The wacky world of Roald Dahl's *Willy Wonka* takes over the Near West Theatre stage

Cleveland, OH (November 4, 2010) - Near West Theatre (NWT) announces its upcoming performances of the Roald Dahl's *Willy Wonka*. Opening on November 19 and running through December 5, performances take place on the third floor of St. Patrick's Club Building at the corner of West 38th Street and Bridge Avenue in Ohio City.

Prepare to have all your preconceived notions about the world-famous candyman and his mysterious factory turned upside-down as a diverse cast of children, teens & adults bring new life and vitality to this musical stage adaptation of Roald Dahl's timeless tale, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Follow our hero, Charlie Bucket, and the 4 other golden ticket winners as they discover the secrets of Willy Wonka's factory, meet the Oompa Loompas and learn the shortcomings of their vices. Featuring classic songs "Pure Imagination" and "The Candy Man," this tale is a frothy, thoughtful blend of scary and fun for both children and adults.

Artistic Director, Bob Navis Jr., explains what makes this such an appropriate and timely production... "*Willy Wonka* is a surprisingly relevant cautionary tale about human excess and consumption and its dangerous effects on our lives, our families and the resources of our planet. Candy is the metaphor for the immediate fix that never satisfies while Charlie and his family live simply and resourcefully, relying on each other for the best that life has to offer. They endure their hardships without resentment and thrive through teamwork. Their affection for each other and a daily cabbage soup seems to be enough. The finding of the Golden Ticket eventually changes everything for them as character is tested and honesty and innocence win the day."

Performances are Fri.-Sun. November 19-21, Fri.-Sun., November 26-28, and Thurs.-Sun., December 2-5. The performance on December 2 is a signed performance by The Heard. Curtain times on Thursday, Fridays, and Saturdays are at 7:30 pm and Sundays at 3:00 pm. All offerings are at St. Patrick's Club Building, located at W.38th and Bridge Avenue* in Ohio City and include free parking. Adult tickets are \$8 and children, 12 & under, are \$6. The Star Seat ticket, which helps NWT fill the gap between the affordable rate it offers its patrons and the actual cost of the production, is \$20 and includes a concession coupon. Tickets are available by calling (216) 961-6391 or can be ordered online at www.nearwesttheatre.org.

*While accessibility is an important part of Near West Theatre's Mission, our current location at W. 38th & Bridge is on the third floor and is unable to accommodate an elevator or chair lift to make it accessible to individuals in wheelchairs or those who have difficulty with stairs. We are focused on providing an accessible space as we continue our progress on our joint capital campaign to build a new theatre in the Gordon Square Arts District.

Near West Theatre is grateful to Medical Mutual of Ohio for their sponsorship of Roald Dahl's *Willy Wonka*. The Ohio Arts Council has helped fund this program with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. NWT is generously funded by Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture and is a member of Greater Cleveland Community Shares. Community Shares supports local nonprofit organizations working for long-term, sustainable, solutions to build a stronger Cleveland. Learn more about Community Shares and supporting social justice through workplace giving at www.communityshares.org.

Star Seat Packages Available

Star Seat donors help bridge the gap between the true cost of an audience member's experience and the affordable rate we offer our guests. Buy this package to help Near West continue to offer affordable, high-quality theatre on the Near West Side. For \$120, you get 7 tickets for any combination of performances plus concession coupons, playbill recognition and other VIP opportunities and benefits. Star Seat Packages are available online at www.nearwesttheatre.org.

History

Since 1978, Near West Theatre has engaged youth on the Near West Side in a positive activity that taps into their energy, allowing them to discover their creativity and present themselves as contributing members of the community. Through a process that is intense, sometimes rugged and ragged, challenging and transforming, Near West Theatre, now intergenerational, engages participants and audience alike. Individuals from all walks of life come together and share their unique life stories and experiences in order to find their own voices and make personal connections with the production. Near West Theatre's unique blend of performing arts and community-building has played an instrumental role in the theatre's success with its audience, community and participants.

NWT is a partner in the Gordon Square Arts District, a collaboration between Near West, Cleveland Public Theatre, and Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization, where it will build a new, accessible performance venue. Go to www.gordonsquare.org for more information on Gordon Square Arts District which has completed Phase One of its capital campaign (includes completion of a streetscape, renovation of the historic Capitol Movie Theatre featuring art and independent films, site acquisition for NWT's new building & gateway plaza, doubled parking capacity, and expanded campus for CPT and seven new roofs for its historic structures).

For more information about the Near West Theatre, our programs, performances or for audition information, please contact the NWT business office at (216) 961-9750.

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