

**What to Expect at
Merrimack Repertory Theatre's
Theatre for Young Audiences
hosted at
Middlesex Community College's
Richard & Nancy Donahue Family
Academic Arts Center Theatre
240 Central Street, Lowell**



Performance Social Narrative Guide
Welcome to Merrimack Repertory Theatre!
We are happy that you are joining us for
a performance of Elephant and Piggie.



This guide is designed to outline what to expect at the theatre. It will share information about arriving at the theatre, getting settled at the theatre, and expectations during the performance.



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BEFORE YOUR VISIT

We recommend purchasing tickets ahead of time. You can also try to purchase tickets on the day of the show, but they may not be available if the performance is at capacity.

You may purchase tickets for any show by contacting the box office.

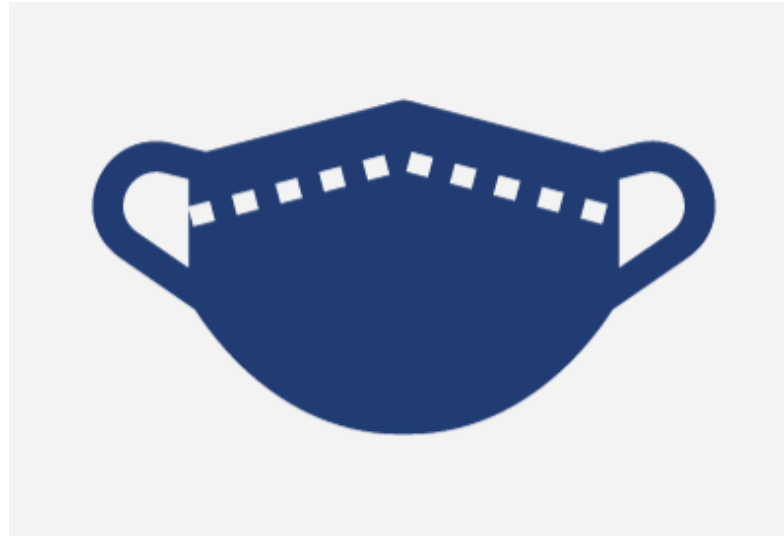
- Phone: 978-654-4678 - Email: box_office@mrt.org

- Visiting Merrimack Repertory Theatre's Enterprise Bank Box Office at 50 East Merrimack Street in Lowell.

Hours: Tuesday – Friday,
11:00am – 4:00pm each day.

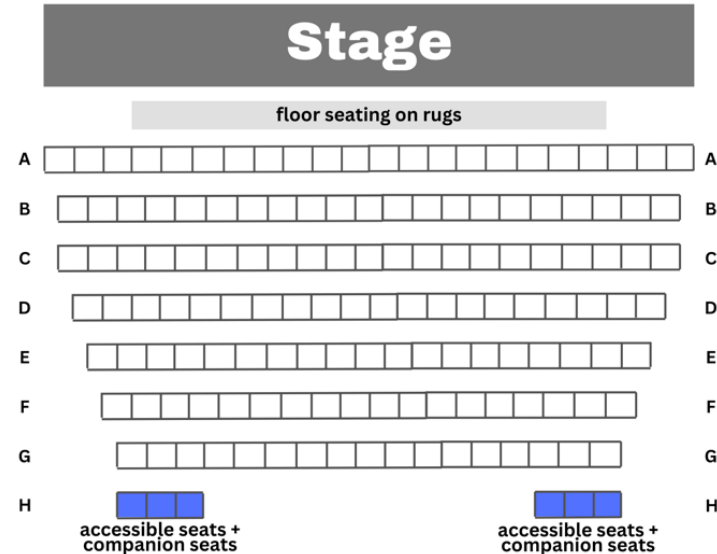


We do not have any COVID protocols that you must follow; however, if you would like to wear a medical face mask, you are more than welcome to do so.

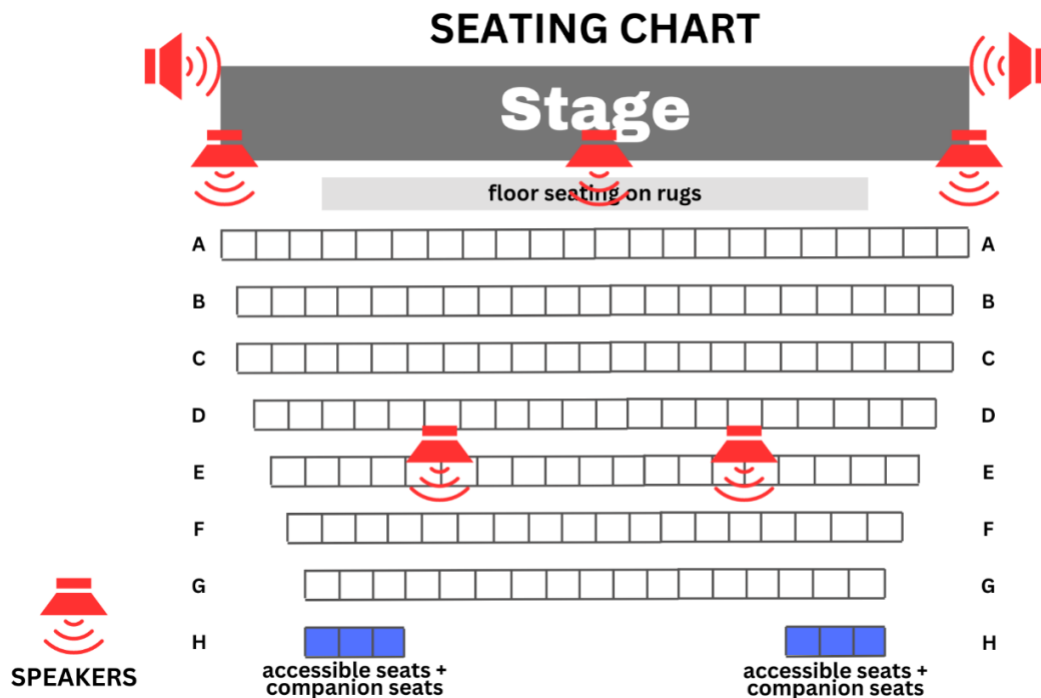


When you purchase a ticket, simply select the number of tickets you wish to purchase. The venue is General Admission with no assigned or preselected seats.

SEATING CHART



If you are sensitive to sound, please let an usher or House Manager know so they can find a seat for you further away from the speakers.

