



SLEEPING BEAUTY

with puppets!



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*Our mission—
to educate, entertain
and enrich the lives
of young audiences*

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Sarah Jane Hardy

Associate Artistic Director
John Ellingson

Education Director
Leigh Mallonee

Introducing The Starlings: NWCT's New All-Puppet, All-Bird Acting Troupe

The Tale of Sleeping Beauty is one the world's oldest and most revered fairy tales... and it has just been hijacked by a company of crazy bird puppets. Making their NWCT Mainstage debut, The Starlings will stop at nothing in their quest to seize the spotlight and re-write history. This madcap musical features catchy original songs by Portland duo The Bylines.

The brainchild of NWCT Artistic Director Sarah Jane Hardy and John Ellingson (Associate Artistic Director, puppeteer, and performer), The Starlings are a collection of passionate puppet performers. This bird-puppet troupe features a range of unique personalities and designs, from the smallest hand-puppet (a pair of gloves and two foam eyes) to a large-scale bird that requires two actors to bring to life. Together, these puppets are retelling the classic story of *Sleeping Beauty*, from a birds eye view. The onstage performance will follow two narratives, the classic fairytale itself and a peek behind the curtain as The Starlings comment on and re-work the show in real time.

Hand-created by Ellingson, each puppet took months to reach the stage. A 2016 recipient of the Leslie O. Fulton Fellowship, Ellingson traveled to England for the Beverley Puppet Festival seeking inspiration. Here he discovered a range of imaginative designs that would go on to inform the creation of The Starlings. Upon returning home, he was greeted by a \$20,000 grant from the Oregon Cultural Trust to complete the puppets and mount their first ever production, *The Tale of Sleeping Beauty*.

The Starlings consist of a core group of principal characters, including veteran thespian "Old Wise" (Andres Alcala), legendary "Diva" (Camille Trinkka), "Big Boss" (Sam Burns), and shy newcomer "Little One" (played by Ellingson himself). Supporting them is a large, colorful ensemble made up of dozens of different puppets.

"We wanted to create something immersive, that exists before the curtain is raised and after the final bows," says Director Sarah Jane Hardy. "To accomplish this John has created a small army of bird puppets, who will appear throughout our building, before, after, and during the show."

These offstage, immersive roles will include puppet ushers, stage techs, and Box Officers, creating a bird-filled world the moment you set foot inside the building. In addition, each core character will continue to exist beyond *The Tail of Sleeping Beauty*, through [The Starlings Youtube Channel](#) featuring weekly vignettes and stories following their adventures in Portland. Already, you can follow the first Starling, Getty (the Go-Getter!) an aspiring bird journalist and Artslandia Magazine's Youth Ambassador, in her own online interview series.

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ALL SHOWS Noon & 3pm
JAN 28, 29 • FEB 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26
FEB 11 at Noon: ASL Interpreted Show
FEB 12 at 3pm: Sensory Friendly Show
FEB 18 at 3pm: Audio Described Show
FEB 20 at Noon: School Break Show

TICKETS & INFORMATION
503-222-4480 • NWCTS.ORG
SEASON SUBSCRIBER DISCOUNTS!

Release Date

Jan 6, 2017

End Date

Feb 26, 2017

Media Contact

To set up interviews or discuss other possibilities for stories, please contact:

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