

NEW STAGE
Theatre

STUDY GUIDE

A WRINKLE IN TIME

Adapted by John Glore
from Madeline L'Engle

ABOUT THE AUTHOR MADELEINE L'ENGLE



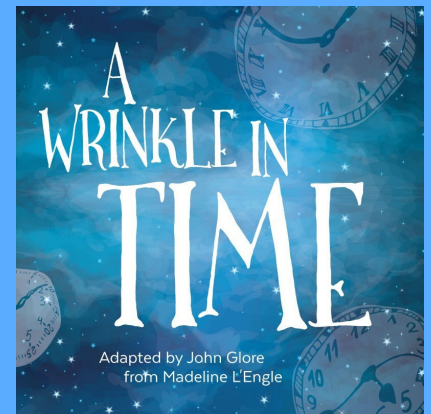
THE BASICS

BORN: Nov. 29, 1918

DIED: Sept. 6, 2007

OCCUPATION: Writer

AWARDS: Newbery Medal (1963)
Margaret Edwards Award (1998)

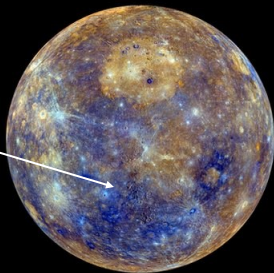


We can learn a lot from Madeleine L'Engle! She began writing stories at the age of 5 and never looked back.

FUN FACT!

There is a crater on Mercury named after L'Engle

L'ENGLE



It took Madeleine years to have any of her works published. After 30 + rejection letters, John C Farrar finally took a chance on L'Engle and published *A Wrinkle in Time*.

A Wrinkle in Time was a huge success. It's success ignited a new fire in L'Engle and she went on to write 47 more books. Her works ranged from picture books to poems, non fiction novels and fiction novels, as well as her very popular children's books.

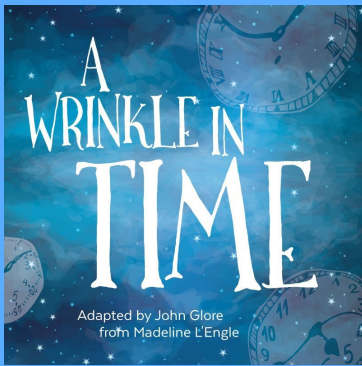
**"WE CAN'T TAKE ANY
CREDIT FOR OUR
TALENTS. IT'S HOW WE
USE THEM THAT
COUNTS"**

- Madeleine L'Engle



WHAT HAPPENS IN THE STORY?

“IT WAS A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT...” Meg Murry huddles against the cold in her attic bedroom, mulling over her missing father, brooding over problems at school and worrying about her little brother, Charles Wallace. Charles Wallace is different from all other children his age. He can always read Meg’s mind when she is in need. Mrs. Whatsit, a mysterious friend to Charles Wallace, arrives in their kitchen and explains to the children and their mother that there is such a thing as a **“TESSERACT,”** and then, she quickly departs. The children are puzzled by this and quickly set out to find Mrs. Whatsit and get some answers. On the way, they run into Calvin, an older boy who goes to school with Meg. Calvin has felt an inexplicable compulsion to go to the same place in which Meg and her brother are headed. They arrive at the **OLD HAUNTED HOUSE** of Mrs. Whatsit and meet her equally bizarre, friends Mrs. Who and Mrs. Which. The three eccentric ladies tell the children that they have been chosen for a mission – a mission they must accomplish by themselves with only minimal advisement. The children must travel to the planet Camazotz by way of the “tesseract” – **A WRINKLE IN TIME** – where they will rescue Meg and Charles Wallace’s father. Before they know it, the kids are whisked off on an **ADVENTURE ACROSS TIME AND SPACE**. First they arrive on the planet Uriel, where they are made aware of **THE BLACK THING** – a force of dark and evil energy. Then they travel to Camazotz where Mr. Murry is being held prisoner by the mind-controlling **IT**. The children are mystified when they notice that all of the planet’s inhabitants move about in perfect sync and they begin to realize that the population is controlled by the power of IT. The trio soon finds Mr. Murry and learns that he was captured and imprisoned on Camazotz during a time travel experiment. He has been trying to fight the control of IT ever since. In an attempt to learn more about the powers of IT, Charles Wallace allows the **MAN WITH RED EYES** to hypnotize him, which turns him into a robot-like being similar to the rest of the population of Camazotz. Meg, Calvin and Mr. Murry are unable to help Charles Wallace and narrowly escape IT by “tessering” to the planet Ixchel. Along the journey, Meg is injured by The Black Thing. Aunt Beast, a strange inhabitant of Ixchel, nurses Meg back to health and **TEACHES HER ABOUT LOVE**. When Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who and Mrs. Which return, they inform Meg that they do not have the power to help Charles Wallace. Meg, who sees herself as the most imperfect and incompetent person in the group, is the only one who can return to Camazotz and **SAVE HER BROTHER**. By fighting IT with her love for Charles Wallace, Meg discovers the power to save him and reunite her family back on Earth.



