

NYS Theatre Institute Study Guide

NYSTI's production of

Disney's



Alice in
Wonderland

JR.

© Disney

*Music and Lyrics by Sammy Fain and Bob Hilliard,
Oliver Wallace and Cy Coban, Allie Wrubel and
Ray Gilbert, Mack David, Al Hoffman and Jerry
Livingston*

*Music Adapted and Arranged and Additional
Music and Lyrics by Bryan Louiselle*

*Book Adapted and Additional Lyrics by
David Simpatico*

Based on the 1951 Disney film "Alice and
Wonderland" and the novels "The Adventures of
Alice in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking
Glass" by Lewis Carroll

...NYSTI education programs

For Teachers

INSERVICE/TEACHER PREVIEW

A free, two-hour program offering a chance to meet the director and designers. Look behind the scenes...walk the set. Observe a segment of rehearsal. Gather ideas for your classroom and updated information.

EDUCATOR PREVIEWS

Unable to join us for the Inservice? We can arrange for you to see a rehearsal.

PERUSAL SCRIPTS FOR EDUCATORS

Contact the NYSTI Education Department at (518)274-3286.

For Teachers and Students

PRE-SHOWINTRO/CLASSROOM PREP

An interactive PowerPoint presented by an Institute educator, tracing the technical creation of the production, introducing characters and exploring the responsibilities of the audience. To arrange call (518) 274-3286 or email cbs@nysti.org. There is a fee for this program.

POST PERFORMANCE CLASSES

Interdisciplinary teaching by NYSTI teacher/actors and teacher/technicians connecting with the specific performance. An integration of the performance into the classroom curriculum occurring in the theatre building following a 10AM performance. Scheduled by request. There is a fee for the program. To arrange call (518) 274-3286 or email cbs@nysti.org.

For additional information regarding availability and cost visit the Educators' Greenroom at:

www.nysti.org/greenroom.shtm

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Alice in Wonderland Jr Study Guide developed by the staff of the New York State Theatre Institute and educators.

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Patricia Di Benedetto Snyder, Producing Artistic Director

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Dear Colleague,

The power of theatre to engage students in multi-disciplinary learning is at the heart of this guide. We hope that the connections that we have made are helpful in providing integrated learning experiences for your students as you develop lesson plans, units of study, or simply expand upon the theatre experience. To that end, we have noted connections to the NYS Learning Standards.

Here are some activities connecting Alice in Wonderland Jr. with the NYS Learning Standards for the Arts.

Standard #1: Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theatre and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts.

- *Use an improvisation to explore the feeling of not fitting in.*
- *Write a scene about a journey to a different "Wonderland."*

Standard #2: Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles.

- *Attend post-performance classes with the teacher/technicians and teacher/actors.*
- *Arrange a Pre-Show Intro/Classroom Preparation.*

Standard #3: Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought.

- *Use the At the Performance section of the guide to discuss individual interpretations and evaluation of the creative team's work.*
- *Use the General Questions section to prompt discussion of this theatre experience.*

Standard #4: Students will develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts in turn shape the diverse cultures of past and present society.

- *Use various sources to explore other depictions of Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass.*
- *Read a chapter from the original book and draw comparisons to the Alice in Wonderland Jr. version.*

...before the performance

OVERVIEW

Alice in Wonderland Jr., brings the 1951 animated © Disney classic to the stage in a musical adaptation for younger audience.

The popular children's story most commonly referred to as *Alice in Wonderland* recounts the adventures of a little girl named Alice who finds herself in a strange and exciting place called Wonderland. *The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland* was the creation of English author Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, who published under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll in 1865. In the 1871 sequel, *Through the Looking Glass*, Carroll has Alice return to Wonderland where she meets a variety of new characters and finds herself on a whole other adventure in this fascinating world. A handful of decades later in 1951, Disney produced one of its first feature-length animated musicals based on these popular children's books. Disney's version, entitled *Alice in Wonderland*, marries both of Carroll's stories in a lighthearted, whimsical, and family oriented approach.

