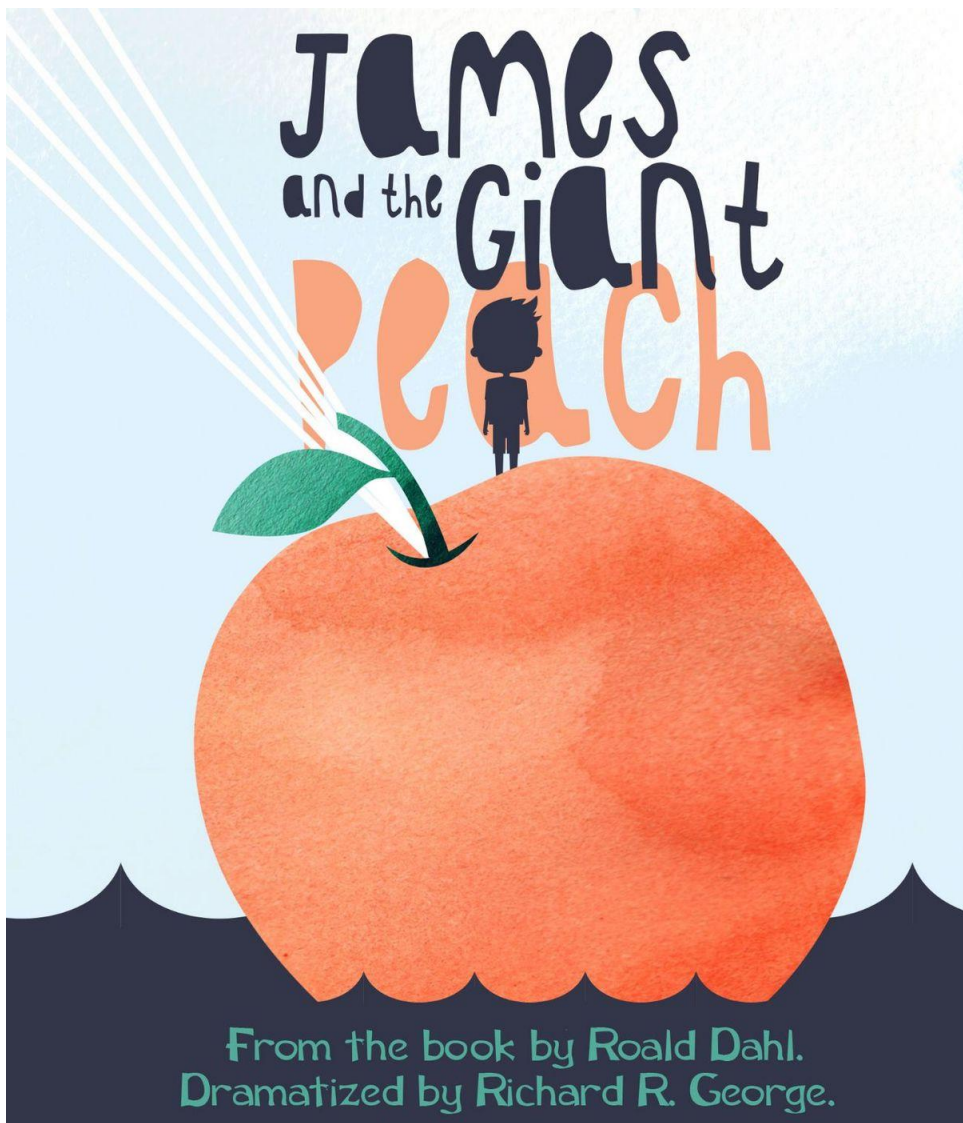




Produced by special arrangement with THE DRAMATIC
PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois

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McLean Community Players is proud and grateful to partner with:



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I chose to direct *James and The Giant Peach* because it is a joyful memory from my childhood as an avid (and curious) reader who delighted in the idea of human-sized insects. James' journey of hope aboard the titular peach resonates with the types of stories I want to tell young people in 2025. Keep going; it will be okay; you will find your people – Even if they don't turn out to be people after all. Adversity is a universal experience and James Henry Trotter showcases his resilience through optimism, curiosity, and altruism. I hope audience members of all ages will see the rhinoceros, sharks, and mysterious bat-like creature as the personal obstacles they face in their lives. I hope you can see your inner critic in Earthworm, or your isolation in Spider.

