At CTC, our mission is to Educate, Challenge, and Inspire our multigenerational audience. This Audience Resource Guide is just one of the ways through which we aim to enhance your experience and further your engagement, beyond just seeing the shows on our stage. Use these articles, conversation starters, and activities both before and after you see The Rainbow Fish!
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.

**Things to Know About the Show**

- This show was created by Mermaid Theatre in Nova Scotia, Canada. It is based on the books *The Rainbow Fish, Rainbow Fish Discovers the Deep Sea,* and *Opposites* by Marcus Pfister.
- The puppets are painted with fluorescent paint, so they glow under black light! Along with visual storytelling, the show features pre-recorded music and narration of the stories.
- You may remember Mermaid Theatre from our 2013 – 2014 Season, in which they presented *The Very Hungry Caterpillar and Other Eric Carle Favorites!*

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**EDUCATE: Learn More About The Rainbow Fish**

Marcus Pfister wrote and illustrated *The Rainbow Fish* in 1992, and it’s since become one of the most beloved children’s stories across the globe. In this section, learn more about Marcus Pfister, the book, the play, and about the oceans in which the sea creatures of *The Rainbow Fish* live!

**Meet Marcus Pfister:**


**Learn About The Rainbow Fish:**

- *The Rainbow Fish,* read aloud: [https://youtu.be/r9mryuEKkKc](https://youtu.be/r9mryuEKkKc)
- *The Rainbow Fish,* Sneak Peek: [https://vimeo.com/391363302](https://vimeo.com/391363302)
- *The Rainbow Fish,* Promotional Video: [https://youtu.be/oftrDecUJdw](https://youtu.be/oftrDecUJdw)

**Resources About Oceans:**

- Tropical Fish Live Cam: [https://explore.org/livecams/under-the-water/pacific-aquarium-tropical-reef-habitat-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](https://mnzoo.org/blog/animals/tropical-reef)
- National Geographic Ocean Education: [https://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/programs/oceans-education/](https://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/programs/oceans-education/)
EDUCATE: Marcus Pfister and The Rainbow Fish

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 now has a total of 11 books, and has been translated into over 50 languages and has sold over 30 million copies.

The *Rainbow Fish* illustrations are created with watercolor and pencil. The holographic features are not added until the production process but Marcus Pfister always indicates on his paintings where the foil should go. Learn more about how he creates the book artwork in the program when you come see the show!

“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

Light Up Your Imagination!

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

This production uses black light puppetry, 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 *The Rainbow Fish*, puppets and scenery are painted with fluorescent paint; ultraviolet light or black light is used to make those items glow onstage. The puppeteers wear all black clothing and black masks, which allow them to disappear into the background and make 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.
**EDUCATE: The Real Animals of Rainbow Fish**

**Rainbowfish**

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. Rainbowfish live in tropical climates and eat insects floating at the top of the water.

**Starfish**

Despite their name, starfish are not actually fish! Although they live underwater, they do not have gills, scales, fins, or a backbone, so they are invertebrates, and most scientists call them “sea stars.” There are over 1,600 different species of starfish; some weigh up to 11 pounds! While most species have five arms, there are some that have many more. You won’t find any starfish in Minnesota because they cannot survive in fresh water.

**Octopus**

Octopi are one of the most distinctive creatures of the ocean, and are known for their intelligence! Nicknamed the “monster of the deep,” they are known for their bulging eyes and eight long arms complete with powerful suctions that help them pull in their food! They build shelters at the bottom of the ocean by arranging rocks, and if threatened, they can shoot inky fluid from their body which darkens the water and confuses their predator.

**Jellyfish**

Jellyfish have inhabited the oceans for over 500 million years; that is longer than dinosaurs lived on Earth! Most jellyfish are clear but others can be are pink, yellow, blue, or purple. Like in *The Rainbow Fish*, some are bio-luminescent, which means they produce their own light. But beware: they can sting using their tendrils! A jellyfish sting can be painful to humans, but they only sting when people accidentally touch them.

**Firefly Squid**

Firefly squids produce a cobalt blue color, which allows them to communicate, confuse predators and escape danger. Their special light-producing organs are called photophores, which emit the deep blue light. Thousands of photophores are found throughout their bodies, from the tips of their tentacles to around the eyes. Millions of these creatures gather every year off the coast of Japan, which creates a beautiful light show.
EDUCATE: Conversation Topics and Activities

Check out the ideas below for what to talk about, create, and explore before and after you see *The Rainbow Fish*!

- Create your own puppets using recycled materials!
- Is it more important to keep what makes you unique or be liked by peers?
- Rainbow Fish is brave when he travels into the dark cavern. Share a time you were brave.
- The Rainbow Fish feels happy when he shares his scales. When have you shared with a friend? How did sharing make you feel?
- Rainbow Fish goes to the Octopus for advice. Who do you go to for advice?
- Visit an aquarium to see real life sea creatures!
- What was your favorite part of the play?
- One of the things that makes the Rainbow Fish unique is his glittering scales. What makes you special or unique?
- Is it more important to keep what makes you unique or be liked by peers?

CHALLENGE: Swim Across the Ocean

Use your body and imagination to become different characters! This activity works best in an open space with a group of friends or your family, and with someone as the “leader.”

**When the leader says “go,”** everyone can begin walking around the space; however, when the leader says “stop,” everyone must freeze. Practice this a few times so that everyone understands.

Next, challenge walk around the space like a specific animal in the ocean—you can pretend to be one of the animals you just learned about on the previous page, or another sea animal you can think of! Again, no one begin until the leader says “go.” Take a few moments to explore that animal’s movement before the leader says “stop.” Did you stop quickly?

When you are ready, try another animal. Spend time reflecting after each time you say “stop:” were you a large animal, or a small one? Do you move quickly, or slowly?

**Mix It Up!** One person can perform one of their animal walks in front of everyone else, while the rest of the group guesses which animal they are pretending to be! What evidence can you use to figure out the animals everyone is pretending to be?
Use the Venn Diagram below to compare and contrast the book by Marcus Pfister and the play at CTC.
**CHALLENGE: Opposites**

Color the animals, then draw a line connecting the animal on the left side of the page to its opposite on the right side!

- **Big**
- **Many**
- **Few**
- **Slow**
- **Long**
- **Small**
- **Fast**
- **Short**
CHALLENGE: 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 what happened first (1) to last (6).
**INSPIRE: Fin-tastic Friends**

The *Rainbow Fish* makes friends with the Little Blue Fish. Fill out the graph below about being a good friend, then answer the questions below!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Being a good friend…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="#" alt="Eye" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="#" alt="Ear" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="#" alt="Hand" /></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?
INSPIRE: Design Your Own Rainbow Fish

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

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

A question I still have is...

This play taught me...

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

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