



2017 - 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

ALASKA
JUNIOR THEATER
2017 - 2018 PROFESSIONAL FAMILY THEATRE



ALASKA
JUNIOR THEATER

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Alaska Junior Theater (AJT) has successfully closed our 36th Season. We opened in October 2017 with a special Halloween performance of *Journey to Oz*, an immersive production with singing, dancing and acting adapted from L. Frank Baum's tales of Dorothy and her adventures in Oz. In December, we presented Lightwire Theater's *A Very Electric Christmas* to sell out crowds. In February, we learned about the *Anatomy of the Piano* with Will Pickvance. In March, *Step Afrika!* brought its blend of percussive dance styles practiced by historically African American fraternities and sororities, African traditional dance and influences from a variety of other dance forms. We ended the season with the always engaging Pushcart Players in *Peter and the Wolf*. In all, we had a good mixture of music, stories and life lessons for children to take away from what we called our "Season of Journeys."



Students dancing with *Step Afrika!* during one of three workshops they lead while in Anchorage!

During 2017-2018, the December show, *A Very Electric Christmas*, exceeded our school show field trip expectations by 34%. Our Annual Benefit Dinner featured *Step Afrika!*, and we raised \$22,500 for our education programs. This fiscal year, AJT continued to make progress toward reaching our strategic goals through programming and outreach by accomplishing the following:

- 38,746 students and teachers attended our school performances with 7,837 of those attending from a Title I (low-income) school. The school performances achieved 98% of the revenue goal.
- In partnership with 21st Century Community Schools, AJT hosted artist workshops in Title I After-School programs at **Alaska Native Cultural Charter School, Eagle River, Muldoon, North Star, Nunaka Valley, Ptarmigan, Mountain View, Taku, Wonder Park, Willow Crest Elementary Schools and Begich Middle School** with a focus on dance, theatre and music.
- At the Halloween night performance of *Journey to Oz*, AJT partnered with 18 organizations to provide AJT's fifth community Trick-or-Treat Party after the public show; continuing a successful AJT Halloween Tradition.
- 268 volunteers helped make this season a success with 1,090 hours. This helped AJT raise the curtain on 42 performances, host 35 outreach events and change the lives of over 49,000 individuals in Anchorage and the surrounding communities.
- AJT's Board held a wine tasting event, welcome dinners, a garage sale and a Tequila Tasting BBQ raising \$12,267 towards our Education Programs.

As part of our mission of bringing the best performing arts from around the world to Alaska's young audiences, AJT continues to offer subsidized tickets to age-appropriate school shows with direct ties to Alaska Content Standards, study guides and bus transportation for students. Reaching nearly 38,800 students and teachers and providing 1,967 full scholarships throughout the year, AJT is ensuring every child has access to the wonderful world of LIVE performance.

AJT could not fulfill our mission without the generosity of our patrons, our volunteers, our sponsors and donors! Thank you for your continued support. By being involved with Alaska Junior Theater, you enrich the lives of young people and families in our community through the performing arts.

Sincerely,

Yvonne Charles

Lainie Dreas



Yvonne Charles
Board President



Lainie Dreas
Executive Director

[It is] wonderful to have students in the community seeing live arts. This is very valuable and makes a lasting impression.

– Kindergarten Teacher, Ursa Major Elementary.

ABOUT ALASKA JUNIOR THEATER

Alaska Junior Theater (AJT) is a nonprofit organization that has been bringing the best in professional theater from around the world to Alaska's youth and family audiences for 36 years. Each year, nearly 40,000 students attend a variety of live performances, which share the common educational goal of "bringing learning to life." For many students, AJT's school-time presentations are their only exposure to the performing arts.

SUPPORTING EDUCATION

Each show we present has a strong educational theme. Our shows are often able to inspire many students who cannot be reached in a more traditional classroom setting. Teachers also rely on our study guides to prepare their students for what they will see and to create classroom projects in history, social studies, geography, science and other fields. To augment our performances, we offer teacher and student performing arts workshops and master classes whenever they are available.

BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

AJT is committed to building a stronger community by presenting programs that offer different cultural perspectives to Alaska's children - thereby expanding their horizons, opening new worlds of insight into other cultures and inspiring them to work towards overcoming barriers. We also offer a public family series, allowing all members of the family to enjoy high-quality entertainment together.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGHOUT ALASKA

AJT continues to work on strengthening partnerships to bring theatre, music and dance performances to young people and families in smaller Alaskan communities. For the 2017-2018 Season, AJT built upon its relationships with cultural and community organizations with our Halloween Trick-or-Treat Party.

CREATING ACCESSIBILITY

AJT is committed to keeping ticket prices low, allowing children of all financial levels to have a professional theatre experience. Our low educational ticket price of \$8 in Anchorage includes not only a performance, but also bus transportation for students and teachers to and from the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. This price covers half our costs of presenting the shows. To subsidize the remaining \$8 of each ticket, we actively fundraise and rely on the support of corporations, foundations and individuals with a strong community spirit to provide scholarship support. In addition, we fundraise to offer full scholarships, at a cost of \$15 each, to students with financial need. Since our inception, we have presented the best in the performing arts to over 1 million children and parents!



The cast of *Journey to Oz* posing with children at the Halloween party.



Members of Step Afrika! leading a workshop at the Mountain View Library.



