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Active Arts Theatre for Young Audiences presents

RAMONA QUIMBY

A theatrical production by Len Jenkin from the novels of Beverly Cleary

Directed by Jared Randolph

Julia Morgan Center for the Arts, Berkeley: January 23 – 31

Zeum Theatre, San Francisco: February 13-21

Front Row Theatre, San Ramon: February 27 – March 7

(San Francisco, CA – January 5, 2009) It's a great time to see this highly-rated performance company in action! **Active Arts Theatre for Young Audiences** is receiving top marks from children and their parents for their first-rate productions of beloved children's books.

A Facebook fan of the company wrote that her young children were "*enthralled!*" by GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE. And The Mom Blog in the [Orange County Register](#) commented that Active Arts touring production of STREGA NONA: THE MUSICAL was "*magical fun...the kids loved it. There was never a lull... [and] the younger set was literally on the edge of their seats*".

Up next for the busy theater company is a 3-city Bay Area tour of **RAMONA QUIMBY**, a theatrical production by **Len Jenkin** from the novels of **Beverly Cleary**, directed by **Jared Randolph**.

RAMONA QUIMBY opens at the Julia Morgan Center for the Arts in Berkeley (January 23- 31); premieres in San Francisco with a two-week run at ZEUM: San Francisco's Children's Museum (February 13-21) and concludes in San Ramon (February 27-March 7). In addition to their home season, Active Arts is touring their fall hit, **STREGA NONA: THE MUSICAL**, to 22-cities across the country! During the next two months, families in New York, Ohio, and along the East Coast will be treated to performances by this outstanding company.

RAMONA QUIMBY is Beverly Cleary's classic story about an effervescent and independent girl whose big sister, Beezus, thinks she exaggerates. But what's a girl to do when she's bursting with imagination? Ramona Quimby is about to start third grade—and what a year it will be. She immediately gets into trouble with her stern teacher, Mrs. Griggs, and her life on Klickitat Street changes dramatically when her dad loses his job and her mom goes to work.

Through a series of vignettes drawn from Beverly Cleary's Newbery honor books, Active Arts invites kids into Ramona's world and to follow her heartwarming, funny adventures with her family, friends, and neighbors as she tries, in her own way, to grow up.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE CAST AND THE PRODUCERS



ERIN STEVENSON (Ramona) is a Berkeley CA resident who was last seen on stage in the East Bay as Charlotte in Contra Costa Musical Theater's production of *Oliver*. She is thrilled to be playing the role of Ramona Quimby in her first production with Active Arts. Some of her other favorite roles include Little Red Riding Hood (*Into the Woods*), Baby June (*Gypsy*), and Jessie Oakley (*Annie Get Your Gun*). Erin is a Mass Communications major at UC Berkeley.

THERESA MILLER (Beezus) grew up in LA, and has spent the past five years in San Francisco. She has performed with several companies throughout the Bay Area, including Thunderbird Theatre Co., Ross Valley Players, Atmos Theatre, Brookside Rep, Bella Union, Boxcar, Victoria Theatre, and Word for Word. This is her Active Arts debut.

BRIAN SMICK (Howie) attends Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill where he is studying and immersing himself in theatre. He currently lives in Lafayette with his family. He is thrilled to be playing Howie and would like to show his deepest thanks to Nikki and Jared for opening up this opportunity for him.

AVA JACKSON (Sally) is a graduate of Brooklyn College with a B.F.A. in Acting. Recent projects include *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW* with Woman's Will, *TAKE ME TO THE BRIDGE* at the FURYfactory, *TRAUMRAUM* at the Mission Cultural Center, and *THE ODD COUPLE* (female) at Town Hall Theatre. She lives in Berkeley as a freelance choreographer/teaching artist and is the Artistic Learning Coordinator at California Shakespeare Theater.

ERIN J. HOFFMAN (Mrs. Quimby) is pleased to be making her debut with Active Arts. A native of Washington State, Erin has been performing, directing and teaching in the Bay Area for over 10 years. Erin was most recently seen in *DESTINY RIDES AGAIN* with 42nd Street Moon. She also appeared in *THE GREAT AMERICAN TRAILER PARK MUSICAL* at the Willows Theatre and *GOOD BOYS AND TRUE* at New Conservatory Theatre. Favorite past roles include Mazie in *SUESSICAL*, The White Witch in *THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW*, and the title role in *ANNIE GET YOUR GUN*. She holds a Bachelor's in Education, a Masters in Counseling and has had extensive acting training at Central Washington University and American Conservatory Theatre. Erin currently resides in San Francisco.

