

## Peter and the Starcatcher—Dramaturge Note

The story of Peter Pan starts with the imagination. A boy who flies, surrounded by mermaids, pirates, fairies, native warriors, a man-eating crocodile, a couple of lost boys and handfuls of pixie dust—and all on an island where no one grows a day. Therefore, the production of any play regarding Peter Pan must begin with the imagination as well.

Adapted from the book series by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson, Tony Award-nominee, Rick Elice's *Peter and the Starcatcher* does just that. The play almost demands the audience to return their mind to a childhood state in which anything was possible. The style of abstract theatre used in this production is the very essence of a child's imagination itself. Two enormous ships, a horrible storm at sea, and a newfound island full of dangers and thrilling adventures are all portrayed with a bucket, a few props, a piece of rope and handful of actors.

Taking place on the British coast in 1885, the play mixes together historical accuracy with modern humor. The social classes of Victorian England are paid high regards, as is seen in the different styles of the characters' language. The story mixes together characters from each level of society—including everything from an upper class little girl and her governess, to a working class sailor, to a bloodthirsty pirate captain, to a lord knighted by the Queen, to three filthy orphan boys. Nautical terms and procedures used by sailors and seamen at the time, along with piratical culture, are represented as accurately as possible. The music also includes bits of Ragtime and British patriotic tunes, which were popular at the time. Modern humor, however, is intertwined throughout the show, with laughs for every generation.

All of these components all add in together to make a wildly imaginative play. This combination of a Victorian story and contemporary storytelling is a pure form of the game that every child can master—and the core of every Peter Pan story—playing pretend.

—Lauren-Jessica Bertini, Dramaturge