



Interstellar Cinderella

Music and Lyrics by Laurie Berkner

Book by Barbara Zinn Krieger

From the book "Interstellar Cinderella" by Deborah Underwood

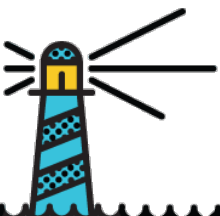
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(212) 573-8791. www.tyashowrights.com.

February & March, 2025



About the Show

It is 3017 in this future retelling of one of the world’s most beloved stories through musical theater, Cinderella. Cinderella is a space engineer looking to revolutionize space travel. When the Prince holds a space parade, Cinderella saves the parade by helping fix the Prince’s spaceship. Cinderella knows it’s the perfect opportunity to show the Prince her new hyper warp speed engine. But first, she’ll have to keep her evil stepmother from throwing a wrench in their plans!

Know Before You Go

Where You Will Go

Long Island Children’s Museum Theater is a professional family theater at the heart of the Museum. We offer a range of performance styles for families and schools including musicals, plays, puppetry, dance, and music. Our high-quality live performances celebrate audience interactivity, are often literature based and always tell a great story.



Question Quest! What is the difference between live theater and a movie? Have you ever seen a live theater performance? What do you do when you see something on stage that you like? Do you clap? Cheer? Smile?

Give acting a try with
[**On Stage: Theater Games and Activities for Kids.**](#)

Who You Will See...

The Cast

Interstellar Cinderella – Kate Budney
Mergatroyd/Prince Astral - Yashaun Harris
Stepmother - Josie McSwane
Stepsister Gidra/God-Bot 1 - Rosie Allenson
Stepsister Hulla/God-Bot 2 - Amy Herzberg
Swing/Assistant Stage Manager -
Zarina Nudalo Cameron

The Production Team

Director - Jim Packard
Choreographer - Lisa Rudin
Musical Director - Willard Meeks Jr.
Stage Manager/Resident Puppet Artist -
Austin Costello
Guitar/Percussion - Mike Leuci
Set Design - Christina Litvaitis

About the Company

James Packard (*Theater Program Director/Director of Interstellar Cinderella*) has 40 years of professional and educational experience working in theater arts. Prior to joining LICM in 2001, he worked in theater & event management for numerous New York City companies and has taught stage technology and design at several institutions including Florida State University & New York City College of Technology. He earned his M.F.A. in Theater from the University of Iowa and his B.A. in Theater from Westmar College (IA).

Willard Meeks, Jr. (*Musical Director*) A lifelong musician, Willard has played on Broadway and national tours for both *The Wiz* and Bob Fosse's *Dancin'*, and others. He has also worked with Stephanie Mills and Whitney Houston, doing tours and music videos, Jennifer Holliday, Jessye Norman, Elton John, Whoopi Goldberg and Maya Angelou.

Lisa Rudin (*Theater Program Coordinator/Resident Choreographer*) has appeared in multiple productions here at LICM Theater. Favorite roles include the Little Old Lady in *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* and Piggie in *Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!"* Prior to her work at LICM, she toured the country as a performer, worked in theater administration, casting, and as a teaching artist in both NY and Los Angeles. She holds a BFA in Acting from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

Austin M. Costello (*Stage Manager/Puppet Artist*) is a Long Island-based Puppet Artist and technician for LICM's Theater. Since receiving his BFA in Puppet Arts from the University of Connecticut, he has built and performed countless puppets of varying styles for shows such as *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus*, *Uncle Vlad's Pumpkin Patch*, *Journey to Oz*, and *Happy as Clams: The Musical*. He has also worked for The Jim Henson Company's New York Shop and Archives, as a director for The Hudson Vagabond Puppets, as a giant backup dancing monster for Danny Weinkauf's Red Pants Band, and as a puppeteer for Helpsters and Sesame Street.

Christina Litvaitis (*Scenic Designer*) is delighted to be working with the LICM Theater again after her work as a Scenic Painter for *The Snowy Day* and an Assistant Puppet Fabricator for *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! The Musical!* She holds a degree in Digital Arts from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and has had her short film, *Wishmaker*, featured in ten festivals in the United States and Australia. Her other credits include *Frederick* (Prop Fabricator and Scenic Painter), *Journey to Oz* (Graphics), and LICM Theater Videography. To follow along with her journey, you can check out her website at www.christinalitvaitis.com.

