

BAY AREA  
CHILDREN'S  
THEATRE

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**A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD Opens Saturday in Berkeley**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**REMINDER:** *A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD*, produced by Bay Area Children's Theatre, opens Saturday at 2 p.m. for a four-week run on weekends at Freight & Salvage, 2020 Addison Street in Berkeley. After its Berkeley run, the show hops to San Ramon for weekend performances, April 30 to May 8, at the Front Row Theatre, 17011 Bollinger Canyon Road.

**WHO:** [Bay Area Children's Theatre](#) (formerly Active Arts Theatre for Young Audiences)

**WHAT:** *A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD*

Small fry and big fish alike will enjoy this song-filled romp, which takes Frog and Toad through a season of comic adventures, as they and their animal neighbors explore the magic of friendship. Nominated for three 2003 Tony awards including Best Musical, *A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD* is adapted from the beloved *Frog and Toad* stories by Arnold Lobel, with music by Robert Reale and book and lyrics by Willie Reale.

**BERKELEY PERFORMANCES:** Weekends, March 26 – April 17 at 2 p.m., with additional performances on Sunday, April 10, and Sunday, April 17, at 11 a.m.; Freight & Salvage, 2020 Addison Street, Berkeley

**SAN RAMON PERFORMANCES:** Weekends April 30 – May 8, at 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., with an evening performance on Friday, May 6, at 7 p.m.; the Front Row Theatre, 17011 Bollinger Canyon Road, San Ramon

**TICKETS:** Children \$14-15, Seniors \$16-\$17, Adults \$18-20, Groups \$12-13

**BOX OFFICE:** <http://www.bactheatre.org/> and (510) 296-4433

((High-res jpeg production shots attached. Charlie Cromer (Frog - left) and William O'Neill (Toad – right). Bird shot – Reggie White and Rebecca Pingree. Photo credit: Joshua Posamentier))

**DESCRIPTION:**

*A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD*, produced by Bay Area Children's Theatre, opens Saturday, March 26, at 2 p.m. for a four-week run on weekends at Freight & Salvage, 2020 Addison Street in Berkeley.

Audiences of all ages will enjoy welcoming spring with outgoing Frog and his reserved pal, Toad, as they awaken from a long winter's sleep, plant a garden, discover that "toad looks

funny in a bathing suit,” rake crunchy autumn leaves, and take a scary winter sled ride—all the while singing up a storm, launching their own version of “snail mail,” and learning what it means to have patience, compassion, loyalty, and love.

Based on the classic children’s *Frog and Toad* books by Arnold Lobel, with music by Robert Reale and book and lyrics by Willie Reale, *A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD* made its debut in children’s theatre before moving to Broadway and being nominated for three 2003 Tony awards, including Best Musical.

#### **ARTISTS:**

**Mina Morita, director**, curated the Fireworks Festival, directed *Crazy Wisdom*, *The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later*, and was assistant director for several productions, including Tony award nominated *In The Next Room*, at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre. She has directed and worked with Shotgun Players (most recently *The Norman Conquest’s Round and Round the Garden*), Aurora Theatre’s *Global Age Project*, *Campo Santo*, *Brava*, *Mary Sano Dance Company*, Playwrights Foundation, *Just Theatre*, *Playground’s Commission Program*, *Kaiser Permanente’s Educational Theatre Program*, and *Crowded Fire* with the *Asian American Theatre Company* (on upcoming *Songs of the Dragons Flying to Heaven*). This summer, she will direct J.C. Lee’s *The Nature Line* with *Sleepwalker Theatre Company*.

**Julia Norton, music director**, is a strong believer in exposing children to complex and rich music from all traditions. Norton teaches privately and for the San Francisco Opera Guild. She creates vocal music for children and adults, and her electro acoustic compositions have been performed all over Europe and North America. Her album, *Lullaby Island*, won a Parents’ Choice award in 2007. Originally from the United Kingdom, Norton has lived in the San Francisco Bay Area for the past 10 years.

**Charlie Cromer** (Frog) is an Ohio native who first began acting in kindergarten as Tiny Tim in the Dayton Human Race’s *A Christmas Carol*. He kept up his histrionic momentum through elementary school with roles with the Yellow Springs Kids Playhouse (YSKP). Favorite rolls in high school included Huck Finn in *Big River* and Max in *Lend Me A Tenor*. Cromer attended Kenyon college, where he studied religion and Russian, worked on a senior thesis (Billy in Albee’s *The Goat*), performed in main stage productions (Orpheus in Sarah Ruhl’s *Eurydice*), and put on a one-man show (Will Eno’s *Thom Pain*). After graduation he worked as a YSKP instructor and performed the role of Arlecchino in the Human Race’s high school outreach production, *Lazzi-Faire*. Since moving to the Bay Area in 2010, Cromer has performed as Emory in Impact Theatre’s *MilkMilkLemonade* and Clown in BACT’s *The Little Engine That Could*. He is auditioning for graduate school, and aspires to teach theatre by day and perform theatre by night.

**William O’Neill** (Toad), a bass-baritone, performs in opera and musical theatre throughout the Bay Area for ensembles such as the San Francisco Opera Guild, The San Francisco Conservatory Opera Theatre, Berkeley Opera, Cinnabar Theater, Goat Hall Opera, and Pocket Opera. Some of his favorite roles include Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola*, Colline in *La Boheme*, Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Bottom in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Sam in *Trouble in Tahiti*, Caldwell B. Cladwell in *Urinetown, The Musical*, Neville Craven in *The Secret Garden*, Tony Esposito in *The Most Happy Fella*, Frederick Bhaer in *Little Women*, Mr. Gobineau in *The Medium*, and Frederick Egerman in *A Little Night Music*. O’Neill made his debut with Opera Colorado last year as Sciarrone in *Tosca*. He holds a master’s degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he won Outstanding Achievement Awards in both

opera and voice. He has appeared as a concert soloist for the San Jose Symphonic Choir, the Mission Chamber Orchestra, Symphony Parnassus, and St. Mary's Cathedral Choir of San Francisco. In addition, O'Neill serves as the worship and music minister at Messiah Lutheran Church, directs youth theatre, and teaches voice throughout the Bay Area. He studies voice with Catherine Cook. ###

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### **About Bay Area Children's Theatre**

*Our Mission:* To inspire young audiences with imaginative productions, introduce children of all backgrounds to the excitement of live theatre, and create an engaging, entertaining, and educational environment in which children and their families can explore and enjoy the arts.

#### *How We Carry Out Our Mission*

- Bring high quality, professional theatre to children and their families, with artists who create vibrant worlds that are intriguing to young audiences
- Encourage young people to explore literature, language, and the arts by producing stage adaptations of great children's books
- Engage pre-kindergartners in the world of theatre with productions specially designed for them
- Develop and perform exciting new work for the stage
- Reach out to children who might not otherwise experience live theatre with free tickets and touring productions at local schools, libraries and community centers
- Create touring productions for young audiences nationwide
- Introduce children to the joy of performance with classes, workshops, and summer camp theatre programs

Bay Area Children's Theatre (BACT) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.