

Open Circle Theatre produces high-quality, inventive theatre productions that provide opportunities for professional theatre artists with and without disabilities.



open circle theatre

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NEWS RELEASE

Open Circle Theatre Announces New Production: To REACH the Unreachable Star – a Retrospective

For Immediate Release:
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(*Total Solar Eclipse Day*)

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ROCKVILLE, MD -- Open Circle Theatre (OCT) at the **Silver Spring Black Box Theatre**.

After the excitement that the fall 2016 production of *The Who’s Tommy* generated, Open Circle realized that not everyone was familiar with its vision, history, and mission. Therefore, they’ve woven together songs from prior and planned shows into a new production titled *To REACH the Unreachable Star – a Retrospective*, written by T. Chase Meacham and Suzanne Richard, featuring songs and scenes from *Evita*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Songs for a New World*, *The Who’s Tommy*, and *Man of La Mancha*. This production will celebrate the rich past of OCT in the context of the disability rights movement; and build more excitement and funding for the theatre’s future.

Artistic Director and Actor Suzanne Richard commented, “It is an honor to be a part of Open Circle. This work is vital to create an inclusive and diverse society, expand the arts to give a more vital voice to the largest minority group in the world, and celebrate and empower people with disabilities to dictate their own stories and roles in the greater community - nothing about us without us.”

To REACH the Unreachable Star – a Retrospective **September 15, 16 & 17**

Friday & Saturday at 8 p.m. | Sunday at 2 p.m.

Silver Spring Black Box Theatre

8641 Colesville Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20910

Direction by Suzanne Richard, Music Direction by Jake Null, Choreography by Dance Exchange, Produced by Paula Sweeney, and featuring a fantastic cast led by Open Circle favorite Rob McQuay.

Reception to follow each show

RSVP via phone at (240) 683-8934 or email OCTRetroRSVP@gmail.com

A \$50 donation (or more!) is greatly appreciated. All donations are tax deductible.

Donate via <http://opencircletheatre.org/donate/>

Open Circle will offer the following services: accessible seating, assisted listening devices, audio description, large print and online playbill, and sign language interpretation.

OCT'S VISION

Open Circle Theatre advances the idea that disability can enhance the artistic experience, inspire aesthetic innovation, and influence a community to become accessible for all. Through the arts, a community can be brought together to celebrate all abilities and embrace similarities rather than focus on differences.

HISTORY

Founded in 1996, Open Circle Theatre Ensemble was a small company of friends that produced three original theatre pieces in Germantown, Maryland, then mounted a fourth original show at the Fringe Festival in Scotland. Although inclusion of artists with disabilities was not the original mission of Open Circle Theatre Ensemble, two company members happened to have disabilities. While considering mounting another production, Artistic Director Suzanne Richard realized that the original concept behind Open Circle Theatre Ensemble--leaving the circle around the campfire open to include the voices of all people--could be taken to another level while retaining the original spirit of the company. Open Circle would now focus on the work of one of the most underrepresented groups of storytellers--people with disabilities. A professional theatre artist with a disability herself, Suzanne Richard and co-founder Arianna Ross, a professional director and storyteller, were invited to create a show in the back room theater of a local bar and discovered that there was a community of theatre artists with disabilities in the Washington, D.C. area. This led them to create an integrated company where these artists could share their talents.

MISSION

Open Circle Theatre, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, produces high-quality, inventive theatre productions that provide opportunities for professional theatre artists with and without disabilities. Consequently, a space is established in the DC metro theatre community that:

- Exposes the work of artists and arts administrators with disabilities in an integrated setting and celebrates the innovative artistic aesthetic that can be generated by embracing these theatre professionals
- Creates an environment that is accessible to all — from the most mainstream theatre goer to those with auditory, visual or intellectual disabilities — and strives to provide an equivalent experience for every member of a diverse audience
- Uses the performing arts to make education and learning inclusive for all students and all types of learners
- Mentors the development of professional artists with disabilities

Note: the OCT *office* is in Rockville, MD but the *performance venue* is in Silver Spring, MD.

Visit <http://opencircletheatre.org/events/current-production/> and <https://www.facebook.com/OpenCircleDC/> for more information about OCT.

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