This original adaptation of Marcus Pfister’s colorful stories uses innovative puppetry, striking scenic effects, and delightful original music that will mesmerize the entire family. Together, you’ll travel with the beautiful Rainbow Fish through the great unknown deep sea, discover new worlds, meet a wise octopus and a helpful starfish, and learn what it means to share your prized possession.

March 10 — April 5, 2020

Produced by MERMAID THEATRE OF NOVA SCOTIA
Written and Illustrated by MARCUS PFISTER
Directed by JIM MORROW
Composed by STEVEN NAYLOR

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We love to hear from YOU!
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Submit your questions online at
www.childrenstheatre.org/offbookquestions

Ever wonder how the costumes are made?
Curious who is in the cast? For more articles about
CTC’s production of
The Rainbow Fish, visit us online at
www.offbook.childrenstheatre.org
Marcus Pfister

Born in 1960, Marcus Pfister grew up in Switzerland, where he still lives with his wife and children. His first book, The Sleepy Owl, was published in 1986 while he was still working as a graphic designer. It wasn’t until The Rainbow Fish was published in 1992 to international acclaim that he quit graphic design to focus solely on picture book creation. In 1995, a competition was held in Germany for school children to write a sequel to the first Rainbow Fish book. A school for the blind and partially blind won the competition and Rainbow Fish to the Rescue was created. The Rainbow Fish series has been translated into over 50 languages and has sold over 30 million copies. Today, there are 11 picture books featuring the colorful fish.

“I am always amazed how, as I travel the world, I come across the Rainbow Fish in the most unlikely places, as if he travels with me.”
~Marcus Pfister

The Rainbow Fish illustrations are created with watercolor and pencil. The holographic features are not added until the production process but he always indicates on his paintings where the foil should go.

To date, Marcus has created 51 books and earned countless international awards for his work. His newest book, Who Stole the Hazelnuts, tackles a forest mystery in watercolor.

Light Up Your Imagination!

The Rainbow Fish swims to Minnesota all the way from Nova Scotia, Canada, where he started his journey at the Mermaid Theatre—the same company who brought The Very Hungry Caterpillar to the CTC stage in 2014.

This production uses black light which allows only certain elements to be seen onstage. Using this technique, anything painted with fluorescent paint can be seen, but anything black becomes invisible. In Rainbow Fish, puppets and scenery are painted with fluorescent paint and ultraviolet light or black light is used to make those items glow onstage. The three puppeteers wear all black and black masks which allows them to disappear into the background and execute visual illusions with the puppets without being seen. The puppets seem to float, swim, shrink, grow, and disappear right in front of the audiences eyes.

Because of the use of black light, the theatre and audience space will be darker than our typical performances. If you find yourself needing to leave the performance, an usher can assist you with a flashlight.
Rainbow Fish
This small and energetic fish gets its name from its many colors. While they are born a silver-white color, they grow more vibrant as they age and have a life span of about 5 years. They are schooling fish, which means that they like to live in groups. Rainbow fish live in tropical climates and eat insects floating at the top of the water.

Starfish
Despite their name, starfish are actually not fish since they are invertebrates and are actually closely related to sea urchins. There are about 1,600 different species of starfish and some can weigh up to 11 pounds! While most species have five arms, there are some that have many more. These limbs can be regrown if damaged or lost. You won’t find any starfish in Minnesota because they cannot survive in fresh water.

Octopus
With a life span of only 1 - 2 years, the octopus features eight legs with suctions to help them pull food into their mouth. While most eat crab, shrimp, and smaller prey some species will eat animals as large as sharks. If threatened, they can shoot inky fluid from their body which darkens the water and confuses the predator. They are thought to be the most intelligent invertebrate and build shelters at the bottom of the ocean by arranging rocks.

Jellyfish
There is evidence to indicate that jellyfish have inhabited the oceans for over 500 million years; that is longer than dinosaurs! Most jellyfish are clear but others can be are pink, yellow, blue, or purple. Like in The Rainbow Fish, some are bioluminescent, which means they produce their own light. But beware: they can sting using their tendrils!