MICHAEL CASSIDY (Ramona's Dad) lives in San Anselmo. He has appeared locally in productions with 42nd Street Moon, *Broadway by the Bay*, *The Aurora Theatre*, *Mountain Play*, *Berkeley Rep*, and *Subterranean Shakespeare*, among others. Some of his favorite roles are The Beast in *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* and Rooster in *ANNIE*.

LETICIA DUARTE (Aunt Bea) is thrilled to join Active Arts Theatre for their production of *Ramona Quimby*! As a child, Leticia lived for the works of Beverly Cleary. As an adult, she is proud to say that her own children, Paris & Ella are subscription holders of Active Arts Theatre! Ms. Duarte has worked with Teatro Vision, Actors Ensemble of Berkeley, Woman's Will, Cuttingball Theatre, Douglas Morrison Little Theatre, Stage 1 Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre & Willows Theatre Company. Leticia also enjoys acting in the world of commercials, industrials and voice-overs. Leticia is currently touring *HAMLET* throughout California with the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival as Gertude.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRODUCERS

[Active Arts Theatre for Young Audiences](#) is an Oakland-based professional, non-profit theater company founded by veteran actors and educators from the Bay Area's vibrant theater scene. Co-founders Nina Meehan, Mina Morita, Rebecca Posamentier, Jared Randolph, and Tracy Randolph are passionate about bringing the highest quality theatrical experience to the youth of the Bay Area. Since their inception in 2004, Active Arts has performed for over 16,000 children and their families at their annual seasons in Berkeley and San Ramon along with performances at the Bay Area Discovery Center, libraries, community centers, and in schools on both sides of the Bay. Following their run of RAMONA QUIMBY, Active Arts will premiere **YOU'RE A GOOD MAN CHARLIE BROWN** (April 10-May 2) in Berkeley and San Ramon. The company's smash hit, STREGA NONA: THE MUSICAL is currently touring 22 cities in the United States.

[Zeum: San Francisco's Children's Museum](#) is a hands-on, multimedia arts and technology experience for kids of all ages. Create a clay animation, produce videos, make digital art, and more! Zeum is conveniently situated in the heart of downtown San Francisco at the corner of Fourth and Howard Streets in Yerba Buena Gardens. In addition to Zeum: San Francisco's Children's Museum and the Zeum Theater, you can also ride the Zeum Carousel and enjoy the Yerba Buena Skating and Bowling Center.

WHO: Active Arts Theatre for Young Audiences

WHAT: RAMONA QUIMBY
A theatrical production by Len Jenkin, From the novels of Beverly Cleary
Directed by Jared Randolph

BERKELEY

DATES: January 23 – February 7
TIMES: Saturdays and Sundays, 2:00pm; plus on Sundays, January 31 and February 7, 4:30pm
LOCATION: Julia Morgan Center for the Arts (2640 College Avenue, Berkeley, 94704)
TICKETS: \$18 adults; \$14 children; \$16 seniors (group discounts available)
BOX OFFICE: (510) 296-4433 and activeartstheatre.org

SAN FRANCISCO

DATES: February 13 – 21
TIMES: (two shows daily) Saturdays and Sundays, 2:00pm and 4:30pm
LOCATION: Zeum: San Francisco Children's Museum (221-Fourth Street @ Howard, 94103)
TICKETS: \$18 adults; \$14 children; \$16 seniors (group discounts available)
BOX OFFICE: 510-296-4433 and activeartstheatre.org

SAN RAMON

DATES: February 27- March 7
TIMES: (two shows daily) Saturdays and Sundays, 2:00pm and 4:30pm; plus Friday, Mar. 5, 7pm
LOCATION: Front Row Theater (17011 Bollinger Canyon Road @ East Branch Parkway, 94582)
TICKETS: \$18 adults; \$14 children; \$16 seniors (group discounts available)
BOX OFFICE: (925) 973-ARTS and activeartstheatre.org

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