A CAST OF CHARACTERS

MEG MURRY: A young, strong willed, stubborn girl who has trouble in school. She is very intelligent but lacks motivated to use her talents. She struggles to control her anger as well as her lack of patience and self-confidence. She overcomes these faults because of her passionate love for her family.

CHARLES WALLACE: Meg's extraordinarily intelligent 5 year old brother. His peers think that there is something wrong with him because he doesn't talk, when in reality he is smarter than everyone around him.

CALVIN O'KEEFE: A super star on the basketball team who has a brilliant mind, like Charles Wallace. He comes from a very larger family. At times, that makes him feel left out. He accompanies Meg and Charles on their adventure to find their father.

MRS. MURRY: Meg and Charles Wallace's mother. Like her husband, she is a scientist who helped to discover the tesser. The tesser allows for time travel.

MR. MURRY: Meg and Charles Wallace's father. He works for a top secret part of the government that experiments with time travel. On one of his missions, he got stuck on an dark planet named Camazotz.

MRS. WHATSIT: The youngest of the three celestial beings who accompanies the children on their trip through time. We are first introduced to her as "The Tramp".

MRS. WHO: The second of the three celestial beings who accompany the children on their adventure. She uses quotations from famous writers and thinkers instead of using her own words because she finds it difficult to verbalize her own thoughts.

MRS. WHICH: The oldest of the three celestial beings and the leader of the children on their adventure. She can wrinkle though time and space. She has trouble materializing and is viewed as a light and voice in the play.

AUNT BEAST: A large beast who helps Meg recover so that she can continue to fight for her family. She teaches Meg about the power of love.

MAN WITH THE RED EYES: A robot like inhabitant of Camazotz who tries to hypnotize Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin in the Central Intelligence building. He is controlled by the power of IT.

WHO'S WHO ON THE MAIN STAGE?

THE CAST

MEG MURRY.....**ALLISON HEINZ**
CHARLES WALLACE.....**CHRIS AMBROSE**
CALVIN O'KEEFE.....**MATTHEW DENTON**
ACTOR 1**JESSICA WILKINSON**
- **MRS. MURRY**
- **MRS. WHO**
- **AUNT BEAST**
ACTOR 2.....**BRI THOMAS**
- **MRS. WHATSIT**
- **MAN WITH THE RED EYES**
ACTOR 3.....**NEILL KELLY**
- **MR. MURRY**
- **MRS. WHICH**