Zarina Nudalo Cameron (*ASM & Swing*) is a singer, actor and puppeteer in NYC and on Long Island. She is thrilled to return to LICM after wrangling shadow puppets in *The Snowy Day & Other Stories* and has previously worked at Plaza Theatricals and Sunrise Theater for their Arts on Stage Programs as a regularly-called Swing, Sally in *Cat in the Hat* and a Puppeteer and Wrangler for *Butterfly: A Life Cycle*. Zarina is a habitual aerialist, needleworker and patron of cat cafes.

Kate Budney (*Interstellar Cinderella*) is so excited to be back at LICM after appearing as Baby Mouse in *Frederick* last season! Recent credits include *Katie Laid an Eggie* (Attractive Nuisance Theater), *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Northern Stage), and *Pericles* and *One Night* (Target Margin Theater). She is also a teaching artist (currently working with Dancing Classrooms NYC), as well as a baker and cat fosterer. Now based in Brooklyn, Kate is from New Hampshire where she went to Dartmouth College and got her BA in Theater and Education.

Yashaun Harris (*Mergatroyd/Prince Astral*) has been performing for 12 years beginning in elementary school. He started performing in plays at his church and since then he's had a love for acting. Some of his favorite roles include Jimmy Early in the musical *Dreamgirls* and George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life*. He's also performed on LICM Theater's stage before as Peter in *The Snowy Day and Other Stories* by Ezra Jack Keats. He's extremely excited to take on his roles in *Interstellar Cinderella*.

Josie McSwane (*Stepmother*) is a LI based performer and choreographer. She has her BFA in Dance and has danced professionally in NY, LA and TX. You may have previously seen her on this stage as Bus Driver in *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* or Mary the Fairy in *My Butterfly*. She is thrilled to be back at LICM performing with the incredible cast and crew of *Interstellar Cinderella*.

Amy Herzberg (*Hulla/God-bot 2*) is an international artist with credits ranging from off-Broadway to short films, music videos and more. Credits include: *The Magical Journey of Arlekina* (Off-Broadway, Sean), *Issue #9* (Off-Broadway, choreographer, Taylor), *The Wild Party* (Choreographer, Nadine), *The Polar Express* (Elf) and many more. Amy is so excited to make her LICM Theater debut with *Interstellar Cinderella*!

Rosie Allenson (*Gidra/God-bot 1*) is a recent graduate of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts and The Academy Company. She is delighted to be making her LICM Theatre debut with such a talented company of performers. Notable credits include *Romeo and Juliet* (Juliet), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Maggie), *Fright Night* (Judy), and *An Enemy of the People* (Mrs. Stockman u/s). Love to Mom and Dad.

Michael Leuci (*Guitar/Percussion*) has maintained an active music career in the New York area for over 25 years, performing on drums and percussion, keyboard, guitar and bass, in addition to songwriting, composing and studio recording/production activities. This is Michael's twelfth year working as an ensemble musician with the LICM Theater, with past productions that include *Happy as Clams: The Musical*, *The Princess Frog*, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *Elephant & Piggie's "We Are in a Play!"* and *Frederick*.

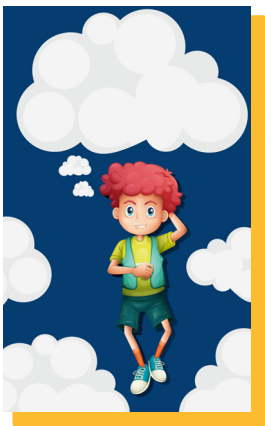
The Cinderella Story

What is the story of Cinderella? Does she have a pumpkin coach and a glass slipper? Did you know that in the traditional version of the story she didn't have either of those? The Cinderella story was passed down orally, and then different authors created their own version of it, for example the Grimm Brothers and Disney. *Interstellar Cinderella* has some of the elements of the original story, but it is set in the future, with a robot mouse, space travel, and anti-gravity belts. It is a futuristic spin on a traditional tale.



Image by brgfx on Freepik.com

Question Quest! What makes a story your favorite? Is it because you like the main character, or the challenge the characters are presented with?



