

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Becca Meyer / Jennifer Walker

BRAVE Public Relations, 404.233.3993

bmeyer@bravepublicrelations.com/
jwalker@bravepublicrelations.com

**Center for Puppetry Arts announces 2017-18 programming and performance season**
*Celebrated puppetry destination launches latest season with fun for the whole family*

**ATLANTA (April 5, 2017)** – Center for Puppetry Arts® is pleased to announce a 2017-2018 season unlike any other in the organization’s history! With the *Worlds of Puppetry* Museum open for more than a year, the Center will begin to expand its program offerings from performances, workshops and films, to special exhibits and spectacular events as well.

The Center’s Jim Henson Collection is the inspiration for many of the signature events this season. Back by popular demand, the Labyrinth Masquerade Ball will return this year to mark the close of the **Labyrinth: Journey to Goblin City, a 30th Anniversary Special Exhibit** on **August 31**. In **November**, **Indian Puppets: The Great Stories and Dancing Dolls** will open in the Special Exhibits gallery. This will celebrate the cultural range of India through the diversity of its puppetry and storytelling.

Other Henson-related programming includes an extraordinary evening with the **Women of the Muppets***,* featuring Henson’s first female puppeteer and Emmy award-winning performer Fran Brill. The event will also include Bonnie Erickson, the designer and builder of Miss Piggy, Statler and Waldorf, among others. Audiences will enjoy first-hand insights in what it was like to be part of the creative culture and revolutionary work of Jim Henson.

This season, Henson-related films will include a special screening of **The Dark Crystal Fan Films**. The event will present the winners and finalists of the Jim Henson Company’s Dark Crystal Fan Film Competition, in which fans created short films inspired by **The Dark Crystal**. Following the screening, there will be a talkback with Cheryl Henson and some of the filmmakers. The Center will also show the documentary **I Am Big Bird,** detailing the career of puppeteer Carroll Spinney, as well as family favorite **Emmet Otter’s Jug-Band Christmas**. **2018 World Puppetry Day** will also include a Henson twist as the Center celebrates Big Bird’s birthday on that special day.

“The Jim Henson collection is enticing a new audience to come to the Center. With that, we’re expanding the programming in the Museum in a way that allows guests to explore many more aspects of our collection, both as observers and participants,” said Vincent Anthony, Center for Puppetry Arts Founder and Executive Director. “With the ongoing expansion of our Museum programming, along with all of our performances and educational programming, we have rounded out our season in a way that allows visitors to get a complete experience of the art of puppetry.”

The Family Series will present some of the most popular titles in the Center’s repertoire. The season kicks off with high-flying entertainment in ***Cinderella Della Circus***. This original production by Center for Puppetry Arts’ Artistic Director Jon Ludwig reimagines the classic fairytale by transporting Cinderella to a circus where she is a tightrope walker with oversized feet. For youngest audiences, the Center will perform ***Mother Goose***, a feel-good, clap-along journey to find the missing Mother Goose in a production specifically designed with Theater for Young Audiences in mind. In the fall, the classic tale of ***Charlotte’s Web****,* by E.B. White and adapted by Joseph Robinette, will have audiences cheering for friendship, love and good spelling. The celebrated Atlanta tradition ***Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer****™* will once again return to light up the holiday season.

In the New Year, ***Rainforest Adventures*** will take audiences on a journey from the treetops to the forest floor as anacondas, howler monkeys, sloths and other animals give a thrilling tour of the Amazon that promises to enthrall and educate. To close the series, the ever-mischievous ***Cat in the Hat*,** along with the zany antics of Thing One and Thing Two, will rhyme their way into hearts in this Center adaptation of the beloved book by Dr. Seuss.

This season’s guest artist lineup includes ***The Adventures of the Gingerbread Man*** and ***Billy Goats Gruff & Other Stuff*** by All Hands Productions of Atlanta as well as crowd favorites ***The Wizard of Oz***, by Frisch Marionettes of Cincinnati, Ohio and ***The Three Little Pigs & More*** by Grey Seal Puppets of Charlotte, NC.

The Center will continue its Autism Spectrum Disorder initiative in the upcoming season, producing sensory-friendly programming for select Family Series productions that includes adjustments to the performance, the Create-A-Puppet Workshop™ and the *Worlds of Puppetry* Museum.

The New Directions Series for Adults and Teens will continue the Center’s commitment to puppet theater for all ages. In the dark comedy ***The Pigeoning*** by Robin Frohardt of Brooklyn, NY, an obsessive-compulsive office worker named Frank is hyper-focused on two things: cleanliness and pigeons. Convinced that the pigeons in the park are plotting against him, Frank sets out on an adventure to solve a problem that perhaps isn’t really there. *The New York Times* calls it “a tender, fantastical symphony of the imagination.” Atlanta’s cult classic ***The Ghastly Dreadfuls*** will rise again this Halloween, and the ***Xperimental Puppetry Theater*** (XPT) will continue its tradition of presenting bold, original works in adult puppetry from artists from all disciplines. Inaugurated in 1983, this puppet performance lab celebrates 35 years of fostering creative new works in the field of puppetry.

In Education, the Explore Puppetry Series for ages 18+ will include workshops in everything from puppet creation and performance for film and television to commedia dell’arte. The Junior Explorers Series includes Puppet Camp and workshops in Claymation and animatronics, as well as the ever-popular Discovery Days. The Distance Learning Program, the Center’s award-winning digital platform, will continue to present curriculum-based workshops and puppet shows to the world—virtually. Distance Learning will also add the *Worlds of Puppetry* Museum programming to its digital offerings for the very first time. A brand new slate of Museum/Education Programming that will begin this summer, including Toddler Tuesdays, World Wednesdays and Museum EdVenture Days.