Alice in Wonderland JR. is a compilation of these three versions of Alice in a basic, easy to follow plot designed specifically for the younger theatre audiences. Memorable characters that we have met, or perhaps have yet to meet, can be found throughout this musical adventure. Alongside Alice, the audience will follow the White Rabbit into Wonderland, meet the dynamic duo known as the Tweedles, receive

friendly advice and witty banter from the Cheshire Cat, attend a tea party hosted by the Mad Hatter and even paint the roses red at the royal court of the Queen of Hearts!

"If I had a world of my own, everything would be nonsense. Nothing would be what it is because everything would be what it isn't. And contrary-wise; what it is it wouldn't be, and what it wouldn't be, it would. You see?" - Alice

VOCABULARY

Students' appreciation of the production may be increased with an awareness of the meanings of the following words from the script.

CHESHIRE CAT: *Alice meets a **pallid**, long-eared , carrot - munching **quadruped** known only as ...*

WHITE RABBIT: *Please be quiet. Time is of the **essence**!*

ROSE: *Beauty without **virtue** is a flower without perfume.*

DOORKNOB: *Who taught you to go around pulling on people's **proboscises** . . .*

DOORKNOB: *Please try to suppress your **emotional** outbursts.*

DODO BIRD: *I am the **monarch** of the sea.*

DODO BIRD: *My dear young **damsel**, the only way to get yourself dry in Wonderland is to initiate an officially **sanctioned** Caucus Race!*

TWEEDLE DUM: *When first you meet a gentleman of **caliber** and class,*

FLOWERS: *Everyday you have to **preen** and **prune**.*

CARDSMEN: *But now we're in a pickle/For the royal mind is **fickle**.*

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Who dares to **taint** with vulgar paint the royal flower bed?

QUEEN OF HEARTS: We speak the Queen's English here, you nameless little **whelp!**

WHITE RABBIT: All assemble for the high **tribunal** of Alice vs. Queen of Hearts.

KING OF HEARTS: Now girls, did you observe any incredibly **suspicious** behavior on the part of the incredibly guilty party?

KING OF HEARTS: What have you to add to the already rock solid evidence against the soon-to-be-decapitated **usurper?**

WHAT IS A CAUCUS RACE ?

'Why,' said the Dodo, 'the best way to explain it[a caucus race] is to do it.'(And, as you might like to try the thing yourself, some winter day, I will tell you how the Dodo managed it.)

First it marked out a race-course, in a sort of circle, ('the exact shape doesn't matter,' it said,) and then all the party were placed along the course, here and there. There was no 'One, two, three, and away,' but they began running when they liked, and left off when they liked, so that it was not easy to know when the race was over. However, when they had been running half an hour or so, and were quite dry again, the Dodo suddenly called out 'The race is over!' and they all crowded round it, panting, and asking, 'But who has won?'

This question the Dodo could not answer without a great deal of thought, and it sat for a long time with one finger pressed upon its forehead (the position in which you usually see Shakespeare, in the pictures of him), while the rest waited in silence. At last the Dodo said, 'Everybody has won, and all must have prizes.'

Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

THE CREATORS OF *ALICE IN WONDERLAND JR.*

This script is the result of many collaborations. Various artists have worked on individual pieces and the list of credits is extensive.

Music and Lyrics by Sammy Fain and Bob Hilliard, Oliver Wallace and Cy Coban, Allie Wrubel and Ray Gilbert, Mack David, Al Hoffman and Jerry and Livingston

Music Adapted, Arranged and Additional Music Lyrics were the work of Bryan Louiselle.

The Book was Adapted and Additional Lyrics were written by David Simpatico. The script is based on the 1951 Disney film *Alice in Wonderland* and the novels *The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll.

The musical numbers include: "Alice in Wonderland," "A World of My Own," "I'm Late," "Very Good Advice," "The Caucus Race," "How D'Ye Do and Shake Hands," "The Golden Afternoon," "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah," "The Unbirthday Song," "Painting the Roses Red," and "Who Are You?"

TEACHER PREVIEW

NYSTI invites you to the Inservice/Teacher Preview for *Alice in Wonderland Junior* at the Schacht Fine Arts Center, Russell Sage College, Troy, New York on **Wednesday, June 2, 2010, 4-6PM**. This program provides teachers with an opportunity to meet the creative team, look behind the scenes, walk the set, and observe a segment of rehearsal. It's **free** - just call **(518) 274-3286** or e-mail **cbs@nysti.org** before **Friday, June 4, 2010** to RSVP. Teachers bringing classes to a performance are invited to return at 7:30 PM to watch a dress rehearsal. Check with your administration. This program offers professional development credit.