THE CREW

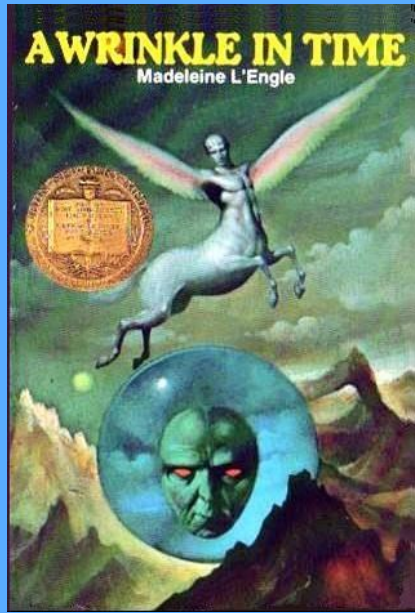
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR.....**FRANCINE THOMAS REYNOLDS**
MANAGING DIRECTOR.....**DAWN BUCK**
GENERAL MANAGER**BILL MCCARTY III**
MARKETING DIRECTOR.....**MELISSA TILLMAN**
MARKETING ASSOCIATE.....**SHANNON FROST**
EDUCATION DIRECTOR.....**CHRIS ROEBUCK**
RESIDENT DESIGNER.....**BRENT LEFAVOR**
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR/PROPERTIES.....**RICHARD LAWRENCE**
STAGE MANAGER.....**ELISE MCDONALD**
RESIDENT COSTUME DESIGNER.....**LESLEY RAYBON**
DESIGN AND PRODUCTION ASSOCIATE**RICHART SCHUG**
SCENIC CHARGE ARTIST/PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....**CLARA SEITZ**
BOX OFFICE MANAGER.....**AMY SMITH**
BOX OFFICE ASSISTANT/EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT.....**BETTY WONG**
BOX OFFICE/BUSINESS ASSISTANT.....**BARBARA MARTIN**
HOUSE MANAGER**CARLA MARSH**
ACTING INTERNS.. **CHRIS AMBROSE, MATTHEW DENTON , ALLISON HEINZ ,**
BRI THOMAS

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT



John Glore is the Associate Artistic Director of South Coast Repertory (SCR), in Orange County, Calif. He is an award-winning playwright whose work for young audiences includes his adaptation of Madeleine L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time*, which debuted at SCR in 2010 and has since moved on to numerous productions nationwide; an adaptation of Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith's *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*, which had its professional premiere at the Coterie Theatre and has since had dozens of productions nationwide; and his newest, an adaptation of Laura Amy Schlitz's *The Night Fairy*, which has been produced at SCR and Imagination Stage in Washington, D.C. Other plays for young audiences include *Wind of a Thousand Tales*, *Folktales Too*, *Rhubarb Jam*, and *The Day After Evermore*. His plays for adults include *On the Jump* (produced by SCR and Arena Stage in Washington D.C.), *The Company of Heaven*, *Preludes and Fugues*, and *City Sky* (a scenario for a dance piece). With the performance trio Culture Clash he has co-authored adaptations of two plays by Aristophanes, *The Birds* and *Peace*. In addition to the theatres already named, his work has been produced at Berkeley Rep, Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Round House Theatre, The Children's Theatre Company, First Stage, Childsplay, Oregon Childrens Theatre, the Getty Villa and many others. He received a 2000 Playwrights Fellowship from the California Arts Council and has occasionally taught playwriting and related subjects at UCLA and Pomona College.

ADAPTATION



An adaptation is a change made in something so that it can fit a new use. This performance of *A Wrinkle in Time* is an adaptation of a book, which is meant to be read, into a play, which is meant to be performed and viewed. John Glore took the story written by Madeleine L'Engle and adapted it so that it could be performed for an audience on stage.

Consider these questions for discussion before you attend the New Stage production:

What kinds of things did the authors have to consider in writing a script of the story?

What kinds of things would Madeleine L'Engle be concerned about in having someone make an adaptation of her story?

Do you think the performance will be shorter or longer than the book?

What will the characters look like? Will they match their illustrations? What differences can you expect?

What about the story? What changes might you expect in adapting it for the stage? Why would these changes be necessary?

After the performance, consider these questions:

Were there any characters or events that were in the book but not in the play?

Why do you think these choices were made?

