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CASTING ANNOUNCED FOR **LIFELINE THEATRE'S WORLD PREMIERE
KIDSERIES PRODUCTION **SKUNK AND BADGER**
ADAPTED BY **LIFELINE** ENSEMBLE MEMBER**



CHICAGO (February 7, 2023) – **Lifeline Theatre** and Artistic Director **ILesa Duncan** announce the casting for the **world premiere production** based on the book by **Amy Timberlake** and illustrated by **Jon Klassen**. Lifeline Ensemble member **Alan Donahue** teams up with director **Brian Tochtermann Jr.** to bring you this world premiere that navigates the rocky road of two very different roommates. ***Skunk and Badger*** runs at Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave. in Rogers Park, from March 2 – April 7, 2024.

Cast members for the production include **Vic Kuligoski** (Skunk), **John Drea** (Badger), **Amanda De La Guardia** (Aunt Lulu, Stoat, et al) and **Connar Brown** (Puppeteer). The creative team for ***Skunk and Badger*** includes Isa Noe (Scenic), Saskia Bakker (Props), Diane Fairchild (Lighting), Valerio Gardner (Sound), Jessica Gowens (Costume), Ava Niemi (Stage Manager), Addoris Davis (Production Manager), Harrison Ornelas (Technical Director), and Karan Wallace (Lighting Supervisor).

Skunk & Badger is the latest installment of KidsSeries, Lifeline's long-standing programmatic series for children. Each KidsSeries brings a children's book to life through stage adaptation, and includes in-school residencies which focus on ensemble-based creating and performing. KidsSeries also includes school-day matinees, outreach events at local libraries, and opportunities for delving deeper into the production with the program Stories Come Alive!

Ensemble member **Alan Donahue** notes on his new stage adaptation, "Translating Amy Timberlake's original work meant maintaining the work's original themes: diversity, equity, and inclusion in a story of great heart displaying empathy, acceptance, compassion, redemption, the good that change can bring, and the support of companionship. These ideas, which amplify Lifeline's larger institutional message, were easily transferred to the stage."

"All Skunk wants is a home where he feels safe, accepted, and cared for," shares the promotion's Director **Brian Tochtermann**. "Just like Skunk, human beings are social animals who long for connection and community. Skunk and Badger both show us that it's not only possible to accept each others' differences but that real communication and connection, even when difficult, is far more fulfilling than studying rocks alone in the dark. I don't care if you're 4 or 34, I promise that you will find something worthwhile and entertaining in this story and in the artistry that has brought it to life."

ABOUT THE CAST

Vic Kuligoski (Skunk) is thrilled to be returning to Lifeline Theatre where he was last seen in *Cat's Cradle* as Franklin Hoenikker. His most recent credits include: *Seagulls* at Oak Park Festival Theatre, *The Kelly Girls*, *Last Night In Karaoke Town* and *May The Road Rise Up* at The Factory Theater. Other credits in Chicago include: *Christmas at Pemberley* with Northlight Theatre, and *Cloud 9* with Eclipse Theatre. Film and Television credits include: Aaron Sorkin's, *The Trial of The Chicago 7* on Netflix, Felix Pinero's, *Adjunto*, *Night Sky* on Amazon Prime, Matt Everett's Indie short film, *You Can Go Home Whenever You Want* and Jennifer Reeder's Feature Film, *Perpetrator* on Shudder. Vic is represented by Grossman and Jack Talent.

John Drea (Badger) Lifeline Theatre credits include: *Whose Body?* and Chicago credits include: *The Sound Inside* (Goodman Theatre), *Solaris* (Griffin Theatre, Jeff Nomination); *Chagall in School* (Grippo Stage Company, Jeff Nomination), *Twelfth Night*, *Cymbeline* (Midsommer Flight), *American Psycho* (Kokandy Productions), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Goodly Creatures Theatre), *Free Space* (Possibilities Theatre). Off-off Broadway credits include: *Oneironaut* (The Outer Loop). Regional credits include: *Deathtrap* (Constellation Stage). Upcoming credits include: *Little Bear Ridge Road* (Steppenwolf). He is represented by Big Mouth Talent.