If you are unable to attend the Inservice, but would like to preview the performance. Please call to arrange to see a rehearsal.

. . .at the performance

THINGS TO WATCH AND LISTEN FOR

Anny DeGange and Michael Musial will co-direct and choreograph the NYSTI production of ALICE IN WONDERLAND, JUNIOR. Her concept for "telling" Alice's story, is to use the skills and talents of the cast members to weave a mad-cap, zany adventure that travels in and out of Alice's dream world via the rabbit hole. Imagine how these familiar characters will careen in and out of the action bringing this fantastical frolic to the stage.

The NYSTI interns will be bringing their circus skills, dancing ability and acting prowess to the stage. The co-directors' staging and choreography and how they manipulate the various "outlandish" inhabitants of Wonderland will bring us closer to the funny and frantic characters that Alice meets on her journey. Yes, the all important journey that will lead Alice, as well as the audience, to make lovely as well as lively discoveries about the challenges of being a child.

COSTUMES

SMALL ALICE: Anybody got a towel? A blow dryer? An extra pinafore?

The approach of the **costume designer, Brent Griffin** to *Alice in Wonderland Jr.* centers on dressing each character in a manner that represents the character's personality, as well as a time period that Alice has been studying in her daily lessons. Alice will wear a classic 1950s style skirt and saddle shoes, to convey the current setting of the play, as well as the time period to work off of for the other characters.

Mr. Griffin will dress the White Rabbit in a style known as Steampunk. “The term denotes works set in an era or world where steam power is still widely used – usually the 19th century and often Victorian era England – but with prominent elements of either science fiction or fantasy”. He is dressed as a newsboy or a newsie as he is constantly running about, assisting Alice in her exploration of Wonderland.

The King and Queen of Hearts will dress in the style of royalty during the French Revolution. Keeping in mind that these characters are based on playing cards, Mr. Griffin will use the color scheme of red, black and white.

The Mad Hatter and March Hare are dressed in earth tone pieces that may be found in the early 19th century. Other Wonderland characters show off what they are in addition to who they are, with their costumes. How would you design a costume for the Caterpillar or the Cheshire cat?

LIGHTING

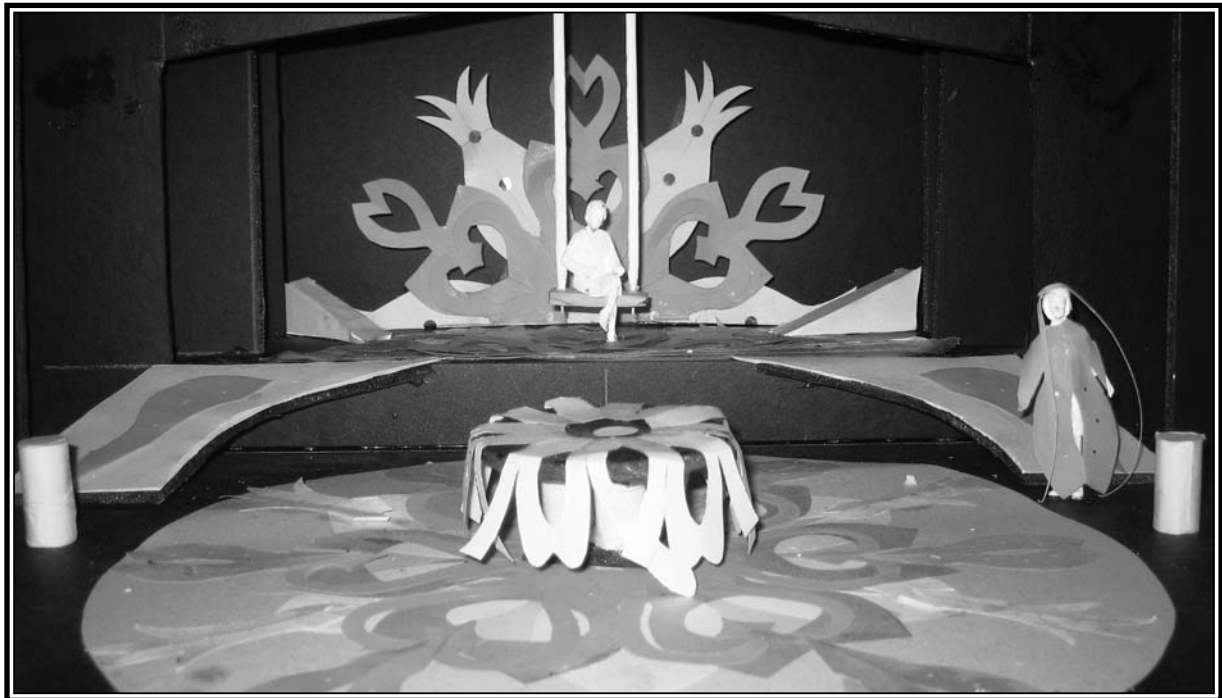
ALICE: *Well, I’m looking and it looks pretty deep and dark. . .*