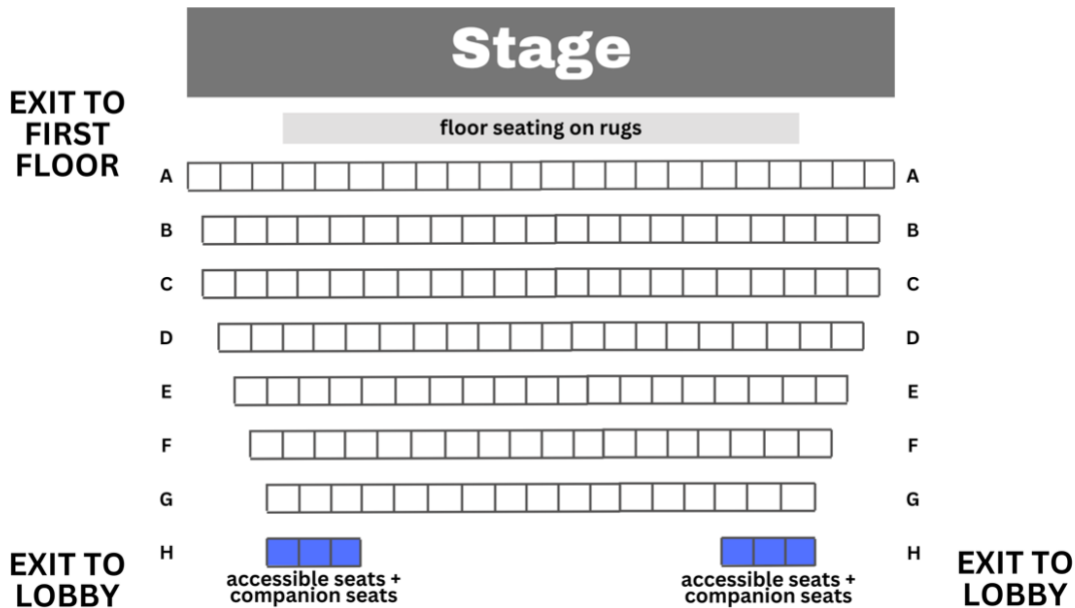


If you need to take breaks during the show, you may want to sit close to an exit. You are free to come and go as you please during the performance.

If you like to move around during the performance, you may want to sit close to one of the entrances/exits of the theatre with easy access to the Lobby.

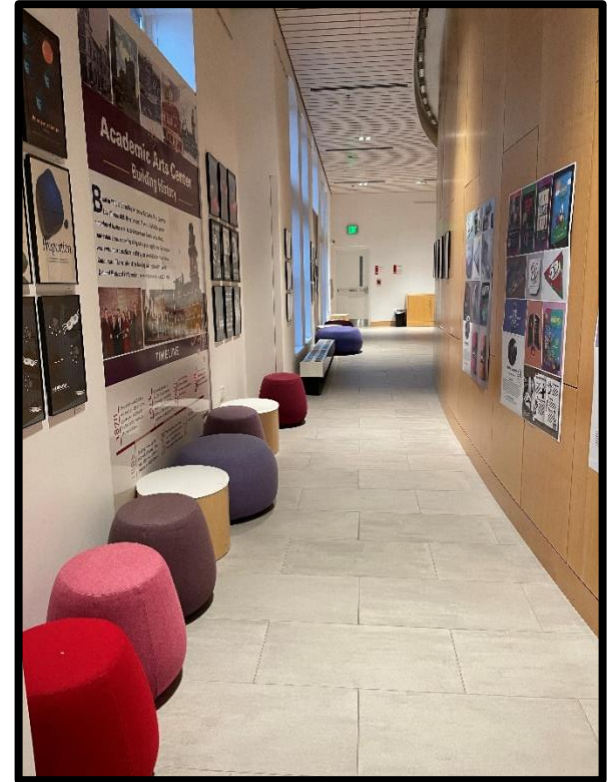
EMERGENCY EXIT
(BACKSTAGE)

SEATING CHART

EMERGENCY EXIT
(BACKSTAGE)

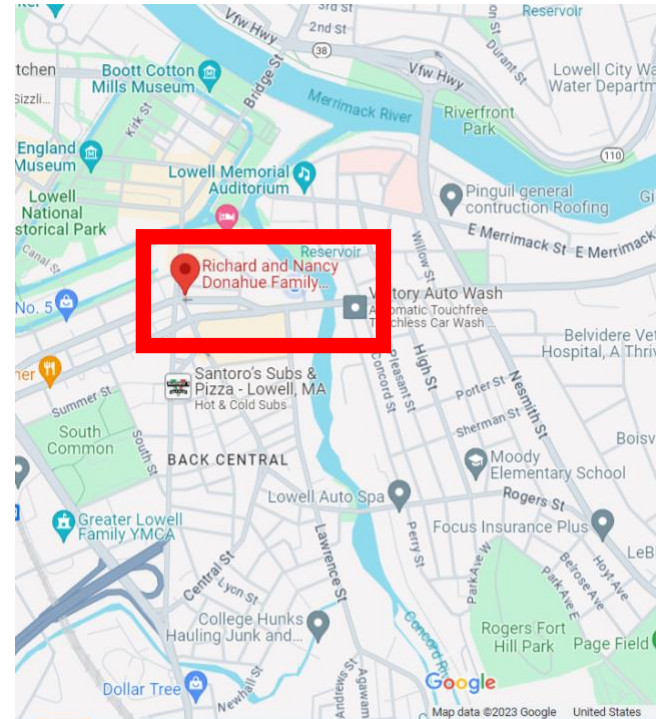
The Lobby is a space where audience members can pace, move, stim, stand, or sit on the ground/in a chair while you are able to watch the show on a monitor.

You are free to use the Lobby at any time during the performance if you need to leave the theatre, as often as you'd like.