Did the changes make the story stronger or was it weaker because of them?

What do you think the set and costume designers need to consider when bringing the book to the stage?

What things helped to tell the story on stage?

PUTTING ON A SHOW!

Every production at New Stage Theatre is a result of many people working together to create a play. You see the actors on stage, but there are many other people who you don't see who help before, during and after a production.



Director

- Determines the overall “look” of the performance
- Guides the actors in stage movement and character interpretation
- Works with designers to plan the lights and sound, scenery, costumes and make-up, and stage actions

Designers

- Plan the lights, scenery, costumes, make-up, sound, and actions to help bring the director's vision to life
- There are also designers who work to create the posters, advertisements, programs and other media for the performance.

Stage Manager

- Before the performance, creates a cuesheet to guide the crew in getting things on and off the stage during the performances.
- During the performance, the stage manager uses this cuesheet to direct people and things on and off the stage at the proper times.

Crew

- Build and operate the scenery, costumes, props, and light and sound during the performances.

Cast

- Includes all of the performers who present the story on stage.

Audience

- That's right! There can be no performance without you, the audience. The role of the audience is unique because you experience the entertainment with the performers and backstage crew. You are a collaborator in the performance and it is important to learn your role so you can join all the people who work to create this production.

READ MORE ABOUT IT!

Here are some suggested books for further reading:

More adventures with Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin

A Wrinkle in Time

A Wind in the Door

A Swiftly Tilting Planet

Many Waters

From Meg and Calvin's family—the second generation

The Arm of the Starfish

Dragons in the Waters

A House Like a Lotus

An Acceptable Time

Other sci-fi and dystopian books you might enjoy:

Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins; the first in a trilogy that includes *Mockingjay* and *Catching Fire*

Interworld by Neil Gaiman and Michael Reaves

Found by Margaret Peterson Haddix

The Maze Runner by James Dashner

The Boxes by William Sleator

Some books about space travel:

To Space and Back by Sally K. Ride

The Astronaut Training Book for Kids by Kim Long

For more on Einstein's Theories:

Einstein for Beginners by Joseph Swartz and Michael McGuinness

TECHNOLOGICAL WONDERLAND

Hold a class discussion about the role that technology plays in students' lives and the ways in which technology is marketed. Discuss Engineering Design as the process of using science principles to make modifications in the world in order to meet humans' desire for the better, faster, smarter, more convenient, healthier, or even more appealing advances in most areas of our lives.

Work as a class to create a list of sci-fi technologies or things that take place in *A Wrinkle in Time*. (Consider tessering, mental telepathy, mind control, Mrs. Who's glasses, the transformation of Mrs. Whatsit as examples.)

Encourage students to work in small groups and have them brainstorm ideas for a 'product' that could meet either one of the technologies from the story or one of their own for use in the lives of us today. Engage their imaginations by telling them that a major technological company wants to create practical applications of fantastic or science fiction technologies for real consumers. When they have settled on an idea, explain that they will need to work to 'market' their product to today's young person so they must develop a sketch of the product, a logo, a brand name, advertising artwork and a sales pitch.

Allow time for students to produce a polished presentation using print advertising, a brochure, a jingle or a commercial. Remind them that their goal is to get fellow students to want their product so they need to actively gear the campaign toward their peers.

Extend the activity by having groups of students research products that are commonplace today but would have been considered 'strange' or 'fantastic' in the past.



TIME IS A MACARONI...

The scientific premises suggesting a theoretical time travel mechanism are Einstein's Theory of Relativity and its successor, quantum mechanics. Einstein's inclusion of time as simply another basic dimension of physical reality, like width and height, and his mathematical equations using the speed of light as a cosmic "speed limit," paved the way for quantum mechanics' description of the physical universe in terms of black holes, singularities, and "cosmic strings," concepts which at times defy "rationality." MIT Professor Alan Guth has given us a concise summary of the Theory of Relativity: "Space tells matter how to move. Matter tells space how to curve."

