



# A Year *with* Frog and Toad *at the* ZACH

STORY BY AVA LOVE HANNA

PHOTOS COMPLIMENTS OF ZACH THEATRE

**Z**ACH THEATRE opened its 2014 – 2015 Family Series with a production of the Tony Award-nominated musical *A Year with Frog and Toad*. The show, an adaptation of Arnold Lobel's well-loved books, tells the story of Frog and Toad's friendship throughout each of the four seasons.

The musical featured an incredible cast with superb performances by Nicholas Kier as Frog and Chase Brewer in the role of Toad. Kelly Petlin, Josh Wechsler, and Megan Richards Wright did an outstanding job as the ensemble playing various characters throughout the show and enchanting the audience with their antics.

The story follows Frog and Toad on their adventures over the course of a year, and incorporates some of the duo's most well-known and loved stories. From Toad's attempt to grow flowers in the spring, his fear of looking silly in a bathing suit in the summer, the pair's attempts to help each other rake leaves in the fall, through to a bumpy sleigh ride down a steep hill in the winter, the show offers a number of vignettes that reveal that Frog and Toad possess a friendship that lasts through every season.

The set made fabulous use of the available space and included the two houses of Frog and Toad with an open area downstage. The houses were built on rotating platforms and turned to reveal either the front door or the inner rooms of the duo's homes. With a few simple prop changes and the ingenious use of trap doors and lighting, the small set took on the aspects of an entire forest and transformed itself right in front of the audience's eyes to accommodate each season.

From its vaudeville inspired costumes and musical numbers to its high energy choreography, *A Year with Frog and Toad* is not merely a show for children but is a top quality production that can and should be enjoyed by audience members of all ages. Even adults will catch themselves humming along to *Getta Loada Toad*, a standout song and dance number in which the entire ensemble joins together to sing about their hopes of catching a peek of Toad in his bathing suit.

The show was directed by Nat Miller, the Director of Education at ZACH Theatre. He said, "*A Year with Frog and Toad* is an incredible show that brings the books to life in a way that is charming, funny, and enjoyable for all ages. It is the only children's theatre production nominated for a Tony because of its incredible music and vaudevillian aesthetic. It is not to be missed!"

*A Year with Frog and Toad* runs through December 12<sup>th</sup> on the Topfer stage of ZACH Theatre.