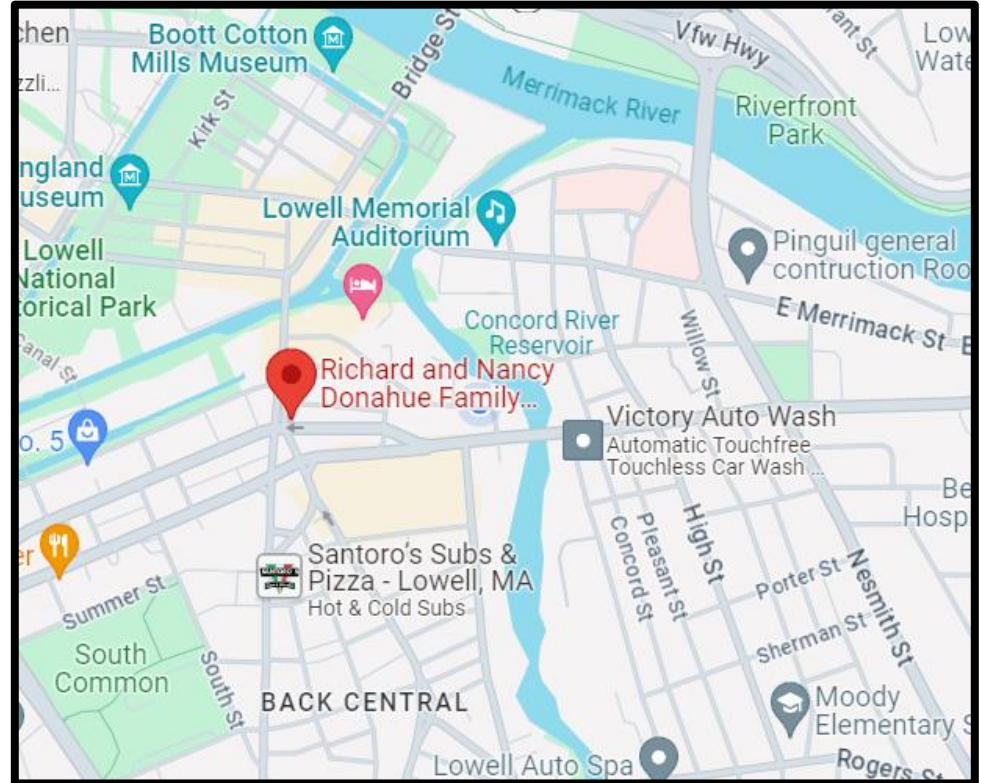


GETTING TO THE THEATRE

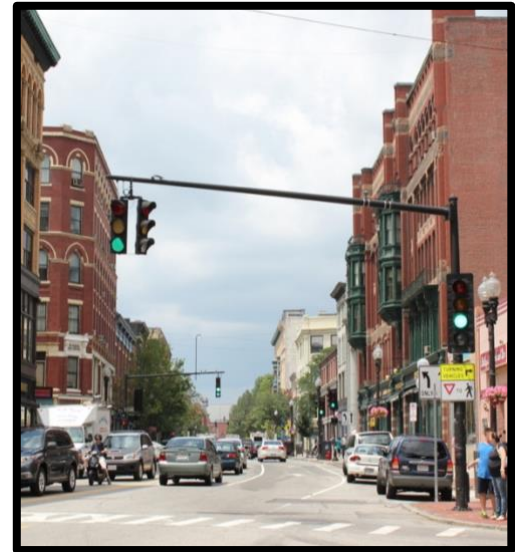
The Middlesex Community College's Richard & Nancy Donahue Family Academic Arts Center is located at 240 Central Street in Lowell, Massachusetts.



The entrance to the building is close to the intersection of Central Street and Green Street.



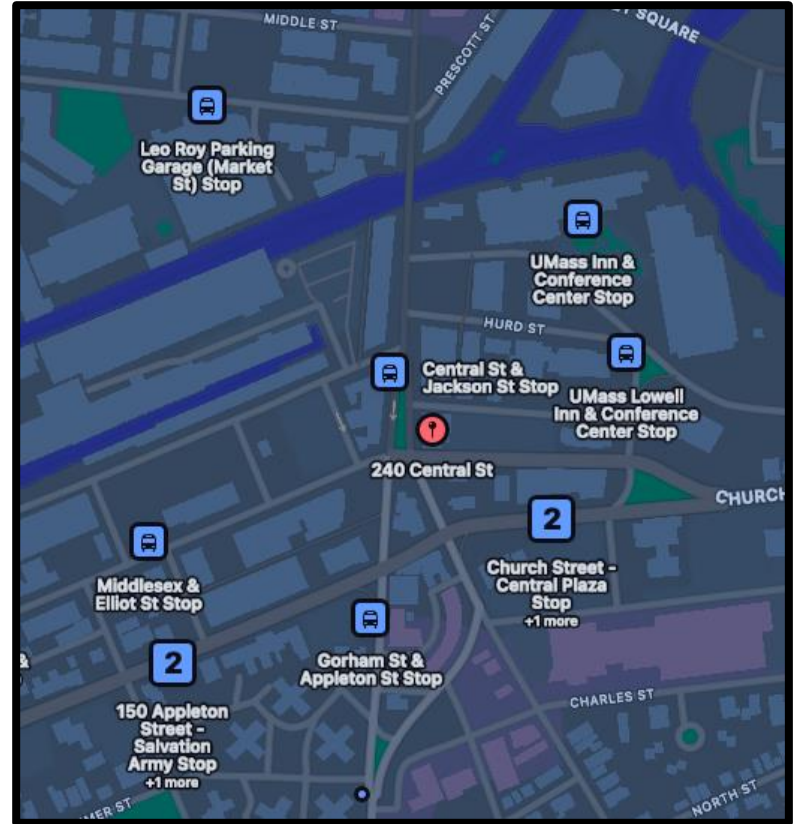
To get to theatre you may walk, take a car, or arrive by bus.



If you are taking a car service or the LRTA Road Runner, you may be dropped off directly in front of the theatre.



To get to the theatre, you may ride a bus. The bus stops are indicated on the map with BLUE icons.



The following Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA) bus stops are nearby.

- Central St & Jackson St Stop – 2 minute walk**
- Church Street – Central Plaza Stop (2) – 3 minute walk**
- Gorham St & Appleton St Stop – 3 minute walk**
- Middlesex & Elliot St Stop – 3 minute walk**
- UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center Stop – 4/6 minute walk**
- 150 Appleton Street – Salvation Army Stop (2) – 4 minute walk**
- Leo Roy Parking Garage (Market Street) Stop – 6 minute walk**

(walking times are estimated)

The sidewalks in Lowell can be uneven due to tree roots and settling of the pavement or concrete. There can also be trolley tracks that cross through the sidewalk. Please use caution.



If you travel by car, there are several options for parking.

On-street metered parking:

Parking is allowed on the side streets surrounding the theatre. Parking kiosks are available. Users need to input their license plate and desired parking duration using the kiosks. The maximum parking time allowed is 2 hours.

The length of the show is just about 1 hour with no intermission.

