

PRESS RELEASE

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Think you know all about that classic fairy tale, the Princess and the Pea? Clear Space thinks you're in for some surprises at its springtime performance of ONCE UPON A MATTRESS!

The weekend of April 7-9, Clear Space's Spotlight on Young Performers troupe will present ONCE UPON A MATTRESS, a musical comedy revealing the back stories absent from Hans Christian Anderson's beloved fairy tale. With music by Mary Rodger, lyrics by Marshall Barer and book by Jay Thompson, Dean Fuller and Marshall Barer, ONCE UPON A MATTRESS opened on Broadway in 1959, starring Carol Burnett in her Broadway debut. Both the show and Burnett were Tony nominees.

Clear Space's ONCE UPON A MATTRESS features Hannah Weilminster (Princess Winnifred) and Devon Lynch (Prince Dauntless the Drab), and is a fully-staged production that culminates the spring term of the Spotlight on Young Performers class. Speaking to his Spotlight experience with rehearsing this show, Lynch says, "This show has been so much fun to do! The script is hilarious - but even better, the members of the cast are friends. When we came into rehearsals, we already were such a strong unit it was easy and fun to work with each another." Weilminster, a Bethesda, Maryland resident, concurs, noting that her weekly commute to rehearsals is "So worth every minute of the drive!"

Weilminster adds, "Princess Winnifred always has been a dream role of mine! The show was the first full musical I was ever in – as a 10-year-old – and I just love having the opportunity to play the outside-the-box, mold-breaking role I so admired then. It is so much fun stepping into Winnifred's goofiness, and I love her energy, spirit and big heart. I can really connect with her – she reminds me so much of myself."

Lynch feels a similar connection to the show: "One of my brothers played Prince Dauntless when he was in high school. I loved the role then – Dauntless just has so much optimism and curiosity about his kingdom and is so desperately searching for true love. It's a really comfortable role for me. Dauntless is lively and bright – and, OK, a little dumb – and is so caring about the well-being of others. I like to think of him as an exaggeration of who I am as a person."

David Button, Director, echoes his leads' enthusiasm: "This has been a great show to work on throughout a really great semester! MATTRESS offers multiple fun, challenging roles that

engage our students and provide opportunities to both polish existing skills and learn new ones. The level of camaraderie among these student-cast members further enhances the whole experience, enabling them to take risks and grow – both into these roles and as performers in general. We're confident audiences will find that collective energy and fun translates into some great entertainment!"

ONCE UPON A MATTRESS runs April 7-9, with Friday and Saturday evening performances at 7:00 pm, and Saturday and Sunday matinee performances at 3:00 pm. Tickets for all shows are \$15, and may be purchased on-line at www.clearspacetheatre.org, or by calling the box office at 302-227-2270.

Open by audition only, Spotlight on Young Performers is designed for advanced young performers in grades 6-12. Classes meet every Saturday from 11:00 am till 2:00 pm; scholarships are available. Auditions for the Fall 2017 term will be held later this year; watch for announcements at www.clearspacetheatre.org.