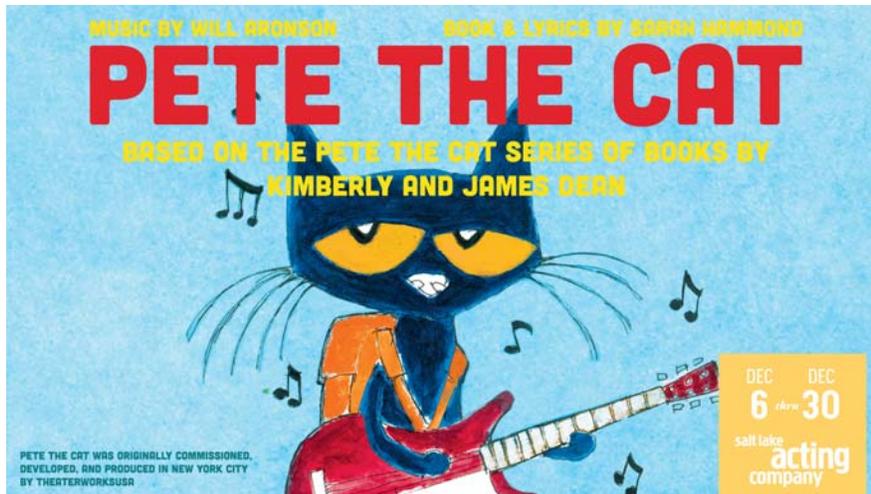


**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



## **SALT LAKE ACTING COMPANY LAUNCHES SECOND DECADE OF PROFESSIONAL CHILDREN’S THEATRE WITH *PETE THE CAT***

*Musical based on popular children’s series makes Utah debut at SLAC after acclaimed Off-Broadway run*

[SALT LAKE CITY, UT, NOVEMBER 13, 2019] - [Salt Lake Acting Company](#) (SLAC), Utah’s leading destination for brave, contemporary theatre, proudly presents its 11<sup>th</sup> annual children’s production, the Utah premiere of **PETE THE CAT**. Based on the popular book series by **Kimberly and James Dean**, the stage musical features music by **Will Aronson** and book/lyrics by **Sarah Hammond**.

*When Pete the Cat gets caught jamming after bedtime, the cat-catcher sends him to live with the Biddle family to learn his manners. But for Pete, life is an adventure no matter where you wind up, and the minute he walks in the door, he gets the whole family rocking. The whole family that is, except for young Jimmy Biddle, the most organized second grader on planet Earth. But when Jimmy draws a blank in art class during the last week of school, it turns out Pete is the perfect pal to help him out. Together, they set out on a mission to help Jimmy conquer second grade art, and along the way, they both learn a little something new about inspiration.*

### **THE PRODUCTION**

Comprising the cast are **Cameron Aragon** (Olive), **Jacob Weitlauf** (Pete the Cat), **Joseph Paul Branca** (Jimmy), **Shelby Andersen** (Mom), and **Trayven Call** (Dad). Weitlauf and Branca return to SLAC’s Upstairs Theatre after appearing in SATURDAY’S VOYEUR 2019. Call understudies the role of Finn in SLAC’s current production of FORM OF A GIRL UNKNOWN. Andersen, a Utah native now based in New York, returns to SLAC, having appeared in CIRCLE MIRROR TRANSFORMATION, 4000 MILES, and the 2012 children’s production CLICK, CLACK, MOO: COWS THAT TYPE. Aragon makes her Salt Lake Acting Company debut with PETE THE CAT.

**Penelope Caywood**, Artistic Director of the University of Utah Children’s Theatre, returns for her 10<sup>th</sup> children’s production at SLAC. She directs, choreographs, and provides musical direction for PETE THE CAT. Rounding out the creative team are **Gage Williams** (scenic design), **Dennis Hassan** (costume design), Justin Ivie (props design) and **Jesse Portillo** (lighting design). **Nicholas Maughn** serves as rehearsal pianist.

In addition to ticketed performances available to the general public, SLAC once again opens its doors to several thousand Title I kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> graders, continuing the theatre's commitment to make the arts accessible to all. The number of Title I students who have or will have attended over the course of the program's 11 years now totals nearly 25,000.

### **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

In honor of the production, the theatre company has partnered with [The King's English Bookshop](#) to create a pop-up PETE THE CAT holiday book store in the SLAC lobby. Multiple titles are available to purchase before and after each performance, as well as during box office hours.

SLAC is also proud to serve, for the third consecutive year, as a donation station for its neighbor, [Washington Elementary](#). During performances of PETE THE CAT, audience members are encouraged to give to students-in-need. Requested (unwrapped) items include: jewelry, hair supplies, sporting equipment, slime, playdough, board games, coloring books, dolls, Barbies, sports team clothing, Minecraft items, remote control vehicles, bikes, skateboards, and gift cards.