Unfortunately, you may NOT park in the lot directly behind the building.

City Parking Garages:

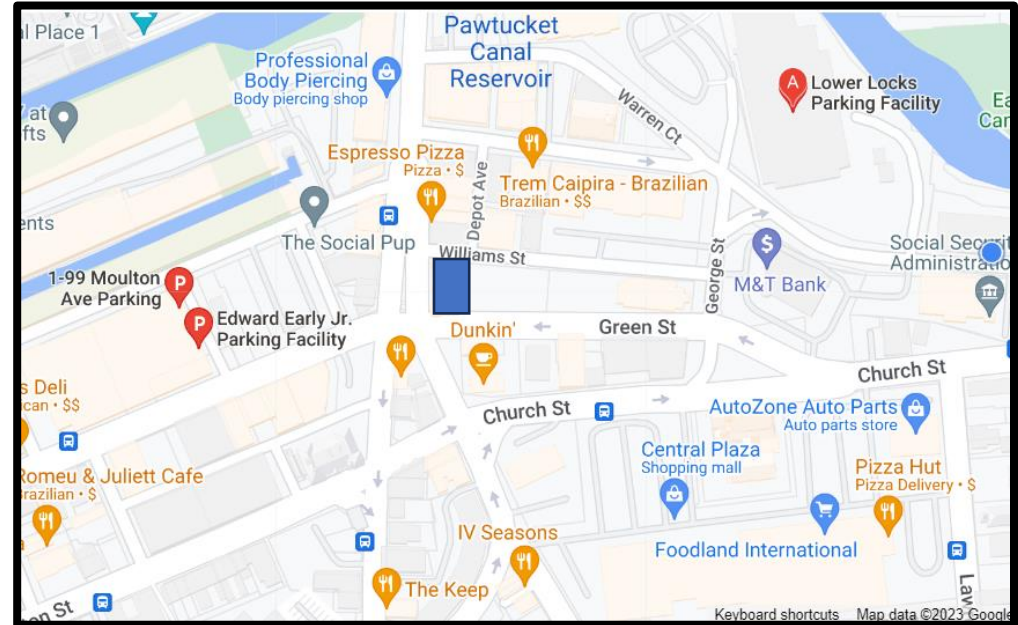
Nearby Parking Facilities are noted on the map with RED pins (theatre is dark blue rectangle), which are about a 5-10 minute walk:

Edward Early Jr. Garage

135 Middlesex Street

Lower Locks Garage

90 Warren Street



If you park at the Edward Early Jr. Garage, you will be able to see the front door of the building.



If you park at the Lower Locks Garage, you will see and approach the building from the back.



WHO YOU MAY MEET

The staff and ushers are friendly, open, and welcoming. Please let them know if they can help. Many of them will have nametags on so they can be identified more easily.

Box Office Staff



Chris Torres
Box Office Manager



Davira Kuy
Box Office Lead



Calvin Plunkett
Box Office Assistant

Our House Managers will wear a shirt and tie or dressier clothing



John Dyson
House Manager

Gabby Davis
Assistant House Manager

There will also be Ushers, who usually wear a white shirt and black pants, to welcome you as you arrive.



ARRIVING AT THE THEATRE

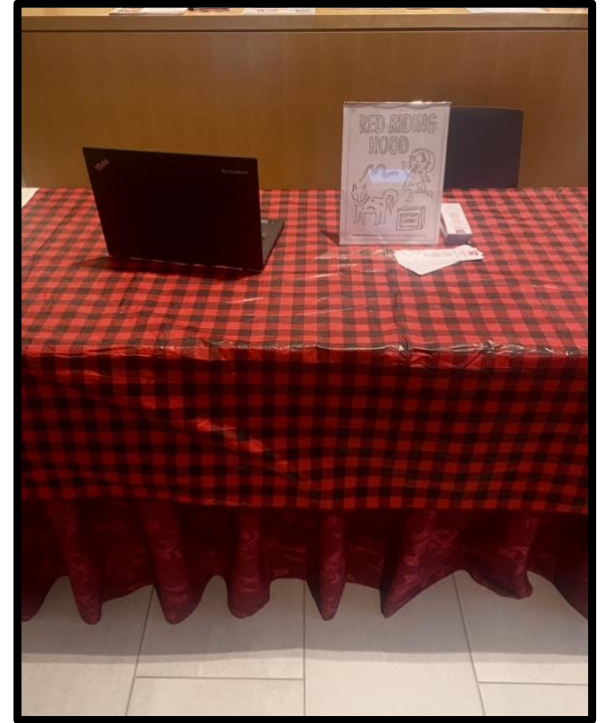
When you arrive, you can enter the building through the entrance at 240 Central Street. You will go through two sets of doors.



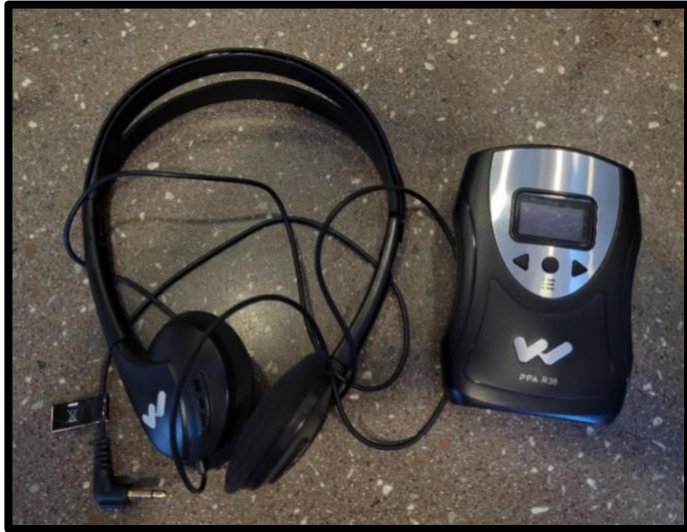
As you enter the building you will be in the Lobby. You will see the security station and the MRT Box Office table.



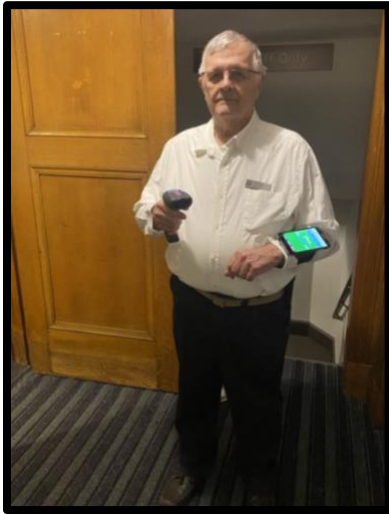
You can get your physical tickets at the Box Office when you arrive. There may be other people picking up tickets, so you may have to wait in line.



