

Eighth annual production by Variety's "Beauty and the Beast" to feature young girl with local ties

September 9 2016 10:37 AM



ST. LOUIS – Perhaps no show yet presented by Variety Children's Theatre offers messages of hope to all quite like this year's show, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. It reminds these kids, and all of us, that it's okay to be different, that inner beauty is what really matters, and that fear should never prevent the quest for new experiences.

Most importantly, is the lesson of the heroic character, Chip the teacup. Which, the role will be played by Variety kid, Keira Cromwell, age 10 from O'Fallon, IL. Her Grandma, Monica Wilson-Cromwell, is a former area resident and graduate of Civic Memorial High School in Bethalto. She also has a large extensive extended family of Aunts, Uncles and Cousins, still in the area. This is her first time to set foot on the Big Stage but that doesn't diminish her enthusiasm. Keira was diagnosed with Polio at the age of 20 months. Chip the Tea Cup reminds everyone's that perfection isn't everything, and that what you accomplish in life has nothing to do with how "chipped" you are.

This year's performance, is yet again under the direction of Tony Award nominee, Lara Teeter. Variety's production of Beauty and the Beast will feature children of all abilities, as well as Adult Actor Equity Association and non-Equity performers.

Variety brings together children of all abilities with professional adults in one of the city's top performance venues to create an unforgettable experience for theatergoers, cast and crew alike. Variety Children's Theater (VCT) is an inclusive theater program for children with and without disabilities, age 7 through 21, to learn on-stage and backstage theater craft from experienced performing arts professionals. This year's performance of Beauty and the Beast will have a cast of 29 children with disabilities.

Variety's performance of Beauty and the Beast will be October 21-23 with 5 shows times. Tickets are available at The Touhill Performing Arts Center in St. Louis, MO or at www.touhill.org

About Variety the Children's Charity of St. Louis

Since 1932, Variety the Children's Charity serves children with physical and developmental disabilities in the St. Louis region, from infancy to age 21. Variety focuses on five core areas to help kids become independent and productive: gifting medical equipment for mobility and independence; developing unique education and recreational programs; funding therapy and Sunshine Coach Vans. For more information, visit www.varietystl.org.