Roald Dahl wrote *James and the Giant Peach* as his first children's novel, but barely started it before his 4-month-old child was hospitalized in an accident. In the foreword of the play, Dahl explains how he would bury himself into this world of fiction between visits to intensive care units. Dahl would go on to develop a breakthrough medical device that would save thousands of children with the same condition as his child. Many years later, Dahl's son – And James' story of survival – Are both very much alive.

I have brought James and his friends to life with fantastical costumes and an even more fantastic cast. It was important to myself and Laura that we use recycled or discarded items to bring the bugs to life. No matter how your value is viewed you can always transform into something of wonder if you keep showing up. Through our rehearsals, I am certain that many of us faced our own sharks, our own aunts, and our own rhinoceros, and I am so grateful to the wonderful humans that have worked hard to collaborate on this story. I hope it reaches out to the curious child in all of us who yearns to create and connect. I hope you will carry this telling of James' adventure in your heart long after the curtains close. Thank you for being here and thank you for being you.

~ Adam Renner

This show will run for approximately 75 minutes.
There will be no intermission.

THE CAST

James/Silkworm.....	Clay Martin
James/Silkworm.....	Mackenzie Gaylord
Aunt Spiker	Ursula Burgess
Aunt Sponge.....	Camille Harvey
Centipede	Mike Holland
Grasshopper	Alex Lew
Spider	Alex Aspiazu
Earthworm.....	Alayna Theunissen
Ladybug	Teresa Preston
Glow-Worm	Camille Harvey
Father	Marc Barbret
Mother.....	Hulda Fahmi
Strange Old Man/Captain	Kim Thornley
First Officer.....	Amanda Hobbs
Second Officer/Little Girl	Laura Leftwich

PRODUCTION STAFF

Producers..... Jess Rawls, Karen Veltri
Director Adam Renner
Assistant Director..... Laura Bingham
Lighting Operator..... Adam Newland
Stage Friend Beck Webster
Set Construction..... Robin & Adam Renner
Hair and Makeup..... The Cast
Props Natalie Foley
Playbill Annie Galvin
Social Media Jess Rawls
House Manager Mary Ellen Defrancesco

SPONSORS

George Farnsworth, Barron Hall

SPECIAL THANKS

Debs Diversions, Kevin Leach, Peggy Marckle,
Arden Donley, Great Falls Library, Julie Maher,
Zach (The Saxaphone Squirtle)

MEET THE CAST



Alex Aspiazu (Spider) is delighted to participate in this production of *James & the Giant Peach*! Alex enjoys playing complex characters with tough exteriors. She most recently played Kay in a Helen Hayes nominated production of *The Pliant Girls* with NuSass and Theatre Prometheus. Alex is especially touched to be sharing the stage for the first time with her only offspring, the fabulous Clay Martin! A special thanks to Ryan, through whom all things are possible.



Marc Barbret (Father) “Hello!”



Ursula Burgess (Aunt Spiker) is elated to be making her McLean Community Players debut in *James and the Giant Peach*. She is new to community theater, appearing in her first show last summer, *12 Angry Jurors* (Providence Players) followed by staged readings of *A Backstage Christmas* (Sterling Playmakers) and *A Bold Stroke for a Husband* (Little Theater of Alexandria). She is a much nicer person than the character she portrays. Well she'd like you to think so.



Hulda Fahmi (Mother/Ensemble) is excited to be part of the enthusiastic and passionate cast and crew of *James and the Giant Peach*. This will be her first role with McLean Community Players. She has previously been part of the ensemble in FCT's *Jesus Christ Superstar* and Encore's *The Sound of Music*, as well as playing Belle in Culpeper Stageworks' *A Christmas Carol*. She

enjoyed Roald Dahl's books as a child, especially *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, and is looking forward to seeing the peach come alive.



Mackenzie Gaylord (James/Silkworm) is an actor based in the DC area, and she is thrilled to be taking on the role of James alongside such a fabulous cast and crew. This is her first performance with McLean Community Players, and she looks forward to being part of many more productions in the future. Most recently, she appeared in *Radium Girls* at The Theater Lab. As a new actor in the DC theater scene, she is eager to continue working with such incredible talent. A very special thank you to her fiancé, who has always been her biggest cheerleader and continuously encouraged her to pursue her dreams.