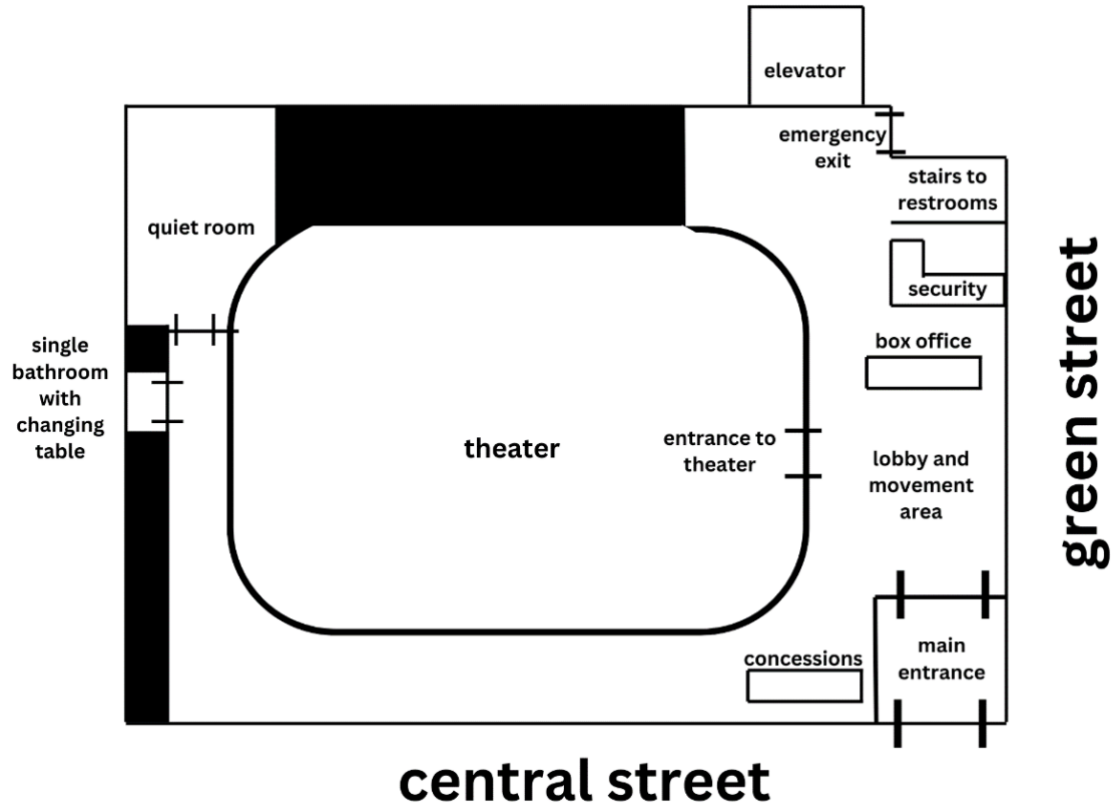
If you would like an assistive listening device, you may get one at the Box Office.



Once you have a ticket or if you use a digital ticket on your device, you will show it to an usher to scan. The ushers usually wear a white shirt and black pants. The scanner will make a beeping noise when your ticket is scanned.



You can refer to this map to understand where important spaces are in the Lobby area, including the theater, the movement area, bathrooms, and our quiet room.



BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

There is a large Lobby area where you can wait prior to finding a seat in the theatre. There is art on the walls by students. There is information about the prior use of the building that is now the theatre and classroom space. There are several seating options where you wait.



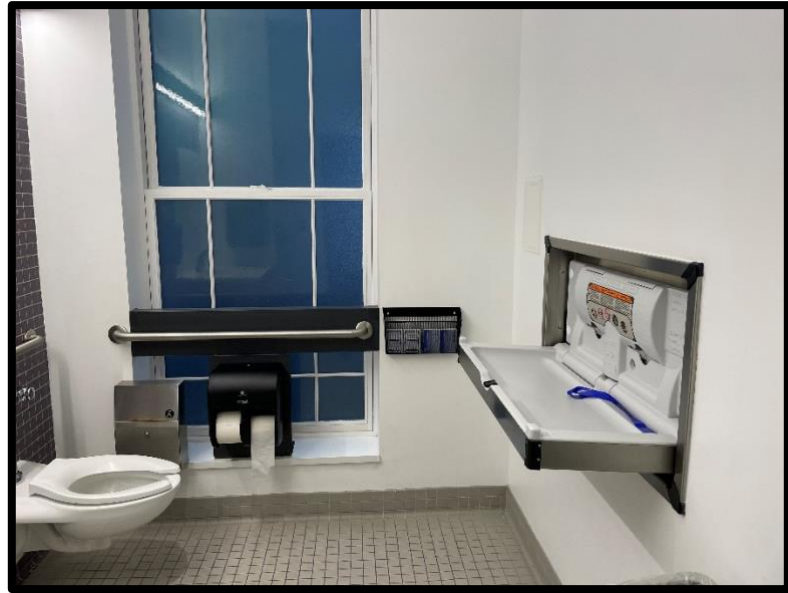
The Lobby is a good place to have a snack or drink before the show. You may NOT eat and drink in the theatre during the performance. Trash cans for food and beverage waste can be found in the Lobby and at theatre entrances.



If you have a jacket and would like to hang it up, there is a coat rack area behind the Box Office table and security desk.



You may want to visit the restroom before the show. There is a single stall with diaper changing table on the ground level floor.



There are additional multi-stall restrooms on the lower level accessible via a staircase or the elevator. There are signs that direct towards the restroom. You can also ask a staff member if you need help finding the restroom or anything else. The restrooms are ADA compliant.



There is a water fountain next to the restroom. Feel free to bring a refillable water bottle.

We also have bottled water available for purchase.



While you wait, you can access the WiFi

WiFi Network: MCC Guest

You must sign-in with your email address.

Throughout the Lobby, there will be flyers posted with the following information: the performance's run time, as well as any design elements in the show that are important to note.


These can include the usage of loud noises, and other show-specific design elements.

RED RIDING HOOD

SHOW RUN TIME

APPROX. 70 MINUTES

Please see the House Manager or Usher if you have any concerns.
Thank You.