Matt Murphy the lighting designer has the responsibility of making sure that the audience can see the characters. What colors would you expect to find in Wonderland? How will the lights give you hints about the mood of the scene and the location?

SET

CHESHIRE CAT: *Alice ran away through the blades of grass and explored the jungles of...*

Set Designer Robert Anton’s approach was to create a transition between the two worlds that Alice experiences; the real world of the park and the “dreamworld” of Wonderland. A ramp on each side of the stage will enable the constant motion of character entrances, as well as the transition of scene locations and focal points. These ramps will also allow Alice to appear to be on a journey, once she finds herself in Wonderland.



Set model for NYSTI’s 2010 production of Disney’s *Alice in Wonderland Jr.* Designed by Robert Anton.

Think of all the locations that are part of Alice's journey, the garden, the rabbit hole, the various parts of Wonderland. The challenge for Mr. Anton is to create a set that allows the audience to discover the different stops in Wonderland as Alice is discovering them.

Notice the use of colors and symmetrical images. How does the use of bright psychedelic colors and designs relate to looking through a kaleidoscope? Watch to see how the moveable structures around the edges of the stage double as furniture and props throughout the show.

Set designer Anton attributes much of his inspiration to a local artist, George Jurrigsatis. Taking its cues from kaleidoscope designs and Jurrigsatis' paper art instillations, you will find this set to be a whimsical creation that will envelop the audience and essentially transport them into this zany and colorful world that Alice comes to know as Wonderland.

CONCEPTS TO CONSIDER

DREAMS

MATHILDA: *Oh, Alice, you've been dreaming again.*

How do the events and people that we encounter during our waking hours find their way into our dream world? What images at the beginning of the play found their way into Alice's adventures in Wonderland?

ADVICE

ALICE: *I give myself very good advice.*

What advice do you give yourself? What person in your life offers you the most advice? Which character in the play offers Alice the best advice?

ANTHROPOMORPHISM

When an author attributes human characteristics and motivations to animals, the practice is called anthropomorphism. Walt Disney has built an empire on animals with human characteristics. His characters include Donald Duck, Bugs Bunny and Dumbo. What other stories contain animals with human characteristics?

MANNERS

TWEEDLE DUM AND TWEEDLE DEE: *Society has set the rules by which we all must play.*

Do these two behave as if they have manners? Why are manners so important?

FITTING IN

PETUNIA: *If you want to be cool, you have to be one of us.*

The blossoms in the Girls of the Golden Afternoon Garden Club are very snobby. They will not let Alice into their group. What kind of attitude are they showing? Are there parallels to the Golden Afternoon Garden Club in your school? What advice would you give Alice after her encounter with the flowers?

RULES

MARCH HARE: *It's so much fun to make up your own rules.*

Why do we need rules? How do rules in the classroom help students? Are there new rules that you would add and why?

NOTES TO THE AUDIENCE

As an audience member, you accept the responsibility of a special agreement. That agreement includes believing what you see is real. It is happening before your eyes. In theatre, the audience has an important role in the experience. Listen carefully and quietly. Let the drama unfold and capture you. A rapport between the actors and audience is established during a performance. The actors are aware of your presence. Your responses can stimulate or stifle the show. When the lights go down, a performance especially for you begins, an opportunity that only live theatre provides.