Amanda de la Guardia (Aunt Lula, Orange Fluff, Hedgehog) returns to Lifeline Theatre's KidSeries. She was seen on the Lifeline stage previously as Ma/Nate in *Extra Yarn* and Governor Bunny in *Neither*. Past Chicago credits include: Auntie Drosselmeyer in *The Nutcracker* (The House Theatre of Chicago), Melody in *X Marks the Spot* (Chicago Children's Theatre), Judge Goll in *Fear and Misery in the Third Reich* (Haven Theatre Co.), Glinda Witch of the North in *The Great and Terrible Wizard of Oz* (The House Theatre of Chicago), Actor 1 & 4 (performing u/s) in *United Flight 232* (The House Theatre of Chicago), Agnes Eggling in *A Bright Room Called Day* (Spartan Theatre Co.), and Little Maria in *Living Large in a Mini Kind of Way* (Teatro Luna/16th St. Theatre).

Connar Brown (Puppeteer) is excited to be returning to Lifeline. Some recent favorite theater credits include: *The SpongeBob Musical* (Kokandy Productions), *Grimm* (Theatre Above the Law), *I Promised Myself to Live Faster* (Hell in a Handbag), and *Dooby Dooby Moo* (Lifeline Theatre). Connar is a proud ensemble member of Theatre Above the Law.

Schedule

March 2 – April 7, 2024

Regular tickets \$20; preview tickets \$15

Previews: Saturday, March 2 at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; and Sunday, March 3 at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Press Opening: Sunday, March 3 at 1 p.m.

Regular Run: March 9 – April 7, 2024: Saturdays and Sundays at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Badger loves nothing more than studying his rock collection in peace and quiet. So, when his Aunt Lula sends a letter saying he must share her brownstone home with her friend Skunk, he tries everything under the sun to get Skunk out! But is it wise to judge a book by its cover, or a rock by its texture, or a skunk by their scent? Strap in for wild antics, new friendships, and lots of chickens in this world premiere adaptation about stepping out of your comfort zone.

Stories Come Alive!

Join Lifeline every Sunday of Lifeline's KidSeries shows for the lauded [Stories Come Alive!](#) workshops, where members of the education team lead a one-hour interactive storytelling session as well as on-your-feet theater games that explore the themes of the current play's source material. Only \$10 per workshop! Call the Box Office (773-761-4477) ahead or sign up in-person the day you see the show to reserve your child's spot.

Student Matinees

Every year, Lifeline's KidSeries [Student Matinee Program](#) serves over 3,000 students, 35 schools, 120 classrooms, and 185 teachers with school-day performances. Student Matinees are at **10:30am on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays** during the run of the KidSeries shows. Learn more about Lifeline KidSeries Student Matinees [HERE](#).

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets to *Skunk and Badger* are on sale at <https://lifelinetheatre.com/performances/2023-2024/skunk-and-badger>. Season memberships for the 2023-2024 are also available now. To purchase season memberships or for more information call the Lifeline Theatre Box Office at 773-761-4477, or visit www.lifelinetheatre.com.

ABOUT LIFELINE THEATRE

Lifeline Theatre is located at 6912 N. Glenwood Ave. in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood. Lifeline is easily accessible by CTA (Red Line Morse stop/buses) and free parking is available at Sullivan High School (6631 N Bosworth Ave, lot located on the corner of Albion and Bosworth) with free shuttle service before and after the show. Street parking is also available. Lifeline is accessible to wheelchair users and visitors who need to avoid stairs.

Founded in 1982, Lifeline Theatre is known for staging innovative adaptations of great works of fiction as well as commissioning original work. In 1987, Lifeline Theatre added KidSeries plays for children and families, and has been producing full seasons of programming for both adults and children ever since. Over the course of **forty seasons** and over **two hundred productions**, Lifeline Theatre has made not only an indelible mark on the Chicago theater scene, but an invaluable contribution to the theater world at large. Lifeline's dedicated artistic ensemble has developed **one hundred and forty-six world premiere literary adaptations and original plays**, nearly forty of which have had a life beyond their Lifeline premieres, with over **three hundred subsequent productions** spread across over forty U.S. states, six Canadian provinces, plus productions in England, Ireland, Australia, South Africa, and Guatemala. Additionally, four scripts developed at Lifeline Theatre have gone on to U.S. national tours, and over a dozen have been published. Lifeline Theatre has garnered a total of **fifty-three Jeff Awards** (Equity and Non-Equity), including sixteen for New Adaptation, New Musical, or New Work.

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