 MERRIMACK REPERTORY THEATRE
2023-24 SEASON
WWW.MRT.ORG | 978.654.4678

If you have a question or would like further information about anything listed or want to double check if other specific elements not listed are utilized in the performance, please ask a House Manager. The House Manager can usually be found behind the Concessions Table in the Lobby.

You can enter the theatre when the doors open, usually about 30 minutes before the performance. Please note, no food or drink are allowed in the theatre. Please enjoy these items in the Lobby.



An usher will direct you inside the theatre. You may select any open seat as there are no assigned seats for the show.



The theatre looks like this.



A few more views of inside the theatre.



The theatre looks like this from the stage.



On the way to your seat, you can pick up a copy of the playbill or receive a copy from an usher. You can also scan a QR code to access a digital copy. A large print playbill is available in the Lobby.

THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

**ELEPHANT AND PIGGIE'S
"WE ARE IN A PLAY!"**

BOOK AND LYRICS BY **MO WILLEMS** MUSIC BY **DEB WICKS LA PUMA**

JEANNE DYAR
STUDY GUIDE SPONSOR

 MERRIMACK REPERTORY THEATRE
WWW.MRT.ORG | 978.654.4678

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  MIDDLESEX
Community College  UMass
LOWELL

PERFORMED AT RICHARD AND NANCY DONAHUE FAMILY ACADEMIC ARTS CENTER

SCHOOL SHOWS
JANUARY 8-24, 2025

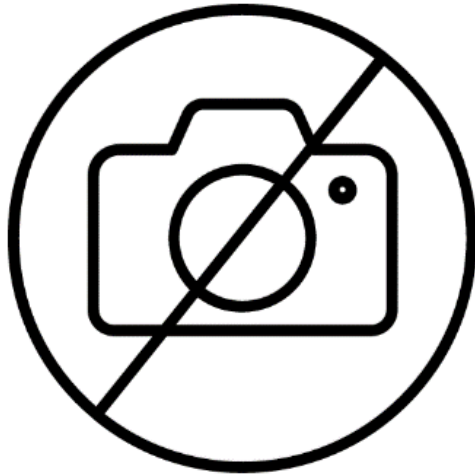
PUBLIC PERFORMANCES
JANUARY 25, 2025

Once you are seated, you may have to wait in your seat for a little while before the show begins. While you wait, you can read the playbill.

The playbill shares more information about the production, creative team, and the play.

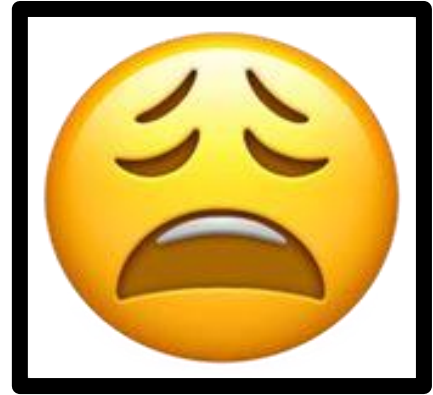
DURING THE PERFORMANCE

The show will begin. A pre-show announcement will be played through the speakers. During the show, you may not take pictures or videos of the performance.



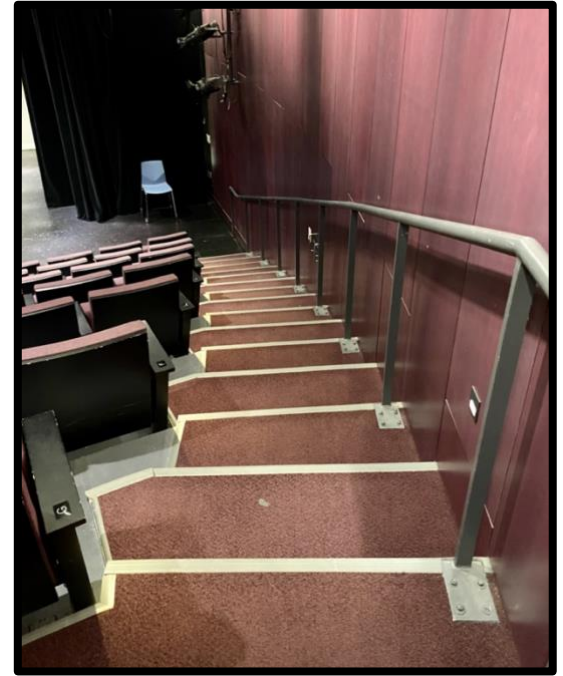
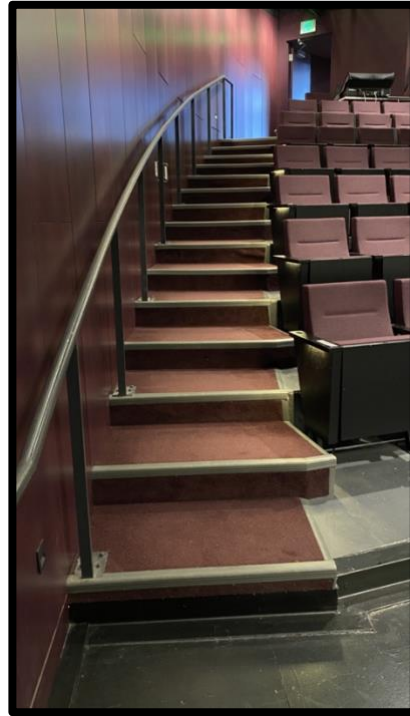
The lights will remain lit on the audience during the show. There will not be any flashing lights or abrupt transitions. The sound levels are lowered. If there are any technical aspects of the show to be aware of, it will be noted on signs going into the theatre. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask one of our volunteer ushers, the House Manager, or our Box Office staff.

The experience of seeing a live performance may be new to you. Or, this may be one of the first times you have visited this theatre.

