

**THE JOHN S. DAVIDSON FINE ARTS MAGNET SCHOOL
PRESENTS DISNEY'S "The Hunchback of Notre Dame"
AS WINNERS OF INAUGURAL
DISNEY ON BROADWAY SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM**



Augusta, Georgia; Tuesday, February 11, 2025 — The John S. Davidson Fine Arts Magnet School will present a production of **Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*** as part of the inaugural **Disney on Broadway School of Excellence Program**, a partnership of Educational Theatre Association, Disney Theatrical Group, and Music Theatre International. The school's production, featuring 100 students led by Rebecca Brune, Renee Toole, Laura Tomlin, James Brewer, Phillip Streetman, & Ben Wheeler, plays at The Beverly J. Barnhart Theater on Thursday & Friday, April 3rd & 4th, 2025 at 7pm.

The Davidson Fine Arts Department is thrilled to have received this prestigious honor and looks forward to producing the stage musical with music by Alan Menken and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz. The composers of Disney's *Pocahontas* & *Enchanted* describe this musical to be their proudest collaboration to date.

Created to celebrate 30 years of Disney on Broadway, the School of Excellence program is a new initiative recognizing middle and high schools across the United States for their exceptional student-led involvement in theatre production. The nationwide competition called upon schools to demonstrate creativity, leadership, and student engagement in theatrical disciplines such as stagecraft, direction, performance, choreography, and design. Winning schools receive free licensing and production materials to produce a Disney musical between fall 2024 and December 2025, plus exclusive educational webinars with industry professionals. Of the 118 applicants from the US, Davidson is one of 21 winners selected for the inaugural cohort of the program.

"Disney Theatrical Group is proud to launch this new initiative, in partnership with EdTA and MTI, in recognition of the outstanding student work taking place in school theater programs across the country," said Disney Theatrical Group. "It is especially meaningful for us to celebrate 30 years of Disney on Broadway by supporting and showcasing the next generation of young theater-makers."

For tickets to Davidson's production of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, please visit <https://www.showclix.com/tickets/the-hunchback-of-notre-dame-tmiw74b>. More information on the Disney on Broadway School of Excellence Program, including a full list of winning schools, can be found at schooltheatre.org/school-of-excellence.

Established in 1981, Davidson Fine Arts is a public magnet school in the Richmond County School System (RCSS) serving over students in grades 6-12. Students are admitted on selective criteria based upon prior school record, good character, and an audition in five fine arts areas (music, dance, drama, art, and creative writing). Those attending Davidson are expected to explore all fine arts areas, but they may specialize in one or more fields during their high school years.

About Educational Theatre Association

The Educational Theatre Association is an international nonprofit that serves as the professional association for theatre educators. EdTA is the parent organization of the International Thespian Society, the honor society for theatre students that's inducted more than 2.5 million Thespians since 1929. Additionally, EdTA operates the Educational Theatre Foundation, the organization's philanthropic arm dedicated to broadening representation and increasing access. Visit schooltheatre.org to learn how EdTA inspires theatre educators to transform lives.

About Music Theatre International

Music Theatre International (MTI) is one of the world's leading theatrical licensing agencies, granting theatres from around the world the rights to perform the greatest selection of musicals from Broadway and beyond. Founded in 1952 by composer Frank Loesser and orchestrator Don Walker, MTI is a driving force in advancing musical theatre as a vibrant and engaging art form.

MTI works directly with the composers, lyricists, and book writers of these musicals to provide official scripts, musical materials, and dynamic theatrical resources to over 100,000 professional, community and school theatres in the US and in over 150 countries worldwide.

MTI is particularly dedicated to educational theatre and has created special collections to meet the needs of various types of performers and audiences. MTI's Broadway Junior® shows are 30- and 60-minute musicals for performance by elementary- and middle school-aged performers, while MTI's School Editions are musicals annotated for performance by high school students.

MTI maintains its global headquarters in New York City with additional offices in London & Australia.

About Disney Theatrical Group

DISNEY THEATRICAL GROUP, a division of The Walt Disney Studios, was formed in 1994 and operates under the direction of Andrew Flatt, Anne Quart and Thomas Schumacher. Worldwide, its ten Broadway titles have been seen by more than 200 million theatregoers and have been nominated for 62 Tony® Awards, winning Broadway's highest honor 20 times. The company's inaugural production, *Beauty and the Beast*, opened in 1994, playing a remarkable 13-year run on Broadway and produced in replica productions around the world over four decades. In November 1997, Disney made theatrical history with the opening of *The Lion King*, which received six 1998 Tony Awards including Best Musical and Best Director, Julie Taymor, who became the first woman in Broadway history to win the award. Surpassing 25 landmark years on Broadway, it has welcomed 112 million visitors worldwide to date and has multiple productions currently running worldwide. *The Lion King* has played over 100 cities in 24 countries on every continent except Antarctica and its worldwide gross exceeds that of any film, Broadway show or entertainment title in box office history. Elton John and Tim Rice's *Aida* opened on Broadway next, winning four 2000 Tony Awards. It was followed by *Mary Poppins*, a co-production with Cameron Mackintosh, which opened in London in 2004 and went on to enjoy a six-year Tony-winning Broadway run. *Tarzan*®, Tony-nominated for its 2006 Broadway premiere, went on to become an international hit with an award-winning production enjoying a ten-year run in Germany. In January 2008, *The Little*

Mermaid opened on Broadway and was the best-selling new musical of that year. Disney Theatrical Group opened two critically acclaimed productions on Broadway in 2012, winning seven Tony Awards between them: *Peter and the Starcatcher* and *Newsies*, each of which enjoyed a two-year run and launched North American tours, with *Newsies* playing a record-breaking Fathom Events in-cinema release. *Aladdin*, Disney Theatrical Group's 2014 hit, continues its smash Broadway run. It has launched nine productions on four continents and been seen by more than 17 million guests. Disney Theatrical Group's newest hit, the 2018 Tony-nominated Best Musical *Frozen* has launched eight productions around the world. Other stage ventures include the world-premiere of *Hercules* in Hamburg, Germany, the Olivier-nominated West End hit *Shakespeare in Love*, stage productions of *Disney's High School Musical*, *Der Glöckner Von Notre Dame* in Berlin and *King David* in concert on Broadway. Disney Theatrical Group has collaborated with preeminent theatres in the US to develop new stage musicals including *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Freaky Friday*. As a part of the recent acquisition of 21st Century Fox, Disney Theatrical Group also heads the Buena Vista Theatrical banner, which licenses Fox titles for stage adaptations including *Anastasia*, *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* and *Mrs. Doubtfire*. Next on the Disney Theatrical schedule: The premiere of *Hercules* in London's West End, the North American tour of a reimagined production of *Beauty and The Beast*, and the ongoing development of the smash film *The Greatest Showman* as a stage musical. With dozens of productions currently produced or licensed, a Disney musical is being performed professionally somewhere on the planet virtually every hour of the day.