SLAC's additional ongoing partner for holiday giving is [Salt Lake County Animal Services](#), on behalf of which SLAC will accept donations for animals in need. In honor of PETE THE CAT, patrons are also encouraged to bring canned cat food.

**PETE THE CAT runs December 6th through December 30th.** Tickets can be obtained via [tickets.saltlakeactingcompany.org](http://tickets.saltlakeactingcompany.org), in person, or by calling SLAC's box office at 801.363.7522.

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### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

## **[PETE THE CAT Press Kit](#)**

*Production photos available December 6<sup>th</sup>*

### **WHAT**

PETE THE CAT

Music by Will Aronson, Book and Lyrics by Sarah Hammond

Based on the Pete the Cat series of books by Kimberly and James Dean

*PETE THE CAT was originally commissioned, developed, and produced in New York City by TheaterWorksUSA.*

### **TICKETING INFORMATION**

December 6<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

- Saturdays and Sundays at 12pm and 3pm
- Additional performances:
  - o Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm
  - o Friday December 20<sup>th</sup> at 7pm
  - o Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 5pm
  - o Monday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> at 12pm and 3pm
  - o Thursday/Friday, December 26-27<sup>th</sup> at 12pm and 3pm

Adults: \$26 | Children: \$16

Discounts available for groups of 10 or more

## **VENUE INFORMATION**

Salt Lake Acting Company – Upstairs Theatre  
168 West 500 North, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84103

Box Office: 801-363-7522  
Open 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Mon – Fri  
[www.saltlakeactingcompany.org](http://www.saltlakeactingcompany.org)

## **PRESS CONTACT**

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joshua@saltlakeactingcompany.org  
801.363.7522

## **ABOUT SALT LAKE ACTING COMPANY**

Salt Lake Acting Company (SLAC)'s mission is to engage and enrich community through brave contemporary theatre. Founded in 1970, SLAC is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 professional theatre dedicated to producing, commissioning, and developing new works and to supporting a community of professional artists. SLAC has been nationally recognized by the Shubert Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Edgerton Foundation, among others. SLAC operates under a SPT Actors Equity Association contract and is a Constituent Member of Theatre Communications Group (a national organization for non-profit professional regional theatres), and the National New Play Network (a national alliance of non-profit professional theatres that champions the development, production, and continued life of new plays). For more information, visit [saltlakeactingcompany.org](http://saltlakeactingcompany.org).

## **CAST & CREATIVE**

Pete the Cat: Jacob Weitlauf  
Jimmy: Joseph Paul Branca  
Mom: Shelby Andersen  
Dad: Trayven Call  
Olive: Cameron Aragon

Director/Choreographer/Music Director: Penelope Caywood  
Set Design: Gage Williams  
Costume Design: Dennis Hassan  
Light Design: Jesse Portillo  
Prop Design: Justin Ivie  
Stage Manager: Jennie Sant  
Rehearsal Pianist: Nicholas Maughan

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

### **ABOUT WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY**

Washington Elementary is implementing several programs this year to increase our academic achievements and support child development.

- Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) provides a free breakfast to all of our students, every day, and the opportunity for students to eat with their teachers.
- Washington is part of a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) grant where the school is using a rewards-based economy for students to earn and purchase items from our school store. This teaches students about finances, budgeting, and planning.

- We have a Principal's 200 Club, where students receive tickets for being safe, responsible, and respectful in our common areas and on the playground. Once a month we draw names and take 10 students to lunch at a local restaurant.
- Washington is in its third year of the Assessment to Achievement (A2A) grant sponsored by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE). This program focuses on using academic data to select an evidence based instructional strategy (EBIS) that will increase student achievement. This year Washington teachers' focus strategy is metacognition.
- We have 3 student teachers from the University of Utah and are a partner school with Westminster, where college students are welcome to observe in our classrooms.
- Washington has a partnership with the University of Utah that offers a free after school piano program (UPOP).
- Our K-3 students are involved with Tanner Dance, and fifth grade does dance with Ballet West.

We are excited to offer students and families a wide variety of opportunities. At Washington we believe that "EVERY STUDENT MATTERS" and that "WE ARE GREATER TOGETHER!"

### **ABOUT SALT LAKE COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES**

Salt Lake County Animal Services, the largest no-kill shelter in the State of Utah, is dedicated to providing consistent, reliable, and professional solutions for animal related issues. Our comprehensive animal care and control services include emergency planning, 24/7 Field operations and enforcement, animal care and sheltering, pet licensing, onsite veterinarian and clinic, pet adoptions and placement of animals with rescue groups, volunteer and foster programs, community issue focus programs, community education, media, and outreach events. For more information, visit [SLCO.org/Animal-Services](http://SLCO.org/Animal-Services).

### **ABOUT THE KING'S ENGLISH BOOKSHOP**

Matching books to readers since 1977. For more information, visit [KingsEnglish.com](http://KingsEnglish.com).