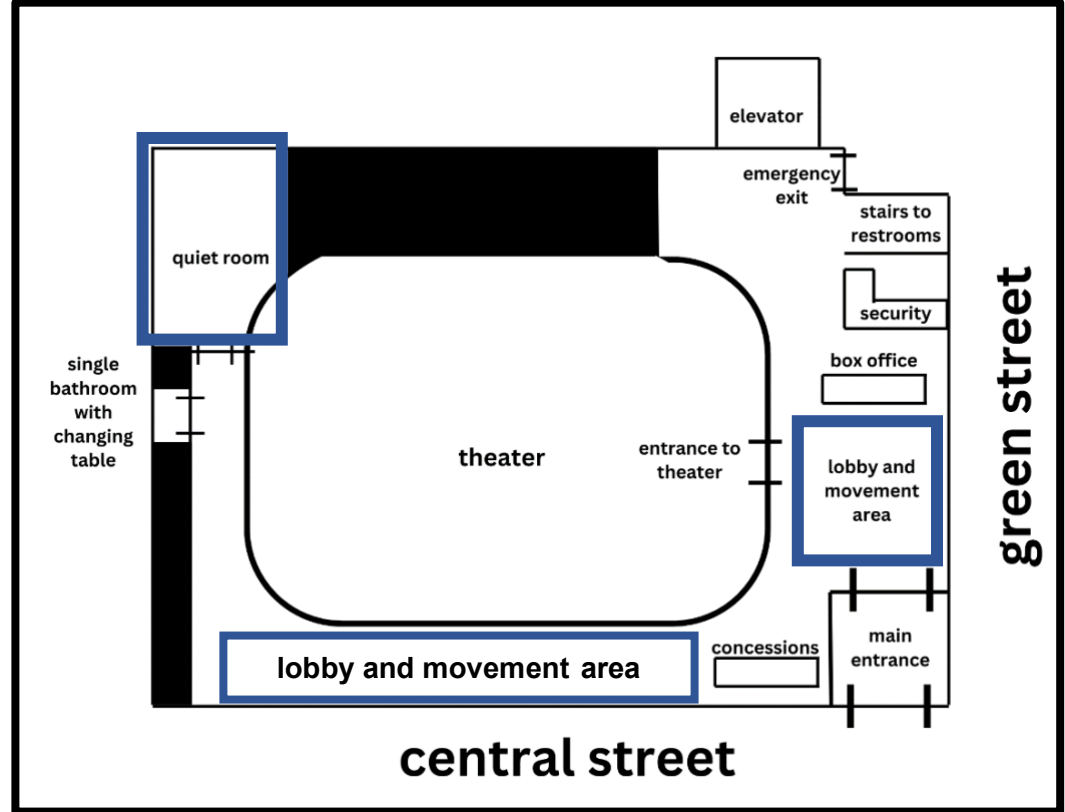


It is OK to feel nervous, excited, or overwhelmed. If you need to make some noise, take breaths, or move about a little bit, that is OK.

It is **NOT** safe to stand, move around, or put items in the aisles of the theatre. Please keep the aisles clear and be aware that actors, crew, and other audience members will be moving throughout the aisles during the show.



If you need to move around more during the show, you can utilize the movement area in the Lobby or visit the Quiet Room.



The movement area is a safe place to move about freely during the performance. A staff member can help direct you to this location.



This is also a good place to go if you need to have a snack during the performance.

While in the movement area, you can continue to hear the performance dialogue through speakers in the Lobby by the Box Office table and on the monitor.

You can choose to return to the performance when you are ready, or you can stay here for the rest of the performance.

If you need a break from the performance, you may also utilize the Quiet Room: this room has softer lighting, comfortable furniture, and other useful tools for regulation. A staff member can help direct you to this location.

You can choose to return to the performance when you are ready, or you can stay here.



If you need support during the show, you can ask an usher or staff member to help you.

Ushers usually wear white shirts and black pants. Our House Manager wears a dress shirt and tie. The House Manager is usually behind the Concessions Table in the Lobby.

The ushers and staff are friendly, open, and welcoming.



AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

When the show is over, everyone will applaud and cheer. Some people will stand while clapping. It may get a bit loud.



Then, you will exit the theatre. This may take a few minutes and be a little crowded because the whole audience may try to leave the theatre at once. The ushers help make this process smooth.

Please be sure to take all your belongings from your seat and get your coat if you used the coat rack in the Lobby.

If you left something behind during your visit, we do have a Lost & Found area. You can call the Enterprise Bank Box Office at 978-654-4678 or email them at box_office@mrt.org to arrange a time to come back to pick up your item.

If you borrowed an assistive listening device, please return it to an usher, the House Manager, or other staff members before you leave.



Following our shows, we host Post Show Discussions:

These are opportunities for audience members to ask the actors and creative team questions following a performance. This discussion takes place in the theatre about five minutes after the show ends. Not all guests stay for this event but all are invited. If you would like to stay for the discussion, remain in the theatre following the performance.

If you would like to not attend the post show discussion, you can leave the theatre.

***There is usually five minutes after a performance before the beginning of the discussion*. You may leave the theater to use the restroom and return to the theater for the discussion.**

An MRT staff member will facilitate the session, which typically runs 20-25 minutes. These discussions are always announced prior to the show if they are occurring at that performance.

Following the performance or post-show discussion, you will exit the building through the double doors where you entered.

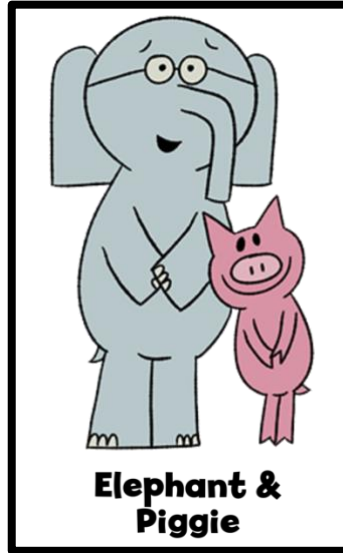


If you are waiting for a ride, you may wait in the building until they arrive.



SHOW SPECIFICS: ELEPHANT AND PIGGIE'S "WE ARE IN A PLAY!"

Sensory-Friendly Performance – Saturday, January 25, 2024



The performance starts at approximately 11:00AM. Sometimes, a show may begin a few minutes after this start time if more time is needed for audience members to arrive and settle in the theater.

The show is about 60 minutes long.

There is no intermission (a break in the middle of the performance).

CHARACTERS

During the show, the actors will play characters in the story.

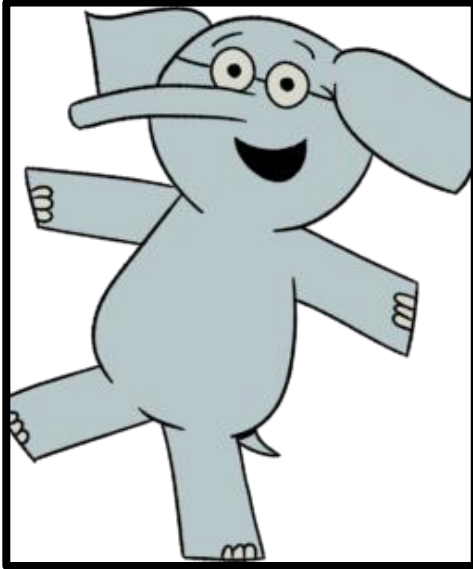
During the show, the characters will ask the audience questions.