CLASSROOM PREPARATION/PRE-SHOW INTRO

Presented by an Institute educator, the program traces the creation of the production, introduces characters, and explores the responsibilities of audience members through an interactive PowerPoint presentation. To arrange: call (518) 274-3286 or e-mail cbs@nysti.org. There is a travel fee for this program.

...after the performance

WRITING AND DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Teachers may select one of the following excerpts from *ALICE IN WONDERLAND JR* to begin a class discussion or prompt a creative writing exercise.

•

ALL: Maybe somehow, if the world could run on dreams and make-believe and fun ...

•

ALICE: If you don't explore, you'll never discover.

•

QUEEN OF HEARTS: Be careful what you wish for, you might just get it.

•

SMALL ALICE: Up, down, big, small - no matter how hard I try, I never seem to fit in!

•

ALICE: I thought Wonderland would be everything I always dreamed about, but everyone wants me to be something else!

•

ALICE: But if everyone makes up their own rules, how do you know if you're playing the game right?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

TRAVEL BROCHURE

As a class discuss the attributes of Wonderland. Decide that you are the Chamber of Commerce for Wonderland and you would like to increase the tourism. Write and design a brochure that would entice people to travel down the rabbit hole to Wonderland. Use pictures, drawings and characters from the play to “sell” the idea of traveling to Wonderland. Design a passport as well.

A VERY MERRY UNBIRTHDAY TO YOU!

MAD HATTER: *Well, you only have one birthday each year, but you have 364 unbirthdays!*

As a class, select a day that no one knows anyone with a birthday and plan a celebration. Decorate a cake and plan a menu, as well as, party games.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME -

ALICE: *I want to go home, where I know I fit in no matter what size I am.*

Draw a picture of the home of one of the characters that Alice meets in Wonderland. How does the home reflect the personality of the character? What do you think Alice's home looks like? What other famous literary characters discover that there's no place like home?

ADAGES

Be careful what you wish for, you might just get it.

Necessity is the mother of invention.

Look before you leap.

Draw a picture that illustrates your favorite adage. Discuss the adages that you hear most often at home or in school.

USING THE THEATRE EXPERIENCE TO MAKE INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

Here's a list of activities connecting *Alice in Wonderland Junior* to **NYS Education Department Learning Standards**.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- The following historical figures are mentioned by Alice's sister before Alice travels down the rabbit hole. Investigate

these people and share the information with your classmates. Mad King George, the Immortal bard, Columbus, and General George Washington. **Standard # 2**

- Create a map of Wonderland based on Alice's adventures in *ALICE IN WONDERLAND JR.* Don't forget to include a key and a compass. **Standard # 3**

MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- *Alice followed the White Rabbit to the edge of the Rabbit Hole.* Where do rabbits live? What is a rabbit warren? What do rabbits eat in the wild? Why are rabbits considered to be the gardener's enemy? **Standard # 4**

- *DODO BIRD: Stroke, you hard-shelled crustaceans! Stroke or I'll boil some butter and eat you for brunch.* Investigate the world of crustaceans. Do you like to eat a certain kind of crustacean? **Standard # 4**

- *Stage Directions - (Alice inspects the park with a huge magnifying glass.)* Investigate how magnifying glasses were invented and when. How are they made? **Standard # 1**

- *FLOWERS: All the weeds that we've excluded are the weeds we love to tease.* Investigate the different kinds of weeds that grow in the garden. Why are they considered to be weeds? **Standard # 2**

- *ALICE: (to the Caterpillar) You're a butterfly!* Investigate the process of a caterpillar turning into a beautiful butterfly. Identify each of the stages that the caterpillar goes through in its life cycle. **Standard # 2**

- *ALICE: ... maybe it goes all the way to the center of the earth and I'll be burnt to a crisp in the molten core...* Using your knowledge of geology, describe the layers that Alice would pass through if she fell to the core of the earth. **Standard # 7**

LANGUAGE ARTS

- What other stories and books involve a journey through a magic portal into another world? Who wrote these adventures and why? **Standard # 1**

- Lewis Carroll wrote prose within *Alice's Adventures in*

Wonderland which took the shape of a rat's tail. Try your hand at creating a poem and incorporate a visual element that suggests or is related to the subject of the poem.