"If we envision the concept of spacetime as a bedsheet held at the four corners, we can immediately see these implications of Relativity if we place a tennis ball in the center of the sheet; the flat sheet of spacetime is distorted into a curve with the ball at the center, matter telling space how to curve. If we place a second ball on the surface, the new ball rolls toward the indentation made by the first, curved space telling matter how to move. If we place a bowling ball in the center of our flat spacetime, the indentation will be very deep, possibly tearing a hole in the fabric of our spacetime, a black hole. If we view spacetime from beneath the flat sheet, we will see the bowling ball as a protruding shape, the black hole has emerged on the "other side of time" as a white hole or possibly a wormhole. Keeping this scenario in mind, it becomes clear that what is needed for time travel is an object which is massive enough to create a significant distortion of spacetime, something larger and heavier than a ping-pong ball on the surface of our bedsheet."

Recreate the bedsheet analogy with your students.

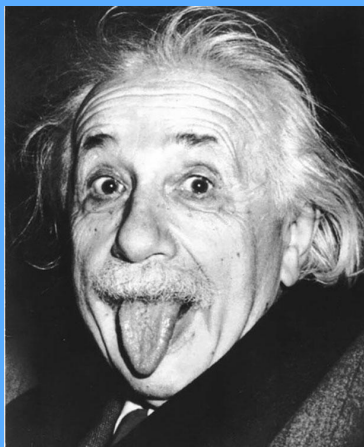
You will need:

A flat bedsheet

A tennis ball

A bowling ball or other larger heavy ball

Once the class has completed the activity, have students draw or write a description of their concepts of time travel.



"FAULTY" POEMS

"Little Meg with the fierce heart; I give you your faults." - Mrs. Whatsit

Meg is able to discover, throughout her journey, that her greatest strengths come from her 'faults'. What quality or qualities do you have that could be considered both fault and strength? How has this quality worked for you? How might it have worked against you?

Choose one quality and list it vertically on your page. Write each line to describe how this quality is sometimes a hindrance. Repeat the process using the same quality but describe it as a strength. Present your finished poems side by side for display.

Example:

Conversation comes so easily for me, but I

Have the habit of wearing out my

Audience.

Talking isn't always appropriate. Just ask my

Teachers who'd prefer

You and I save it for our lunch break!

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE SEEING THE PRODUCTION:

- 1) Define fantasy and science fiction. What are the differences between the two genres? Similarities? List popular movies and TV shows that fit into these genres. Discuss which they consider fantasy, science fiction or a combination of the two.
- 2) The opening line of *A Wrinkle in Time* is: "It was a dark and stormy night." What kind of mood does this sentence immediately evoke? How do you think this mood will be accomplished on stage? Describe how you think the stage will look. What will the lighting be like? What sounds will you hear?
- 3) Family is an important aspect of *A Wrinkle in Time*. Who are the members of your family? How do you help members of your family? In what ways do they help you?
- 4) If you had the opportunity to travel through time, would you do it? Where would you want to go – the past or the future? What time period of the past would you most like to visit and why?
- 5) A major theme in *A Wrinkle in Time* is good vs. evil. Why do you think this theme occurs so often in stories? What are examples of good vs. evil from the world around you?
- 6) In *A Wrinkle in Time*, one of the characters says, "Differences make problems...Why do you think your planet has wars? Why do you think people get confused and unhappy? Because no one trusts anyone who is different." The character is trying to pressure the others to conform. Have you ever been confronted by peer pressure? What did you do?
- 7) What is your definition of courage? Based on your definition, give examples of courageous people in the world today.

QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER SEEING THE PRODUCTION:

- 1) Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who and Mrs. Which are three similar, yet distinct, characters? How are they distinguished from one another in the play? Think about costuming, lighting, sound, hair and makeup designs.
- 2) After Meg, Charles Wallace and Calvin are shown the Black Thing, Mrs. Whatsit warns them that it wants to overcome the Earth. She mentions several humans in history who have fought against the Black Thing. Who were they? Give some other examples of people who fight against evil in our world today.
- 3) How did the play demonstrate the act of “tessering”? Describe the way design elements (sound, lights, choreography, etc.) were used to accomplish it. If you were directing or designing the play, what other ideas would you incorporate to accomplish “tessering”?
- 4) Camazotz is a society where everyone is the same and all thoughts and feelings are controlled for you. What are the pros and cons of living in a society like Camazotz?
- 5) Is Charles Wallace different than kids his own age? In what ways? How is he similar and/or different than Meg? Than Calvin?
- 6) What characters in the play represent good? What characters represent evil? Are these characters always, 100% good or evil?
- 7) Who do you believe is the most courageous character in the play? Why?
- 8) What phrase does Meg repeat over and over again to defeat IT? What do you think the play is trying to say about love?
- 9) What do you think happens after *A Wrinkle in Time* is over? What direction do the main characters take in their lives? How are they better for having gone through the story?

AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

For many of your students, a visit to New Stage Theatre to see *A Wrinkle in Time* may be their first theatre experience. It may be helpful to discuss with them the expected behavior of an audience. New Stage asks that prior to the performance, students are made aware of the following:

- Stay with your group at all times and pay attention to your teachers and chaperones.
- Listen to the New Stage staff member who will board your bus and escort your group to the lobby.
- Be sure to go to the bathroom before the performance begins. It is hard to leave once the performance begins.
- Make yourself comfortable while keeping movement to a minimum.
- Please do not stand up, walk around or put your feet on the seat in front of you.
- Absolutely no gum chewing, eating or drinking in the theatre.

Noise

Live theatre means live actors who can hear not only what is happening on the stage, but in the audience as well. While laughter and applause at appropriate time are appreciated by the actors, excessive noise and talking is not. Even whispering voices can be distracting to the actors and others in the audience.

- Do not talk during the performance.
- Cell phones are prohibited in the theatre. If you have one turn it off and put it away and do not bring it out during the performance.

Applause

Applause is used to acknowledge the performers and to voice appreciation or approval. Traditionally, applause comes before intermission and at the performance's conclusion. Dimming the lights on the stage and bringing up the house lights usually signals these intervals. A curtain call in which the cast returns to the stage for bows usually follows a performance.