Camille Harvey (Aunt Sponge/Glow-Worm) is acting in her first play with MCP. When not terrorizing James, she loves spending time with her fiancé, Steve and dog, Oliver. Thank you to the wonderful cast mates and directors for an awesome experience.



Amanda Hobbs (First Officer) is thrilled to take the stage with the McLean Community Players in *James and the Giant Peach*. Most recently, Amanda was an Assistant Stage Manager for MCP's *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged* and the Assistant Director for LTA's production of *The Explorers' Club*. She's looking forward to many more adventures in theatre.



Mike Holland (Centipede) is thrilled to be performing in James and the Giant Peach as this will mark his sixth show with MCP (*Damn Yankees*, *Guys and Dolls*, *1776*, *Seussical*, *American Idiot*). Mike has also performed with LTA, Encore, Providence Players, TAP, PWL T and ACCT. Offstage, Mike is a statistics professor at George Mason University. He can also be found with a comic book in hand, playing guitar and bass in various bands and rollerblading around, not all at once of course...



Laura Leftwich (Second Officer/Little Girl) is excited for her MCP debut and to bring one of her favorite stories to life! Recent roles include Sally Jackson in *The Lightning Thief* (Nativity Players), ensemble in *Merrily We Roll Along* (GAC), and *Lucky Stiff* (GSP). A music educator, Laura loves how theater fosters growth in teaching and life. Thank you for coming to our show! Special thanks to Alex, Rachael, Erika, Matt and Frannie for their consistent encouragement, and to my friends and family for their support. Hope your experience is absolutely “peachy!”



Alex Lew (Grasshopper) is thrilled to join this talented cast and crew in his first show with the McLean Community Players! Recent roles include Jonas Nightingale in *Leap of Faith* and Percy Jackson in *The Lightning Thief* (NPTM); Wallace Hartley in *Titanic* (GSP); and Nick in *The Prom* (TAP). Thanks so much to Adam and Laura B. for this opportunity and to Laura L. and Patrick for their support!



Clay Martin (James/Silkworm) is very glad to be in this production of *James and the Giant Peach*, with his first main role. Past roles include: The Artful Dodger, and the Narrator in *Willy Wonka*. In his free time, Clay enjoys writing, drawing, listening to music, and playing the drums. He thanks his friend, Bean, for boosting his mood through long days of rehearsal, and his castmate and mom, Alex Aspiazu, for helping him with acting.



Teresa Preston (Ladybug) returned to theatre two years ago after a 20-year absence from the stage. She recently appeared in *Two on the Aisle*, *Three in a Van* (LTA), *The Sound of Music* (Encore), and a staged reading of *Fuenteovejuna* (LTA). She has also worked backstage on productions of *Surviving Grace* (Providence) and *Jekyll & Hyde* (LTA).



Alayna Theunissen (Earthworm) is excited to join her first production with MCP as a nasally, peevish, and overly dramatic “much-loved creature.” She contends that only 2 of these descriptors fit her when she’s not a worm. Her recent credits include *Much Ado About Nothing* (Conrade) with CFTC, *The Death of Boson X* (Merrill Hastings) at Silver Spring Stage, and *Is He Dead?* (Cecile) at LTA.



Kim Thornley (Strange Old Man/Captain) is a director, choreographer, actor, and dance and drama teaching artist. She has worked in dinner theatre, community/children's theatre, dance companies/studios and performing arts centers. Notable roles include Violet Bassey in *A Delightful Quarantine* (RCP, Broadway World D.C., Regional Awards recognition), Ethel Banks in *Barefoot in the Park* (MCP) and Doris Miller in *Damn Yankees* (MCP, D.C. Metro Theatre Arts recognition) Much love always to Karissa.

MEET THE PRODUCTION STAFF

Adam Renner (Director) is excited to bring this talented group together for his first production with Mclean Community Players. He is a seasoned production artist and educator with a background in technical theatre and haunted attractions – And a deep belief in the power of storytelling. A huge thank you to his Fright and Gale production partner, Laura Bingham, for always being a wonderful creative collaborator, and a shout out to his parents for supporting art with reckless abandon. Adam can next be seen technically supporting and acting in the 2025 Richmond Fringe Festival performance of *The Memorial of Lucian Sablewood*.