The Pushcart Players with students at Wonder Park Elementary School

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ACHIEVEMENTS

The mission of Alaska Junior Theater is to bring the best performing arts from around the world to Alaska's youth and family audiences, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Highlights of AJT's 2017-2018 Season:

- Provided 1,967 student scholarships to school shows.
- Raised the curtain on 42 performances.
- Reached 49,451 community members through educational performances and outreach activities.
- Partnered with 268 volunteers who contributed 1,090 of hours to ensure youth have access to the performing arts.
- Conducted 35 master classes, lectures or outreach events.
- Allocated 496 complimentary tickets to public shows.
- Distributed pre-performance study guides to teachers in the Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna Borough School district teachers.

Journey to Oz – Experiential Theater Company gave six school performances, a library reading and craft event, two theatre workshops and one public show in the Atwood Concert Hall for more than 10,894 diverse audience members in the Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough. AJT's annual Halloween Trick-or-Treat Party was held after the public show on all four floors of the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, giving community businesses a chance to participate in a safe environment to hand out candy to kids.

A Very Electric Christmas – Exceeded all expectations with 12,136 students and teachers attending. Lightwire Theater is becoming very well known and appreciated in our community.

Anatomy of the Piano – This was a truly fantastic show that entertained and educated everyone who got the change to see Will Pickvance turn a piano into so much more. AJT presented Anatomy of the Piano with Will Pickvance for eight school shows reaching 3,042 students, teachers and chaperones.

Step Afrika! – ***Step Afrika!*** reached 10,957 community members through performances and outreach events. Underground Dance Company, SanKosa Dance Theatre of Alaska and The Drift Gallery Dance Studio each performed a piece to create an opening act for the public show. This dance company owned the stage with its percussive dance styles practiced by historically African American fraternities and sororities, African traditional dance and influences from a variety of other dance forms.



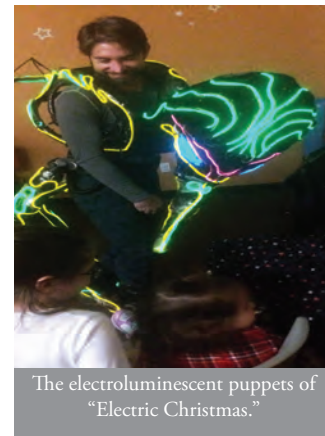
Local Sororities and Fraternities gave a fabulous Welcome Dinner for Step Afrika! at Clark Middle School.

AJT's Annual Benefit – Step Afrika! performed as we celebrated 36 years of bringing the best in professional family theatre to Alaska during our Annual Benefit Dinner in March and raised more than \$22,500.00 for our Education Programs.

Peter and the Wolf - The always engaging Pushcart Players delighted students and families with their reinvention of Prokofiev's classic musical story. With performances and outreach events, these artists reached 8,476 members in our community.



Makeshift stage for a *Journey to Oz* workshop with excited



The electroluminescent puppets of "Electric Christmas."



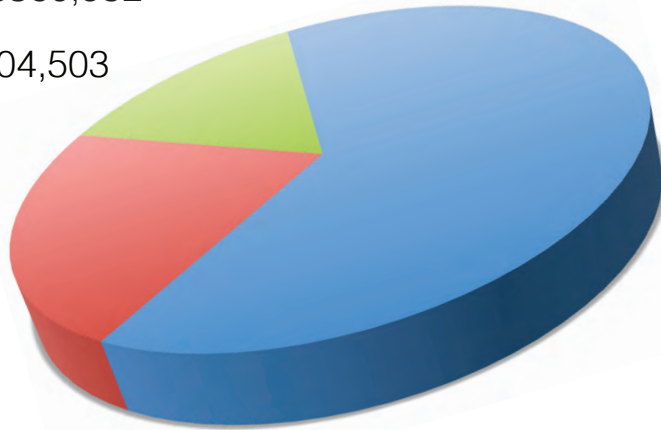
Will Pickvance showing off the Anatomy of a Piano at the Loussac Library.



Pheobe Taylor of Pushcart Players helping make a wolf mask for a young fan.

Total Revenue: \$532,655

- Earned Income: \$360,952
- Contributions: \$104,503
- Grants: \$67,200



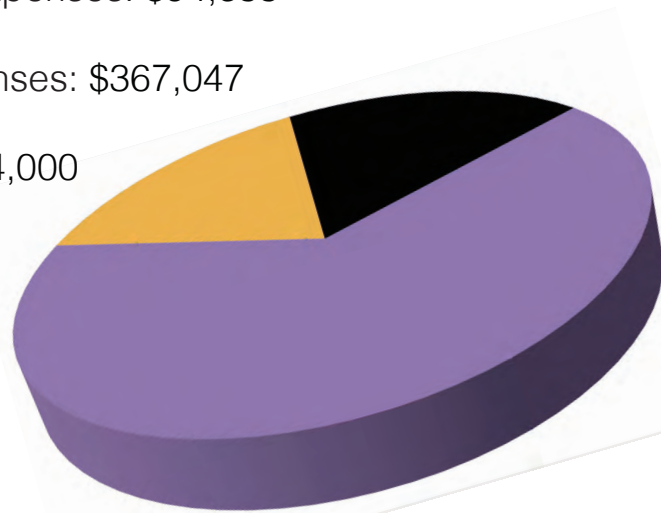
Journey to Oz



A Very Electric Christmas

Total Expenses: \$545,902

- Administrative Expenses: \$94,855
- Production Expenses: \$367,047
- Troupe Fees: \$84,000



Anatomy of the Piano



Step Afrika!



Peter and the Wolf

Alaska Junior Theater's performances would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. Thank you!





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Ryli Meehan
Rod Mehrtens
Tish Millette
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