In addition to the variety of performance, educational and Museum programming, the Center also offers a robust Film Series that includes family favorites like “**Where the Wild Things Are”** and “**ParaNorman**,” as well as documentaries and talkbacks at select screenings.

TICKETING

Tickets prices vary for performances and other programs. Prices are available at [PUPPET.ORG](http://puppet.org/index.shtml) or by calling 404-873-3391.

MEMBERSHIP

The best way to experience the Center is by [becoming a Member](http://puppet.org/contribute/member.shtml). Members receive up to 50 percent off tickets to performances and enjoy benefits like free museum entry, free films and priority seating. For more information to go PUPPETJOIN.COM or call the membership office at 404-881-5151.

**2017-2018 FAMILY SERIES:**

 **Cinderella Della Circus June 20-July 23, 2017**

Adapted by Jon Ludwig

 **Billy Goats Gruff & Other Stuff Aug. 10-13, 2017**

By All Hands Productions of Atlanta, GA

 **Mother Goose Aug. 15-Sept. 17, 2017**

Adapted by Amy Sweeney

Theatre for the Very Young

 **Charlotte’s Web Sept. 19-Oct. 22, 2017**

By E.B. White, Adapted by Joseph Robinette

#  The Three Little Pigs and More Oct. 24-Nov. 5, 2017

By the Grey Seal Puppets of Charlotte, NC

 **Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer™ Nov. 7-Dec. 31, 2017**

Based on the classic television special

Adapted by Jon Ludwig

 **The Adventures of the Gingerbread Man Jan. 2-7, 2018**

 By All Hands Productions of Atlanta, GA

 **Rainforest Adventures Jan. 23-March 4, 2018**

 By Jon Ludwig, Stephanie Bogle & Raylynn Hughes

 **The Wizard of Oz March 6-18, 2018**

By Frisch Marionnettes of Cincinnati, OH

 **Dr. Seuss’s The Cat in the Hat March 20-May 13, 2018**

 Based on the book by Dr. Seuss

 Play originally produced by the National Theatre of Great Britain

Adapted and originally directed by Katie Mitchell

 Center for Puppetry Arts production directed by Jon Ludwig

**2017-18 NEW DIRECTIONS SERIES FOR ADULTS AND TEENS**

 **The Ghastly Dreadfuls (ages 18+) Oct. 11-28, 2017**

 By Jon Ludwig and Jason Hines

 **The Pigeoning (ages 13+) Feb. 9-11, 2018**

By Robin Frohardt, Brooklyn, NY

 **Xperimental Puppetry Theater (XPT) (ages 18+) May 10-13, 2018**

By Various Artists

**2017-18 FILM SERIES**

 **Where the Wild Things Are June 3, 2017**

 **The Adventures of Prince Achmed June 24, 2017**

Screening includes a special lecture and book signing with
 Whitney Grace, author of a book about the film’s
 pioneering creator Lotte Reiniger.

 **ParaNorman Aug. 5, 2017**

 **The Dark Crystal Fan Films Sept. 30, 2017**

Screening & talkback with Cheryl Henson and the filmmakers

 **Emmet Otter’s Jug-Band Christmas Dec. 9, 2017**

 **Shaun the Sheep Jan. 20, 2018**

 **Tomorrow We Disappear Feb. 3, 2018**

Screening and talkback with one of the directors

 **I Am Big Bird April 14, 2018**

**2017-18 SPECIAL MUSEUM PROGRAMING**

 **Labyrinth Masquerade Ball Aug 31, 2017**

 **Jim Henson Birthday Extravaganza Sept. 23, 2017**

 **The Women of the Muppets March 3, 2018**

Panel discussion featuring Fran Brill and Bonnie Erickson

 **World Puppetry Day March 24, 2018**

**2017-18 MUSEUM SPECIAL EXHIBITS**

 **Jim Henson’s Labyrinth: Journey to Goblin City Now-Sept 3, 2017**

 **Indian Puppets: The Great Stories and Dancing Dolls Opening Nov. 14, 2017**

###

**The Center for Puppetry Arts is supported in part by:** Fulton County Arts Council • City of Atlanta Mayor’s Office of Cultural Affairs • Georgia Council for the Arts • The Zeist Foundation •

For a complete list of the Center’s major supporters visit [www.puppet.org/about/sponsors](http://www.puppet.org/about/sponsors).

*Center for Puppetry Arts® is a unique cultural treasure – a magical place where children and adults are educated, enlightened, and entertained. Since 1978, the Center has introduced millions of visitors to the wonder and art of puppetry and has touched the lives of many through enchanting performances, curriculum-based workshops, and the hands-on Museum as well as Distance Learning and Outreach programs. Center for Puppetry Arts is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization and is supported in part by contributions from corporations, foundations, government agencies, and individuals. Major funding is provided by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners and the City of Atlanta Mayor’s Office of Cultural Affairs. These programs are also supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. GCA is a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Center is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre; Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA/USA/ASSITEJ); and International Performing Arts for Youth (IPAY).The Center also serves as headquarters of UNIMA-USA, the American branch of Union Internationale de la Marionnette, the international puppetry organization.*