

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# **Metro Theater Company Announces 51<sup>st</sup> Season of Theater and Educational Programs for Young Audiences and Their Caregivers**

**St. Louis, MO (August 21, 2023)** – Metro Theater Company (MTC), St. Louis’s premiere professional theater for youth and families and St. Louis’ third-oldest professional theater company, announces its 51<sup>st</sup> season.

Metro Theater Company’s 2023-24 season celebrates the strength and power we find within ourselves through our connections with others, and the joy that friendship brings, especially in those moments where it is tested. “Season 51 productions are filled with joy. They celebrate acceptance of difference, the importance of friendship, and the strength and wisdom we find in ourselves and our community,” stated Artistic Director Julia Flood. Managing Director Joe Gfaller adds, “As we continue our commitment to reach every child in the St. Louis region over the next decade, this season of live theater and in-school residencies deepens young people’s relationships to one another, our community, and their own imagination,”

The season kicks off with a tour of ***Maddi’s Fridge*** (September 11 – October 22), followed by two productions at The Grandel Theater: ***Eddie & Vinnie*** (October 18 – November 5) and the Tony-nominated ***A Year with Frog and Toad*** (February 7 – March 3). Through a new partnership with St. Louis County Children’s Service Fund, MTC’s programming in Season 51 will include in-school residencies of anchor programs ***Building Community Through Drama*** and ***Say Something, Do Something*** with fourth graders across the University City, Ferguson-Florissant, and Hazelwood school districts. In addition, a special two-day family festival to celebrate 50 years of MTC will be held October 21 and 22. Tickets go on sale to the general public on **August 28**.

**Metro Theater Company 23-24 Season**

**Maddi's Fridge**

By Anne Negri

Adapted from the book by Lois Brandt

Directed by Jess Shoemaker

*September 11 – October 18*

**Touring to schools across the St. Louis metropolitan region. Limited public performances in September and October 2023.**

What if the only way to help a friend was to break a promise? Sofia and Maddi are best friends. They live in the same neighborhood, go to the same school, and play at the same rock-climbing gym. But when Sofia learns a secret about Maddi's family, she's faced with a difficult decision: to keep her promise or tell her parents about Maddi's empty fridge to help her friend. With humor and heart, this play is sure to inspire conversations with your young people about honesty, sensitivity, empathy and helping others. The cast includes Sarah Lantsberger, Gabrielle Watson Torres, and DeAnté Bryant. *Maddi's Fridge* is recommended for ages 5 to 11.

**Free Public Performances**

September 16, 10 am

Buder Library

September 16, 2:30 pm

Central Library

October 1, 2 pm

Stone Barn

Hermann Farm

*Fall Family Festival Performances\**

October 21 & 22, 10:30 am\*\* & 1:30 pm

Grand Center Arts District

On Oct 22, the 10:30 am performance of *Maddi's Fridge* will be Audio Described and ASL-Interpreted. Audio Description by MindsEye.

***Eddie & Vinnie***

A New Play by Jenny Millinger

Directed by Alicia Revé Like

*October 18 – November 5, 2023*

**Grandel Theatre**

Eddie is an unstoppable artist with a uniquely beautiful mind – and his best friend is a gecko. Together, the pair spends hours making intricate and beautiful puzzles. But he'll be stuck in summer school if he can't get his grades up. In a last-ditch effort, Eddie teams up with the overly helpful new girl for the dreaded end-of-year report. Will their presentation on MC Escher save his grades? *Eddie & Vinnie* reminds us that there is more than one way to learn – and more than one way to shine. The cast of *Eddie & Vinnie* includes Caleb Long, Hailey Medrano and Rae Davis. *Eddie & Vinnie* is best enjoyed by ages 6-12.

**Public Performance Schedule**

*Ticketed Public Performances*

October 27 – November 5

Fridays at 7 pm

Saturdays at 10:30 am & 2 pm

Sundays at 2 pm

*Free Fall Family Festival Performances\**

October 21 & 22, 12\*\* & 3 pm

\*\*The October 22 12 pm performance of *Eddie & Vinnie* will be Audio Described and ASL-Interpreted. Audio Description by MindsEye.

***A Year with Frog and Toad***

*Music by Robert Reale*

*Book and Lyrics by Willie Reale*

*Based on the books by Arnold Lobel*

*Presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI)*

*Directed by Julia Flood*

*Music Direction by Jeremy Jacobs*

*Choreography by Tyler White*

February 7 – March 3, 2024

**Grandel Theatre**

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Hibernation is over, and it's time to celebrate! Even though Frog and Toad find joy and wonder in very different things, their year together is filled with adventure. Dive into the delight of Arnold Lobel's award-winning books in this three-time Tony-nominated musical. Across a jazzy, upbeat score, this nostalgic duo reminds us that individuality makes a friendship stronger – delighting longtime fans and the youngest tadpoles alike! The cast of *A Year with Frog and Toad* will be announced at a later date. Recommended for all audiences. Best enjoyed by ages 3 – 8.

### **Public Performance Schedule**

Fridays at 7 pm

Saturdays at 10:30 am & 2 pm

Sundays at 2 pm

Tickets to the mainstage 2023-2024 Season productions are **\$20- \$38**. Tickets go on sale to the general public at 10 am CST on **August 28** and are available through [metroplays.org](https://metroplays.org). For school bookings, email [community@metroplays.org](mailto:community@metroplays.org) or fill out a bookings interest form online at [metroplays.org/education](https://metroplays.org/education).

### **\*Fall Family Festival**

**October 21-22, 2023**

Grand Center Arts District

This fall Metro Theater Company partners with some of our region's most loved arts and education organizations to create two days filled with artmaking, learning, food, and fun. Anchored by MTC's productions of *Maddi's Fridge* and *Eddie & Vinnie*, this festival will help the young people in your life sample all the best of the visual, creative, and performing arts. Food trucks on site. **General admission is free for all. Advance registration is strongly recommended.**

Institutional and 2023-2024 Season support for Metro Theater Company is provided by Regional Arts Commission, Emerson, Crawford Taylor Foundation, Shubert Foundation, Whitaker Foundation, Fred M. Saigh Foundation, Missouri Arts Council, and National Endowment for the Arts.

**About Metro Theater Company:** Since 1973, Metro Theater Company has been creating productions that respect young people's intelligence, tell compelling stories, stimulate curiosity and provoke thoughtful reflection. The Company has reached a total audience of more than two million and has a national reputation for excellence in the field of professional theater for young audiences. Metro Theater Company has received major honors and awards, both locally and nationally. The company is led by Artistic Director Julia Flood and Managing Director Joe Gfaller. For more information, visit [metroplays.org](http://metroplays.org).

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