Jess Rawls (Producer/Social Media) is an actor/writer/producer originally from the DMC area. She got her BFA from VCU, moved to New York City, and the pandemic brought her back to the DC area. Since moving back she's been seen as Callie in *Stop Kiss* with RCP, Ben in *American Idiot* with MCP, Catherine in *Proof* with MCP, Marianna in a staged reading of *Constellations* with NOVANightsky, Juror #5 in *Twelve Angry Jurors* with Providence Players, and Beatrice in LTA's *Much Ado About Nothing*. This is her third producing role after MCP's summer production of *Heathers*. Jess has also written and produced her own work and will be doing so again soon! She hopes you enjoy the show! @jessrawls

Karen Veltri (Producer) is pleased to be part of this production of one of her favorite childhood books! She is grateful to Adam and Laura for all of their hard work, and thanks each and every one of you for continuing to support McLean Community Players.

Laura Bingham (Assistant Director) is honored to have worked with the cast of Mclean Community Players' *James and the Giant Peach*, who have brought James' story off the pages of this timeless classic with their rich portrayal of what it means to persevere in the face of improbable odds. Laura is an intimacy

coordinator and teaching artist who loves working with performers from all backgrounds as the co-founder of Fright and Gale Productions (www.frightandgale.com). Laura thanks Mary Faris, Debbie Bingham, Sarah Bingham, and Kevin Leach, and you for supporting expressive arts in your community.

Adam Newland (Lighting Operator) told us that he has an illustrious but highly classified career in the staging of artificial events. He said he also used to help McLean throw community events, camps, and trips after attending some of them as a kid himself. His favorite game is 2 Truths and a Lie. What McLean Community Players can verify is that he is delighted to be a part of this show! He joins us again for lights and effects operation after *Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged)*, *Heathers* and *American Idiot*.

Natalie Foley (Props) is overjoyed to be working on her fourth show with MCP, having previously worked on *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*, *American Idiot* and *Heathers*. She loves that she's found a home with this amazing company and is super stoked to be with this hilarious and immensely talented cast and crew. Enjoy the show!

Beck Webster (Stage Friend) is thrilled to be back at MCP working backstage on *James and the Giant Peach*. Most recently they have stage managed *Heathers* at MCP and have assistant Stage managed *Jekyll & Hyde* and *Matilda* at LTA.

Mary Ellen Defrancesco (House Manager) is a talented actress who enjoys the classics. Mary Ellen trained as a character actor at Utah State University. Some of her credits include the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, Madwoman in *The Madwoman of Chaillot*, Mrs. Malaprop in *The Rivals*, Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and Sonia in *Godspell*. She hopes to return to the stage in the near future.

LOCAL THEATER REFERENCE GUIDE

ACCT:	Aldersgate Church Community Theatre	NS:	NextStop Theatre Company
AFYP:	Acting for Young People	PCP:	Port City Playhouse
BCT:	Bowie Community Theatre	PPF:	Providence Players of Fairfax
CCP:	Chevy Chase Players	PTP:	Port Tobacco Players
CFTC:	City of Fairfax Theatre Company	PWLT:	Prince William Little Theatre
CPA:	Colonial Players of Annapolis	RCP:	Reston Community Players
CCRT:	Castaways Repertory Theatre	RLT:	Rockville Little Theatre*
CT	Chalice Theatre	RMT:	Rockville Musical Theatre
DTC:	Damascus Theatre Company	RTP:	Rooftop Productions
DS:	Dominion Stage	SMP:	St. Mark's Players
ESP:	The Elden Street Players	SCT:	Stagecoach Theatre
FCT:	Fauquier Community Theatre	SP:	Sterling Playmakers
GAC.:	Greenbelt Arts Center	SSS:	Silver Spring Stage
HBP:	Hard Bargain Players	ST:	Silhouette Stage
II:	Ibiala International	TAP:	The Arlington Players
KAT:	Kensington Arts Theatre	TCP:	Tantallon Community Players
LMP:	Laurel Mill Playhouse	TFT:	Taking Flight Theatre Company
LTA:	Little Theatre of Alexandria	TTL:	The Theatre Lab
MAD:	Goddard Space Flight Center's Music & Drama Club	VTC:	Vienna Theatre Company
MCP:	McLean Community Players	VLOC:	Victorian Lyric Opera Company
MET:	Maryland Ensemble Theatre	WT:	Workhouse Theatre
MVCCT:	Mount Vernon Community Children's Theatre	ZS:	Zemfira Stage