

Press Release: Sept 11, 2015

THE SUN SERPENT



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

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Artistic Director
Sarah Jane Hardy

Associate Artistic Director
John Ellingson

Education Director
Leigh Mallonee

Release Date
Sept 11, 2015

End Date
Oct 24, 2015

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Three Actors Take on 48 Roles in NW Children's Theater's *The Sun Serpent*

"Long Ago, When I Was a Boy, I Survived The Great End." *The Sun Serpent* is an ancient story told through an innovative mix of language, masks, and digital media. When the arrival of Cortes' fleet shatters the world ruled by the Aztecs, two brothers must embark on a journey that explores myth, conflict, and the bond of brotherhood itself.

Written by award-winning playwright Jose Cruz Gonzalez, *The Sun Serpent* explores Cortes' conquest of Mexico through the eyes of young Anahuac (Sam Burns). Following the death of his grandmother Anci (Nelda Reyes) Anahuac must set out in pursuit of Cortes' army to find his older brother Tlememe (Andrés Alcalá) before it is too late. Using dozens of masks, these three actors transform themselves into over 48 different characters throughout the play.

The Sun Serpent was originally performed at Childsplay in Arizona, followed by Mixed Blood Theatre and now NW Children's Theater & School. Actor and Director Andrés Alcalá performed with the original cast and is co-directing with Rachel Bowditch, who headed up the original production. Told in English, Spanish, and Nahuatl and heavily featuring mask work and digital projections, this is a unique production for NWCT.

NWCT's 2015-16 season follows a record-breaking, award-winning 22nd Season. Boasting three sell-out productions, last season saw unprecedented recognition for the Children's Theater in the form of nine Portland Area Musical Theater Awards (PAMTAs) and seven Drammy Awards, including Best Production of a Musical, Best Director, and awards for Costumes and Design. NWCT's 23rd season promises to delight families with stories of familiar friends, fantastical adventure, and the return of two of

NWCT's most popular original productions. *The Sun Serpent* will be performed in repertory with NWCT's production of *Elephant & Piggie's "We Are in a Play"*, and will reach new audiences age eight and up.

The Sun Serpent will also feature the second of four NWCT Sensory Friendly Performances for this season. Featuring shorter run-times, no intermission, reduced or removed lighting and sound cues, and the constant presence of house lights, these performances are specially designed for children on the autism spectrum or with other sensory sensitivities. Based on work done by the Kennedy Center, these performances are accompanied by a unique Social Story to help guide families through the entire theater experience from parking lot to the final bows. NWCT's 2015-16 Season offers four Sensory Friendly Performances free of charge (one each for *Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*, *The Sun Serpent*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Snow White*) thanks to generous funding from The Oregon Cultural Trust and the Jackson Foundation.

The Sun Serpent is produced in part through the support of the Collins Foundation, Regional Arts and Culture Council and Work for Art, Kafoury & McDougal, Schwabe, Williamson, & Wyatt, the Oregon Arts Commission, and NWCT Donor Circle Members. Portland area school students will experience Anahuac's journey during ten student matinee performances.

SAT & SUN 7pm

OCT 3, 4, 9, 10, 11*, 16, 17, 23, 24

*Sensory Friendly Performance

TICKETS & INFORMATION

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