Audience help is wanted, and you are encouraged to respond during these moments!

During one song, two actors will walk through the aisles.

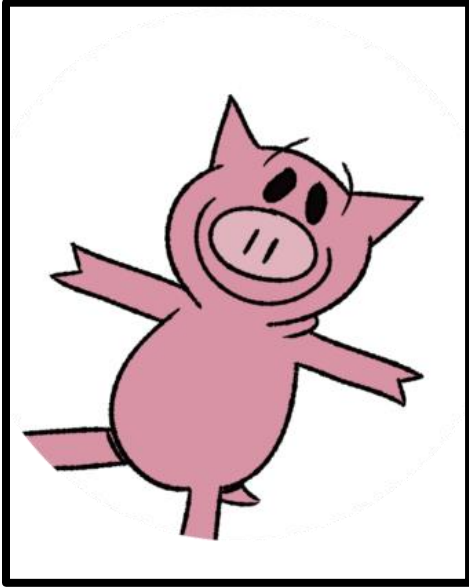
The actors will not touch the audience members.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS



Gerald (Elephant) – Gerald is a formally-dressed elephant who is best friends with Piggie.

Peter Carranza is an actor who plays Gerald in our show.



Piggie (Piggie) – Piggie is a curious pink pig who is best friends with Gerald.

Katie Wiitala is an actor who plays Piggie in our show.



The Squirrelles – The Squirrelles are 3 back-up singing squirrels who are friends with Gerald and Piggie.



Vanessa Waugh, Gabriella Navarrete, and Bronte Ryan are three actors who play the Squirrelles in our show.

Dog – Dog is a dutiful delivery dog.



Vanessa Waugh is an actor who plays Dog in our show.

Penguin – Penguin is a sarcastic ice cream seller.



Gabriella Navarrete is an actor who plays Penguin in our show.

Understudies are people who perform if the actor cannot perform the show at a performance. Our understudies are:



Ryan Belanger
(Gerald understudy)



Bronte Ryan
(Piggie Understudy)

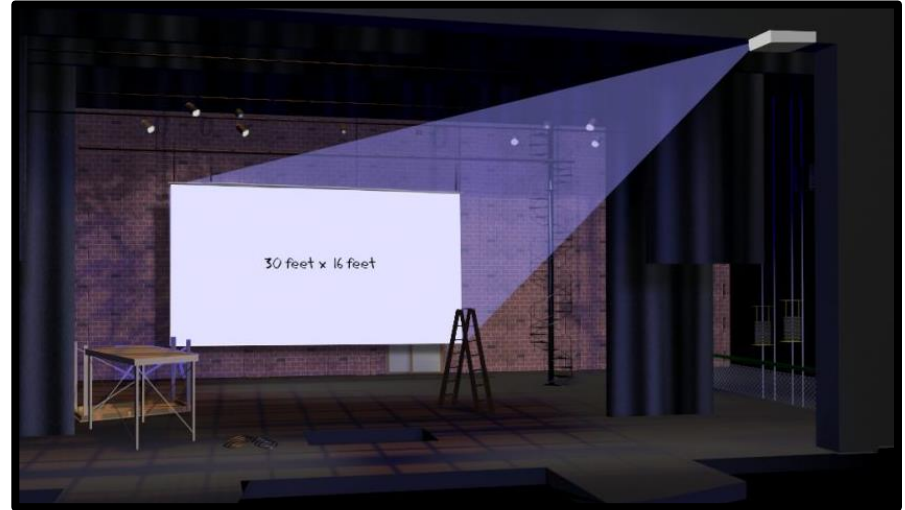
STORY SYNOPSIS

Elephant and Piggie's "We Are In A Play!" by Mo Willems and Deb Wicks La Puma is a musical about best friends Gerald and Piggie. Gerald worries that something could go wrong that would end their friendship in the next 1 hour, but Piggie is not worried at all and sees the great possibilities of their friendship. Then, Piggie and Gerald are invited to a party hosted by the Squirrelles, three singing squirrels who love to have a good time. They embark on an adventure to attend the party. Over the course of the musical, Gerald and Piggie learn about sharing, how to get ready for a pool party, and how not to get angry at a friend even when they break your toy. At the end of the show, Gerald and Piggie are happy and remain best friends.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Projections

This performance of Elephant and Piggie's "We Are In A Play!" will utilize projections. This is when a computer image is displayed by a projector against a blank screen to visually help tell the story.



Lighting and Sound notes:

- There is music before and during the show. Music and sounds are used to highlight action on the stage.
- House lights will remain raised slightly throughout the show.
- Loud sound levels have been reduced for this performance. If additional sound sensitivity support is required, earplugs are available at the Box Office table in the Lobby.
- There are some gentle light movements during the show.
- There will be moments where the lights are moving in the audience area of the theater, but no lights will be shining in the audience's eyes.

- There will be a brief blackout (when all lights are turned off on the stage) for one scene towards the end of the show briefly.
- There is a sudden light shift when Piggie's toy breaks.
- There are a few louder sounds during this show: elephant stomping by actors, toy trumpet sounds from Piggie, and sound effects of objects crashing and breaking together.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS

- A limited number of bags that include earplugs and small fidget items are available at the Box Office table.
- Electronic devices will be allowed in the back three rows of seating.
- A Quiet Room with low lighting, small activities, and comfort items is available on the ground floor. You can access it from the Lobby.
- Accessibility Assistants (trained staff and volunteers) are available throughout the theatre, the lobby area, and the Quiet Room.

Please feel free to bring comfort items from home to help make the experience enjoyable.

CONTENT TRANSPARENCY

The story of Elephant and Piggie's "We Are In A Play!" contains elements and themes that may be scary to some audience members.

This includes:

- characters being sad, mad, upset, and loud

If you have any specific questions about content and the show, please feel free to contact our Box Office.

**We hope that you have a good experience and
will join us for another performance in the future!**



We are constantly learning, so please let us know if there is something missing from this document that would improve your visit to the theatre.

You may email us at: info@mrt.org or call us at 978-654-4678

Many thanks to the MRT Staff who helped develop this document.

We also received great training and guidance from ConsultAbility (their website is <https://www.consultability.org/>)