Standard # 2

THE ARTS

- In 1939 English artist David Hall created a series of paintings of the story of *Alice in Wonderland* for Walt Disney. Investigate the work of this artist. **Standard # 3**

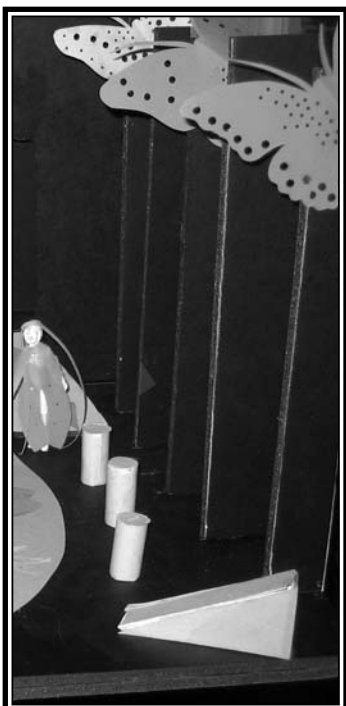
- **QUEEN OF HEARTS:** *Enough of your scarlets and crimson vermillions and rouges and cherries and reds!* How many different reds are there? Find other names for specific shades of red. **Standard # 2**

- The song "Zip-a-dee-do-dah" was originally used in the 1946 animated movie, *Song of the South*. The music was written by Allie Wrubel and the lyrics are by Ray Gilbert. The song won the Academy Award for Best Original Song. How many other songs in Disney films have received the same honor?

Standard # 4

- What if Alice had a chance to send a postcard to a friend during her visit to Wonderland? Draw the postcard and then write the message that Alice would have sent on the back. **Standard # 3**

- Send your comments and/or questions about the NYS Theatre Institute's production of *Alice in Wonderland Jr.* to: cbs@nysti.org. **Standard # 3**



Set model detail for NYSTI's production of Disney's *Alice in Wonderland Jr* by Robert Anton.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- CHESHIRE CAT: *Try the Red Zinger - does wonderful things for growing pains.* Investigate this kind of tea. What makes it different from regular tea? Plan for your own tea party and develop the menu. **Standard # 2**

- ALICE: *I bet you probably want to play a game of croquet using upside-down flamingos instead of croquet mallets, right?* Investigate this game. Can you arrange to a croquet tournament with your class? **Standard # 1**

CHARACTER EDUCATION CONNECTIONS

BULLYING

LILY: *Beat it slug, before you wind up on the bottom of somebody's shoe.*

Alice is the victim of bullying by the members of the Afternoon Garden Club. Which characters that she meets in Wonderland offer her any advice. Are there any characters who show Alice empathy? How would you counsel Alice?

SUGGESTED READING AND RESOURCES

The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll.

Through the Looking Glass by Lewis Carroll.

more **NYSTI** *programs*

For Students

INTERNSHIPS

College and high school students earn academic credit while working in professional theatre. Offering experiential learning about performance, education, technical areas, and arts management. Contact the Intern Director at (518) 274-3573 or interndirector@nysti.org.

THEATRE ARTS SCHOOL

Saturday workshops taught by theatre professionals. Personal development combined with professional training in acting, voice and movement for students ages 3 through high school. Contact the Theatre Arts School at (518) 274-3295 or tasdirector@nysti.org.

WINTERSTAGE

A February vacation program., Monday - Friday, 9AM to 4PM. Students ages 8 through 15 gain skills in juggling, balancing, clowning, gymnastics and much more. Taught by professionally trained clown, Sean Patrick Fagan of Circus Theatriks. Contact the Theatre Arts School at (518) 274-3295 or tasdirector@nysti.org.

SUMMERSTAGE

A three-week day program for students ages 8 - 18. With a focus on a theme, training in various performing arts topics combined with individual development in confidence cooperation, and poise. Contact the Theatre Arts School at (518) 274-3295 or tasdirector@nysti.org.

SUMMER THEATRE INSTITUTE

A four-week day program for high school and college students. Audition required. Students take acting, singing and dance classes as well as perform a musical. Contact Summer Theatre Institute Director at (518) 274-3754 or stidirector@nysti.org.

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