Firefly Squid
Firefly squid produce a cobalt blue color which allows them to communicate, confuse predators and escape danger. Typically, they don’t grow more than 3 inches; however, there is evidence to suggest that these tiny creatures might be able to see color like humans. Millions of these creatures gather every year off the coast of Japan which creates a beautiful light show.
Springboard ideas of what to talk about, write about, or explore while connecting ‘The Rainbow Fish’ to your curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Create your own puppets using recycled materials.</th>
<th>Read <em>The Rainbow Fish</em> books by Marcus Pfister.</th>
<th>This play uses puppets! Why do you think we use puppets instead of real animals?</th>
<th>Write a letter or draw a picture for the actors or puppets.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice going to the theatre by creating a stage and audience in your classroom.</td>
<td>Research the animals in the show. Compare and contrast the real animals with their puppets in the show.</td>
<td>Go to an aquarium to see real life versions of the animals in <em>The Rainbow Fish</em>.</td>
<td>What is the moral or lesson in <em>Rainbow Fish Discovers the Deep Sea</em>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retell the story from the perspective of the Little Blue Fish or the Octopus.</td>
<td>Is it more important to keep what makes you unique or be liked by peers?</td>
<td>What emotions did you feel during the play? What part of the play surprised you?</td>
<td>What was your favorite part of the play?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Fish is brave when he travels into the dark cavern. Share a time you were brave.</td>
<td>Rainbow Fish goes to the Octopus for advice. Who do you go to for advice?</td>
<td>What is the moral or lesson in <em>The Rainbow Fish</em>?</td>
<td>The Rainbow Fish feels happy when he shares his scales. When have you shared with a friend? How did sharing make you feel?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the things that makes the Rainbow Fish unique is his glittering scales. What makes you special or unique?</td>
<td>The Rainbow Fish loses his scale in the underwater cavern. Share a time you lost something. Did you find it?</td>
<td>Rainbow Fish does not want to share his scales but no one will be his friend. Should he share his scales in order to make friends or keep the scales that make him special?</td>
<td>The Rainbow Fish goes on a journey. Where have you traveled?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Children’s Theatre Company – The Rainbow Fish*
Class Act: Actor’s Tools

Actors use many tools to help them tell a story — three we focus on at CTC are body, voice, and imagination.

Explain that projecting means using a loud voice and enunciating means speaking clearly. Have students practice projecting and enunciating by saying the title of the play, The Rainbow Fish as a group, and then individually.

Brainstorm emotions that actors might portray. Try saying “The Rainbow Fish” using those emotions. Students will naturally begin to use their body to portray the emotion as they say the line. Brainstorm how your body looks or feels different when you are feeling these emotions. Allow a few students to showcase their work as a solo.

List some of the characters in the play along with characteristics of each. How would each of those characters say the title? Say the line as a group, using different characters as inspiration. Then, ask for volunteers to perform the line individually.

Class Act: Swim Across the Ocean

Objective: This activity challenges your students to use their bodies and imaginations to physically become different characters. It is easiest if you are able to move desks to the side or utilize a large open space.

Directions: When you say “go” students can begin walking around the space; however, when you say “stop” they must freeze. Practice this a few times so that everyone understands.

Next, challenge students to walk around the space like a specific animal in the ocean. Again, they cannot begin until you say “go.” Give them a few moments to explore that animal’s movement and then say “stop.” Compliment the students who were able to stop quickly. Point out a few things you are noticing (for example “I notice that (insert students name) is using their hand to be a fin.”) When you are ready, give them another animal. Again, they cannot begin until you say “go.” Spend time reflecting after each time you say “stop.”

Example animals
- Jellyfish
- Octopus
- Sea Slug
- Starfish

After you have completed a variety of characters as a group, ask students to return to their desks. Invite one student to come to the front of the room and perform one of their character walks. Ask the rest of the students to guess which character they are performing. Ask students to support their guess by drawing evidence from their performance.
Class Act: Come in!

**Objective:** This activity allows kids to explore animals using their body, voice and imagination. This activity works well as a warm up activity to start the day or to transition from table work to circle time.

**Directions:** The leader announces that they are looking for animals to join the circle. The leader is looking for people who are sitting quietly and raising their hand (or any other behavior you would like to reinforce) to become animals and join the circle. One at a time, the leader calls on a student to join the circle. The student knocks on the door (this can be a literal door or a pretend door). The leader opens the door and says, “What animal are you?” The student becomes the animal using their body and voice and announces what animal they are. The leader then responds with, “oh great, come in,” and the student joins the circle. When they sit in the circle, they become people again. Play continues until all students have joined the circle.

Class Act: Shape Your Body

**Objective:** This activity allows students to explore animals using their body, voice and imagination. This activity works well in an open area and encourages special awareness, motor skills and listening.

**Directions:** The leader announces that they are looking for animals to join the circle. The leader is looking for people who are sitting quietly and raising their hand (or any other behavior you would like to reinforce) to become animals and join the circle. One at a time, the leader calls on a student to join the circle. The student knocks on the door (this can be a literal door or a pretend door). The leader opens the door and says, “What animal are you?” The student becomes the animal using their body and voice and announces what animal they are. The leader then responds with, “oh great, come in,” and the student joins the circle. When they sit in the circle, they become people again. Play continues until all students have joined the circle.

