

## Break a leg, Mom! - Four generations make CATS production a family affair

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James and the Giant Peach Friday through April 8 Creative Arts Theatre School 1100 W. Randol Mill Road \$7 861-2287

When she and daughters Ellie and Alison Peterson tried out for parts in the new Creative Arts Theatre and School production of James and the Giant Peach, Hope Hutchison of Kennedale had no idea that her own mother and grandmother would show up for auditions, too.

Carol Darwin and her mother, Pearl Darwin, ended up getting parts as crowd members along with Hope and Alison, and Ellie landed a puppeteer and cloud person role.

It's the first time four generations of one family have starred together at CATS.

"My oldest daughter, Elizabeth [that's Ellie, 10], wanted to audition, and when we got here, they [the Darwins] were already here to audition," Hope Hutchison says. "I was surprised."

"We were taking tap dancing downstairs," explains Carol Darwin, who lives in Fort Worth. "We knew they were auditioning for James and the Giant Peach, so we came up and got involved."

"One thing leads to another, I guess," adds Pearl Darwin, the matriarch of the whole clan, who lives in Dallas. "I've been in plays before, but it's been so far back I don't even remember. I've always wanted to do this, and take tap, too."

Pearl Darwin's own great-grandmother, Elizabeth "Betsy" Page, performed on the London stage in the late 1800s, she says. Betsy Page is Ellie Peterson's namesake.

"It's really fun, and it's kind of amazing, too," Ellie says of the experience of acting with so many family members onstage. "We all have different acting experiences and perspectives, different ways of looking at the show."

"I'm a crowd person and I just walk around," said

Alison, 7.

"No, you don't," reminds Ellie. "You have a line. What is it?"

"Oh. 'Green things from outer space,' " Alison says.

The family is just part of the large cast of James and the Giant Peach, which runs Friday through April 8.

"I'm finding that our production will be really fascinating, mainly because of the costumes," director Margaret Crawford says. "The insects will be wonderful."

Puppeteers will be a big factor in the cast, Crawford says, with lizard tongues, lanterns and the three-person Cloud Man all depicted by puppets.

The cast includes Christian Genco as James, Ciara Gay as Spider, Charli Habingreither as Silkworm, Sean Henry as Centipede, Jackie Holt as Ladybug, Madeline Rady as Earthworm, Scott Rickels as Grasshopper, Julie Wood as Glowworm and Ann Shropshire as the narrator.

Showtimes are 7:30 p.m. Friday, Saturday and April 7; 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, April 8; 10:30 a.m. April 8.

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