COSTUME DESIGN

A Wrinkle In Time



Calvin Charles Wallace Meg



Mrs. Whatsit

Mrs. Who

A Wrinkle in Time



Wears lab coat in lab and bathrobe during storm scene

glasses

Tweed jacket

Mother Father



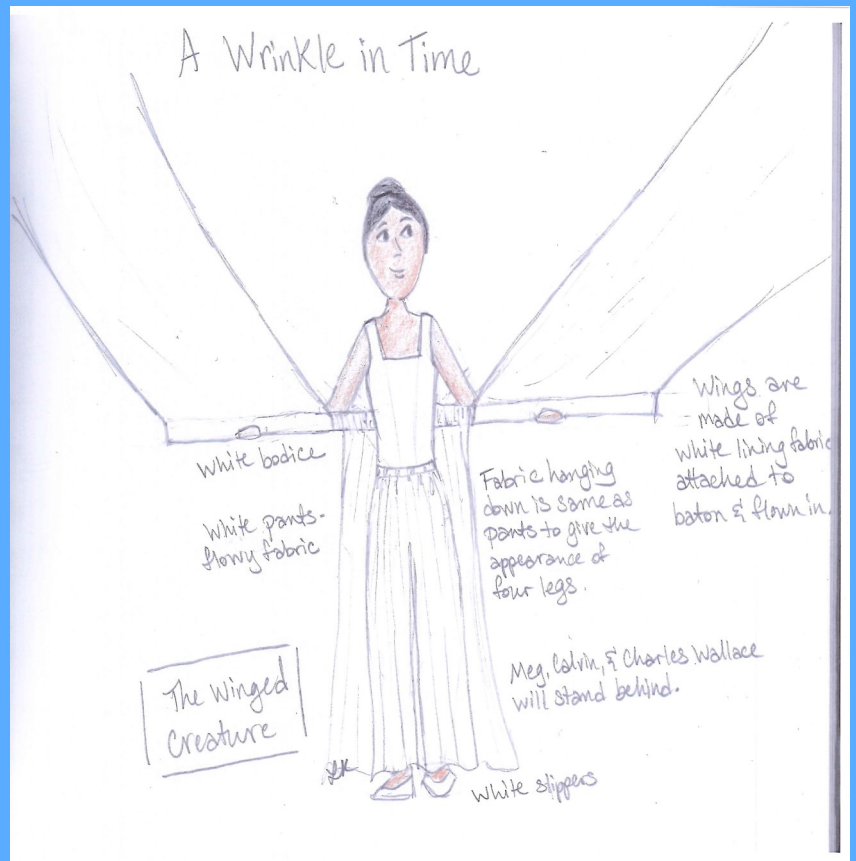
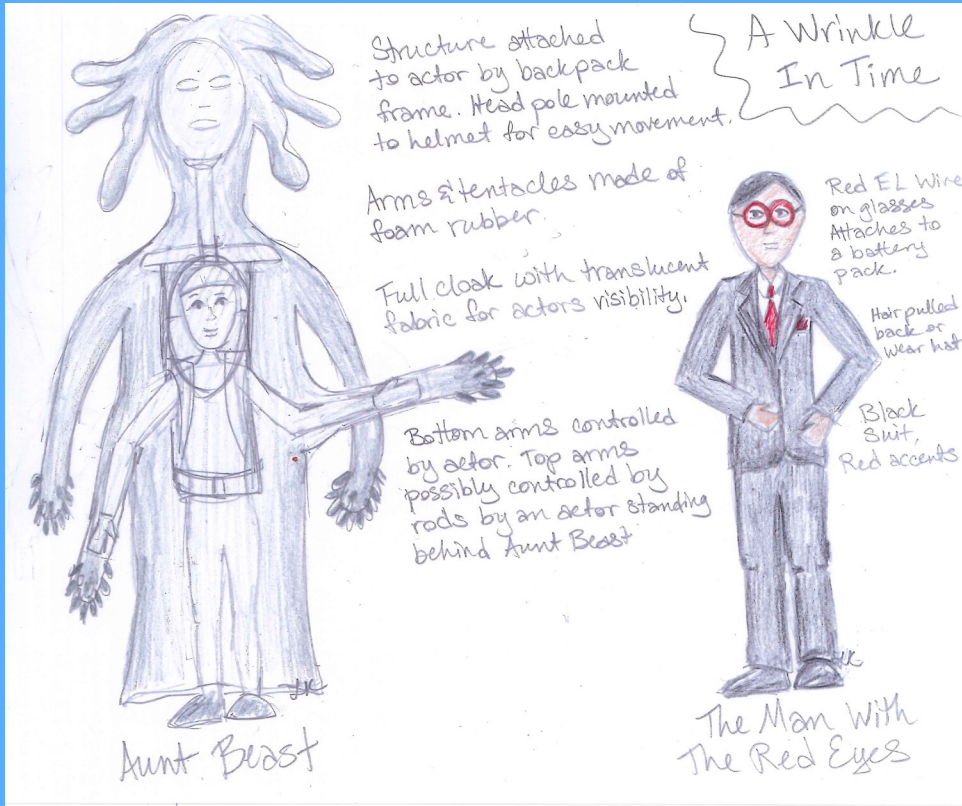
Wig - can be different color

50s style grey dress

Non-Descript Grey suit

Camazotz Woman Camazotz Man

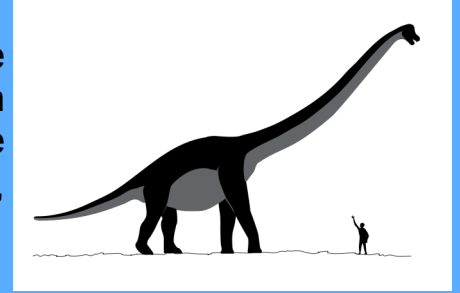
COSTUME DESIGN



IF I COULD TURN BACK TIME...