Class Act: Whale and Crab

**Objective:** This activity encourages students to use their body, voice, and imagination to become characters from the story. This activity works well in an open space.

**Directions:** *The Rainbow Fish* features animals that are big and animals that are small. Ask each student to find a spot in the room to stand. When you say go, students will make their body big like a whale and make a whale noise. Remind students to do this without touching or hurting anyone around them. Encourage students to use their whole body, including their face, to become the whale.

Then, when you say go, students will make their body small like a crab and make a crab noise. Again, encourage students to use their whole body, including their face, to become a crab.

Once students know the two actions, test their knowledge by switching back and forth between the two. You can also apply emotions by creating a happy whale, sad whale, excited crab, or shy crab.
Class Act: Character Interview

Objective: In this activity, students will use their imagination to invent backgrounds, justify actions, and answer questions from a character’s perspective. Students will generate questions to better understand a variety of characters. Students will offer advice and ideas to help the characters.

Directions: Invite students to consider how Rainbow Fish’s voice would sound if he could talk. Practice by having the students say “The Rainbow Fish” in their fish voice.

Place a chair at the front of the room. Ask for a volunteer to come to the front of the class and pretend to be Rainbow Fish. Have them swim to the chair like a fish to help them get into character.

The rest of the students will play the role of news reporters who are interviewing Rainbow Fish for the local newspaper. The teacher can model by asking Rainbow Fish a few questions then invite the class of reporters to ask Rainbow Fish questions.

Sample questions
- “What is so special about your scales?”
- “Why do you choose to share your scales?”
- “Were you scared to go into the deep blue sea?”
- “How did you feel after you shared your scales?”

After interviewing Rainbow Fish, do the same activity for other characters in the story such as Octopus, Little Blue Fish, or Starfish.

Mix it up!
Use this activity to explore characters in other stories, real people from history/current events or animals.

Class Act: This Scene Needs

Objective: This activity challenges students to create original dialogue and examine the emotions of characters.

Directions: Brainstorm with students the important moments from the story or play. Choose a specific moment to build a tableau. Tableau is an acting word for frozen image. Choose five students to be actors. Have the first student come to the front of the class and say, “This scene needs...” For example, if the scene is Rainbow Fish talking to the Octopus, a student might say, “This scene needs a cave.” The student will then use their body to become that character or object. The remaining four students add into the scene, one at a time, until all five students are working together to create the objects or characters in the scene.

Once all the students are frozen in the scene, allow each to make up a line of dialogue their character/object would say. Challenge the students to connect to what the other actors are saying to create a conversation.
‘The Rainbow Fish’ Venn Diagram

Use the Venn Diagram below to compare and contrast the book by Marcus Pfister and the play.
Story Sequence

So much happens in the plays we see and the books we read! See if you can remember the order of events in *The Rainbow Fish* by numbering the pictures below from 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>.
**Fin-tastic Friends**

*The Rainbow Fish* makes friends with the Little Blue Fish. Fill out the graph below then answer the questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Being a good friend...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Face" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looks Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Ear" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounds Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Hand" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feels Like</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who is someone you consider a friend? How are they a good friend?

Write about a time you were not being a good friend. How did you fix it?
Design Your Own Rainbow Fish

Design your own rainbow fish using the template below. What makes your rainbow fish special?
Opposites

Color the animals, then draw a line connecting the opposites

Big

Many

Few

Slow

Long

Small

Fast

Short
Cork Board Conversations

Use the sticky notes below to think critically about *The Rainbow Fish*.

Three adjectives that describe this play are...

1.

2.

3.

This play made me feel...

This play made me think about...

A question I still have is...

A status I would post on my social media after seeing the show is...

This play taught me...

My Rating of *The Rainbow Fish* at Children’s Theatre Company
**Further Resources**

**More about The Rainbow Fish**
Marcus Pfister’s Website  
http://www.marcuspfister.ch/

‘The Rainbow Fish’ Read Aloud  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9mryuEKkKc&t=47s

‘The Rainbow Fish’ Sneak Peek Video  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oftrDecUJdw

**Classroom Resources About Oceans**
Tropical Fish Live Cam  
https://explore.org/livecams/under-the-water/pacific-aquarium-tropical-reef-habitat-cam

Minnesota Zoo Tropical Reef  
https://mnzoo.org/blog/animals/tropical-reef/

National Geographic Ocean Education  
https://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/programs/oceans-education/

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2019 – 2020 Weekday Student Matinee

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Questions? Contact School Engagement Coordinator at  
schools@childrenstheatre.org