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**Contra Costa Civic Theatre (CCCT) presents**  
**Mary Zimmerman's**  
**THE SECRET IN THE WINGS**  
**February 16-March 11**

El Cerrito, CA—Contra Costa Civic Theatre (CCCT) continues its 58th season with **Mary Zimmerman's** wildly inventive, highly theatrical ***The Secret in the Wings*** from **February 16** through **March 11**. Filled with Zimmerman's signature wit and humor and helmed by Chicago-based director **Jack Phillips**, this collection of lesser-known Grimm's fairy tales—told through storytelling, music, and movement—takes us on a thrilling, sometimes scary journey from “Once Upon a Time” to “Happily Ever After.”

The structure of *The Secret in the Wings* is as follows: All but the central story (“Silent for Seven Years”) is told in two parts; the first half of each story is interrupted by the first half of the next story and so on until we reach the central story which is represented without interruption. After that, the second half of each story unfolds in the re-verse of the original order. The play “fans in” to the central story, and then “fans out” again. The framing story of the play is an updated version of Perrault's familiar classic “Beauty and the Beast”; it is this story which most movingly illustrates what G.K. Chesterton wrote of fairy tales: that their profound lesson is “you must love a thing before it is loveable.”

“I've always loved fairy tales,” said playwright **Mary Zimmerman** in a 2005 interview. “I think they perhaps led me to theatre rather than the other way around. I remember a particular, lavish book with full page color illustrations that were lush and romantic. Pictures of girls in towers in windows looking at bluebirds; pictures of white snakes. I stared at those pictures for hours; I can see them in my mind's eye even now, in great detail. As a child I wanted to invent a machine that could record my dreams, so I could watch them in the morning; or hire someone to draw the things I had in my head, because I knew I didn't have the skill to do it myself. Theatre is that machine. I can make these images come to life and actually walk around inside them for a while.”

Director **Jack Phillips** adds, “When we were children, people read and told us stories. As adults, we passed on many of the same stories. The child psychologist, Bruno Bettelheim, has suggested that fairy tales and folktales address the fears that all children have—the fear of being abandoned, of being lost, of being small and powerless, of being scared and needing to be brave. In most of the stories the main character meets the challenge and lives happily ever after. In *Secret in the Wings* Mary Zimmerman, who dramatized the tales, chose stories that many of us haven't heard, but they still all address the basic fears most children have and offer an insight into our lives.”

**JACK PHILLIPS** (Director) returns to CCCT following his critically-acclaimed production of *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. He received his MFA from the Acting/Directing division of the Yale Drama School where he was the John Schubert Memorial Scholar in Directing. Jack spent 13 years as the Executive Director of the Civic Theatre in Spokane, Washington, and 5 years as the Artistic Director of Theatre of Western Springs. He has directed nearly 300 plays in professional and community theatres from Edinburgh to Los Angeles, acting in over 250 stage roles and



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more than 75 roles in film, TV and commercials. Jack is nationally known as a theatre adjudicator, having taught at Harvard, Gonzaga, and the graduate school of Leslie University. Jack is Past President of the American Association of Community Theatre, is included in both Who's Who in America and Who's Who in the World and was recently awarded the Art Cole Award for "a lifetime of contributions to community theatre."

The ensemble for *The Secret in the Wings* features a collection of familiar faces to the CCCT stage: **Jason Berner** (Kolenkhov in *You Can't Take it With You*), **Andrew Calabrese** (*The 39 Steps*), **Richard Friedlander** (*A Child's Christmas in Wales, August: Osage County*), **Alyssa Kim** (*A Child's Christmas in Wales, August: Osage County*), and **Julia Norton** (*A Child's Christmas in Wales*), along with newcomers **Jenn Bates**, **Avi Jacobson**, **Joel Stanley**, and **Lisa Wang**.

The design team is **Kuo-Hao Lo** (set design), **Mackenzie Laurel Orvis** (costume design), **Courtney Johnson** (lighting design), **Devon LaBelle** (props design), and **Michael Kelly** (sound design).

Single tickets for *The Secret in the Wings* range from \$11 to \$30. Performances are Fridays and Saturday nights at 8pm, and Sunday matinees at 2pm. All performances take place at CCCT's intimate and fully accessible theatre in the Flynn building located at 951 Pomona Avenue in El Cerrito. Free parking is provided in the adjoining lot. For more information, visit [www.ccct.org](http://www.ccct.org) or call 510.524.9012.

#### **ABOUT CONTRA COSTA CIVIC THEATRE**

Contra Costa Civic Theatre, established in 1959 by Louis and Bettianne Flynn and a group of dedicated volunteers and now under the artistic direction of Marilyn Langbehn, is a non-profit community theatre with its permanent home in El Cerrito, CA. Our mission is to provide affordable, high-quality entertainment to residents throughout the East Bay and provide training in performing arts for children and adults. We are proud to be an independent, self-sufficient organization presenting five Main Stage and thirteen youth productions annually in our intimate two hundred-seat theatre.

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