We asked the cast of *A Wrinkle in Time*: “If you had the opportunity to time travel, would you want to visit the past or the future? What time period would you most like to visit and why?”

Allison Heinz (Meg): I would love to go back in time to the age of the dinosaur. We have such a clear image of what the land on our planet looks like now, I would want to take a plane with me and see how different earth looked like back then. Plus, dinosaurs.



Chris Ambrose (Actor 1, Charles Wallace): I would go to the past. I would travel back to 2009, to my first day of college when my father was alive and I decided to pursue acting professionally. I believe that if I could I would love to tell my father about the differences I have tried to make in the lives of everyone with whom I have come in contact. I would tell him how much I enjoy performing for children in Mississippi because to them I could become a hero for them through art and performance. To show them that it doesn't matter where we come from, we can still change lives and create happiness for everyone and be leaders in society.

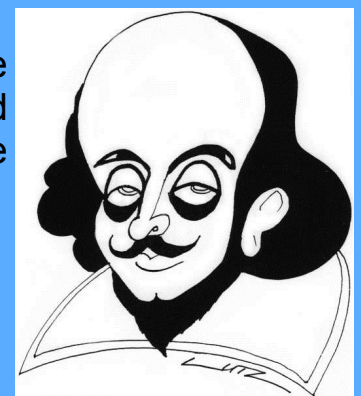


Matthew Denton (Actor 4, Calvin): If I had the opportunity to travel through time, I believe I would choose to travel forward, way forward. I would love to see how our society "progresses" and changes, and what it becomes centuries from now. We live in a period of unrivaled technological and scientific advancements, I wonder where all that will take us and how different our world will be in the future.

Jessica Wilkinson (Actor 2, Mother): I'd go back to the 1980s when I was a little kid. Life was carefree, and there was so much time to play with siblings and cousins. I'd love more chances to "play school" or ride bikes or spend summers out by my cousin's pool. I'd love to relive the joy of childhood again.

Bri Thomas (Actor 3, Mrs. Whatsit): I would travel into the future 100 years from now, to see if by then people will have learned that we are all one, and treat each other accordingly.

Neill Kelly (Actor 5, Father): I would want to go back to the Renaissance and experience all of the advances in the arts and sciences as they were happening. It would be so cool to see Shakespeare's plays being performed for the first time.



Student Evaluation Form
A WRINKLE IN TIME

Name: _____

School: _____

What was your overall reaction to the play?

What was your reaction to the production values of the play (costumes, scenery, acting, etc.)?

What was your favorite part of the play?

Did you learn anything from this production? If so, what?

What other stories would you enjoy seeing staged by live actors?

Please list other comments and observations?

Please help New Stage by sharing your thoughts with us!

Return this form to:

Chris Roebuck/ Education Director/ New Stage Theatre/ 1100 Carlisle St/ Jackson, MS 39202 or
fax to 601.948.3538

Teacher Evaluation Form *A WRINKLE IN TIME*

Name: _____ School: _____

What is your overall reaction to the production?

How do you feel about the production values of the performance (costumes, set, performers, etc?)

How did your students react to the production? (We would appreciate any written response from your students)

Please comment on the educational value of the program.

What is your overall reaction to the question and answer (talk-back) session?

How did you hear about the New Stage educational matinee?

What other plays would you like for your students to see?

Please list other comments and observations.

Please help New Stage by sharing your thoughts with us!

Return form to:

Chris Roebuck, Education Director, New Stage Theatre, 1100 Carlisle St, Jackson, MS 39202
croebuck@newstagetheatre.com Or fax to: 601.948.3538