Picture by freepik.com

Having a Dream

In our story Cinderella would like to be a space engineer and invent rockets but is not allowed to because of her Stepmother. The prince would also like to be able to travel around space but cannot because it is not safe. They both wonder if their dreams will come true. Do you have any dreams about something you would like to do? Maybe what you would like to be when you grow up, or an activity you would like to try?

Activity

Create a dream catcher!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HihUk18BkRo>

What is a Fairy Tale?

A fairy tale is a story about magical and imaginary beings and lands. Sometimes these stories contain a moral lesson. Some examples of fairy tales include Snow White, Little Red Riding Hood and Cinderella, of course! Fairy tales usually have a protagonist (main character), a villain, and an element of magic, which could be an object, location, or being. They often have strong depictions of good and evil characters. There is a conflict or challenge for the protagonist to overcome. Other traits of fairy tales include the use of repetitive phrases throughout the story. Often the good character wins and the bad character loses.

Activity

Create a story with these characters in the picture. Choose a location, a conflict or challenge. Is there something standing in their way of achieving their goal? What do they do? How does the story end?



Picture by freepik.com



Picture by brgfx at freepik.com

Gravity

Gravity was discovered by Isaac Newton. The story goes that he was sitting under a tree when an apple fell. He wondered why the apple fell and didn't go up or sideways, instead. He discovered gravitational theory.

Interstellar Cinderella and her family live on a faraway planet, not Earth. They are going to the Gravity Free Ball on the fictional planet X4, which is four and a half light years away. Four and a half light years is 5.8 trillion miles!

The force of gravity is different in different places. All the characters in *Interstellar Cinderella* need to wear "gravity belts" to keep them on their feet and not floating around. So, what exactly is gravity?

Explanation from <https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/what-is-gravity/en/>

Gravity is the force by which a planet or other body draws objects toward its center. The force of gravity keeps all planets in orbit around the sun.

What else does gravity do?

Why do you land on the ground when you jump up instead of floating off into space? Why do things fall when you throw them or drop them? The answer is gravity: an invisible force that pulls objects toward each other. Earth's gravity is what keeps you on the ground and what makes things fall.

Earth's gravity comes from all its mass. All its mass makes a combined gravitational pull on all the mass in your body. That's what gives you weight. And if you were on a planet with less mass than Earth, you would weigh less than you do here.

If you weigh 100 lb. on Earth, you would weigh:

17 lb. on the moon

38 lb. on Mercury and Mars

91 lb. on Venus and Uranus

107 lb. on Saturn

114 lb. on Neptune

253 lb. on Jupiter

Activity

Use your imagination to pretend that you are on a planet with less gravity than Earth. How would you move around? Would you float? Pretend you have two helium balloons pulling you up high! How does that feel? Now imagine you are on a planet with more gravity. How would your body feel? Is it hard to move?

Ball Drop Experiment

What you need:

- Two objects of different weights (like a small ball and a larger book).
- A chair or a step stool (to stand on safely).

What to do:

- Stand on the chair or stool (make sure you are safe!).
- Hold the two objects—one in each hand—at the same height.
- Drop both objects at the same time.
- Watch closely! Did they hit the ground at the same time?

What happens: You'll see that both objects, even though they have different weights, should fall and hit the ground at the same time. This shows that gravity pulls objects to the ground at the same rate, no matter how heavy they are!

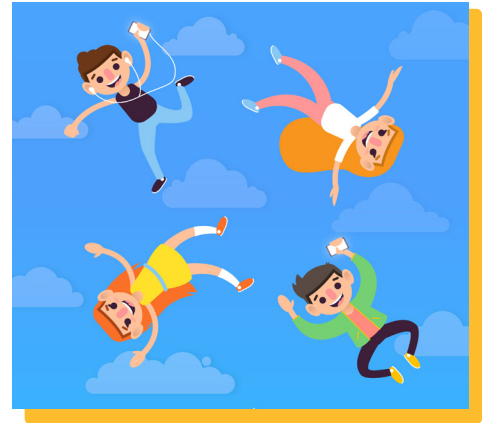
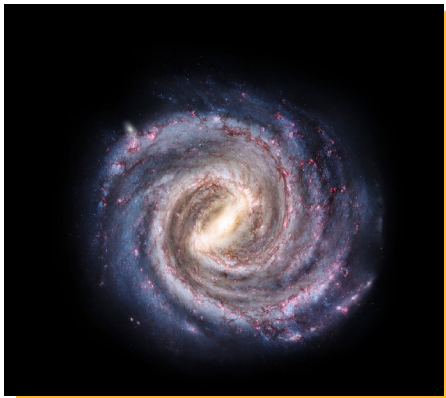


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The Milky Way Galaxy

We live on a planet called Earth that is part of our solar system. But where is our solar system? It's a small part of the Milky Way Galaxy.

