



**THE CREATOR OF MR. DRESSUP LAUNCHES
CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY "SUITCASE THEATRE"
CELEBRATE FAMILY DAY WITH A FREE PLAY!**

Sunday, February 20th at 2 p.m

**Bring your family and friends to All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church
2850 Bloor Street West (corner of Bloor Street West and Prince Edward)**

All are welcome but please reserve your seats at 647-654-PLAY

Toronto (January 23, 2011) – **Suitcase Theatre** (www.suitcasetheatre.com), a professional touring children's theatre company, sets sail in 2011 with their latest production, **The Friend Ship**.

Suitcase Theatre was developed by the creator and original producer of the well-loved children's television show, **Mr. DressUp**. Mr. Gilchrist, now retired, has returned to his roots of live theatre and is working with a team of theatre professionals to produce children's plays that have honest core values, great stories and celebrate both creativity and imagination.

"Children's theatre is a wonderful land of magic and imagination: a place where young people can allow their minds to create and be part of a land where suspense and laughter live side-by-side. The people behind Suitcase Theatre are committed to providing programming that promotes good values and joy so we can model its importance for young people. I am energized by the passion our team possesses and am so very fortunate to share it with them."

The Friend Ship stars wonderful emerging talent and features an original score by Doug Price. It is the tale of an extraordinary suitcase that transforms on stage into a friendly pirate ship. The ship's crew includes Captain 5, First Mate Froo, stowaway squirrel Chippy and Morris the Monkey. The play celebrates self-confidence and care for the earth. Children learn the value of cultivating friends, lending a neighbour a helping hand and seeing challenges through to the end.

Suitcase Theatre is a professional touring theatre company that connects with children at daycares, schools, hospitals, community centres, festivals and special events across Ontario. Our goal is simple: we strive to encourage children aged 3-12 to foster self-confidence, discover creativity and grow up to love theatre! The company is a not-for-profit group that is privileged to be affiliated with 6 St. Joseph House and The Seeds of Hope Foundation. All donations receive a 100% charitable tax receipt.

WHAT ARE OTHERS SAYING?

Feedback on The Friend Ship

“Froo and Captain 5 were funny and I loved Morris the Monkey.” – 3 year old

“What an absolutely terrific time we had at The Friend Ship. The mood was fun and lively and I don’t know who had a better time – my kids or me!” – Parent

“I was really surprised and impressed by the quality of the songs and music! The Friend Ship was our daughter’s first experience at a play and it could not have been a better one! To this day, we still talk about Captain 5 and the whole cast! Thanks, Suitcase Theatre!” - Parent

“Everything from the songs to the cast made this a really great outing for our family. Please let us know when you will be performing because we’d like to see the show again.” - Parent

“This is the kind of show you wish everyone could see! Very fun and completely age appropriate. Great job everyone!” – Parent

"I had the wonderful opportunity of attending an incredible production with my 2.5 half year old daughter. It was the first show I took her to and at the start she was quite apprehensive. But the script was written so beautifully that it slowly reeled the kids in one scene at a time. By the end of the show, my daughter could be found close to the edge of the performance space smiling and singing along with the cast." - Parent and Theatre Arts Director"

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ARTIST BIOS

Doug Price, Composer and Director

Doug is thrilled to be a part of the wonderful Suitcase Theatre team. Since he was six years old, Doug has been wrapping his life around as much theatre and music as he can handle. A graduate of Sheridan College's prestigious musical theatre performance program, he has performed in theatres across the country. Selected credits include Fiddler on the Roof, Oklahoma (Grand Theatre), Urinetown, 110 in the Shade (Theatre Sheridan), Anne of Green Gables (Globe Theatre), Les Feux Follets (Charlottetown Festival), Forever Plaid (Thousand Islands Playhouse), West Side Story (Theatre St. John's), and Oh What A Lovely War (Soulpepper Theatre).

Doug also actively writes music, and in December 2009, presented his first song cycle featuring his original music at the Upstairs Berkeley Street Theatre. In November 2010, he presented his second evening of original music entitled, Music Makes Me: A Wave of Doug Price Music. The show involved over 60 performers and musicians and played to a sold out house. Doug is a 2006 Top 20 Under 20 winner in Canada and has been accepted into the Berklee College of Music in Boston for composition.

Scott Dermody, Captain 5

Scott occupies his time teaching children the finer (and sometimes blunter) points of theatre and enjoys gently nudging them towards their own personal fits of brilliance. He is a founding member and Artistic Producer for Soup Can Theatre, whose critically acclaimed inaugural production: Love Is A Poverty You Can Sell, sold out at the box office and was moved to the Toronto Centre for the Arts as part of Best of the Fringe showcase run!

Stage credits include: Ashes to Ashes (New Ideas Festival, Alumnae Theatre), Love Is A Poverty You Can Sell (Soup Can Theatre), Ritual Refuge (SummerWorks Gallery 2009), Veronika Decides to Die (Darkroom Theatre Projects), A Memory, A Monologue, A Rant and a Prayer (VDAY 2008), Everyman (Single Thread Theatre), Variations on X & Why We Float (Queen's Drama), Antigone (Queen's Classics). Scott holds a BA in theatre from Queen's University.

Adam Hobbs, Puppeteer

This is Adam's second production with Suitcase Theatre playing the Man All Tattered and Torn in The House That Jack Built. He is featured as Brus in the upcoming release of Utokia, which will be available on CD in the near future. Other selected credits include Basil Hallward in Dorian Gray, Seymour in Little Shop of Horrors (BEST Productions); Mr. Fag in The Rivals (Theatre Sheridan); and Ren McCormick in Footloose (IM Theatre). Adam is a graduate of the Music Theatre - Performance program at Sheridan Institute.

Anna Wheeler, Froo

Anna hails from St. John's Newfoundland and is currently attending Ryerson University's acting program. She is also a musician:

<http://radio3.cbc.ca/#/bands/Anna-Wheeler>.