A galaxy is a huge collection of gas, dust, and billions of stars and their solar systems. A galaxy is held together by gravity. Our galaxy, the Milky Way, also has a supermassive black hole in the middle.

When you look up at stars in the night sky, you're seeing other stars in the Milky Way. If it's dark, far away from lights from cities and houses, you can even see the dusty bands of the Milky Way stretch across the sky.

There are many galaxies besides ours, though. There are so many, we can't even count them all yet! The Hubble Space Telescope looked at a small patch of space for 12 days and found 10,000 galaxies, of all sizes,

shapes, and colors. Some scientists think there could be as many as one hundred billion galaxies in the universe.

Some galaxies are spiral-shaped like ours. They have curved arms that make it look like a pinwheel. Other galaxies are smooth and oval shaped. They're called elliptical galaxies. And there are also galaxies that aren't spirals or ovals. They have irregular shapes and look like blobs. The light that we see from each of these galaxies comes from the stars inside it.

Make a Pinwheel Galaxy Like M101 Galaxy!

<https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/pinwheel-galaxy/en/>

Activity: In our show there is a space parade, with all kinds of different spaceships. We had a lot of fun imagining what they might look like. Design your own spaceship!

About Barbara Zinn Krieger, playwright

Barbara Zinn Krieger founded New York City Children’s Theater during her 22-year tenure as Executive Director and Founder of New York’s Tony Award-winning Vineyard Theatre. Barbara has written children’s operas and musicals for over 25 years. Barbara is a recipient of the Opera America Distinguished Service Award and was inducted into the Off-Broadway Hall of Fame in 2020 as a Legend of Off-Broadway. She holds a BFA in Theatre from Columbia University School of the Arts and an MA in Speech and Theater from Columbia University Teachers College.

About Laurie Berkner, music and lyrics

Laurie Berkner has been a professional musician since 1992. Laurie was the first recording artist ever to perform in music videos on Nick Jr. and was a beloved presence on the network’s *Jack’s Big Music Show* series. Her music videos now appear regularly on NBCUniversal’s *Sprout House* and on *The Laurie Berkner Band’s* YouTube channel. She is a frequent presence on SiriusXM’s *Kids Place Live*. Laurie also created a 10-chapter Audible Original Series titled *Laurie Berkner’s Song and Story Kitchen*, which debuted in November 2018. She maintains a busy touring schedule and has performed at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and the White House, among many prestigious venues. Venturing into the world of the theater Laurie has written music and lyrics for three Off-Broadway children’s musicals produced by New York City Children’s Theater: *Wanda’s Monster* (2013), *The Amazing Adventures of Harvey and the Princess* (2014), and *Interstellar Cinderella* (2017). <https://laurieberkner.com/>



Making Connections

Moon to Mars

Explore the out-of-this-world possibilities of space travel that takes us from Moon to Mars.

In Residence: January 18 – May 4, 2025

Blast off with Moon to Mars! This interactive STEAM exhibit, crafted with support from NASA’s Deep Space Exploration Systems at Johnson Space Center, invites visitors to dive into the realities and dreams of

interplanetary travel. Young explorers will design and fly their own rockets, hover above distant planets in our Orion Spacecraft, experience the thrill of walking in reduced gravity, and navigate new terrains in the Lunar Rover. Moon to Mars features six immersive areas, each tailored for specific types of play, including physical, social, inquisitive and creative.

Tool Box

Interstellar Cinderella is an inventor and engineer. Visti Tool Box to build your own invention! Discover and test what makes an object a tool. Children learn safety measures and the creative process while using real tools to build their own sculptures.

This gallery explores the big idea of “What is a Tool?” as well as the process of using tools and applying the six simple machines. In this unique space, children can use actual, grown-up tools including hammers and nails for children ages five years and up. Younger children can make their own creations with glue and other age-appropriate tools at the craft table. As simple as a stick or as specialized as a computer keyboard, anything that helps you complete a task is a tool.

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