

teacher resource guide

**schooltime
performance
series**



**a very
electric christmas**

**arts
education
njpac**



about the performance

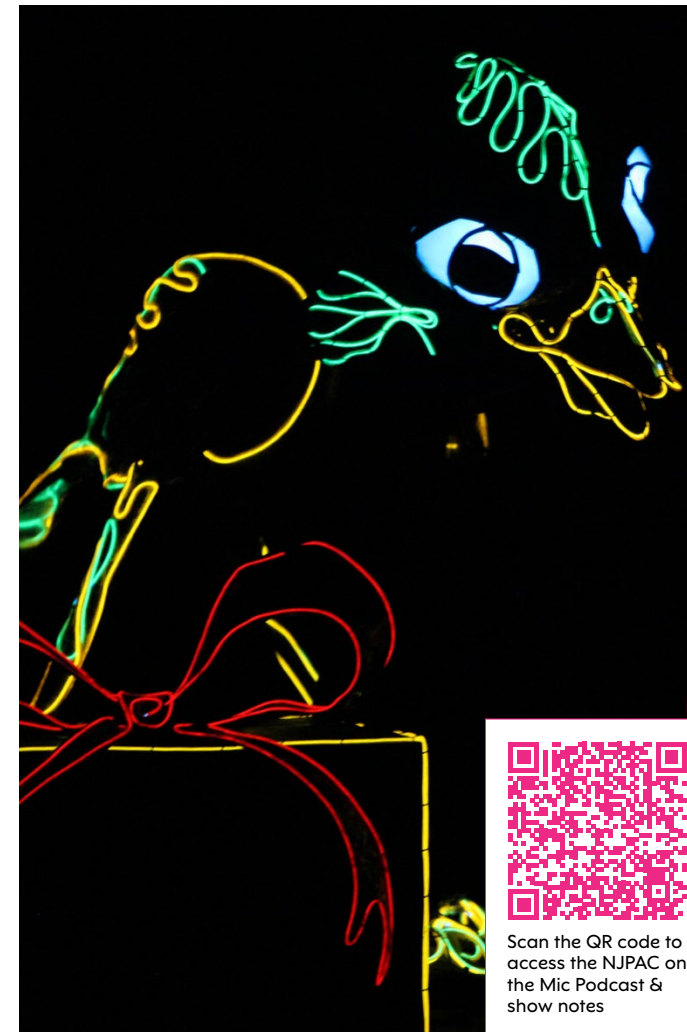
A Very Electric Christmas brings to life an enchanting holiday story through puppetry, theater, dance, festive songs and a dazzling light show. Produced by Lightwire Theater, the show's innovative approach to lighting makes use of brilliant electroluminescent wire to make characters magically appear out of the darkness.

The story introduces a young bird named Max and his family as they begin their journey south for the winter. When Max gets blown off course and ends up at the North Pole, he meets dancing toy soldiers, caroling worms and performing poinsettias that light up the stage in this delightful tale of family and friendship.

Lightwire Theater is internationally recognized for its signature brand of electroluminescent artistry and poignant storytelling. Based in New Orleans, the company continues to create and deliver innovative theatrical experiences to audiences worldwide.

njpac on the mic podcast

A Very Electric Christmas



Scan the QR code to access the NJPAC on the Mic Podcast & show notes

Part 1: About | *Pre-show audio, 6 minutes*

Includes: An introduction to the performance, artists & venue, welcome message

Written and hosted by Dania Ramos

Additional writing by the team behind *A Very Electric Christmas*

Sound editing and design by Michael Aquino

Music from Epidemic Sound

Voiceover by Michael Aquino

Welcome message voiced by Ian Carney

Part 2: Connect | *Post-show audio, 8 minutes*

Includes: Reflection questions, history of light in holiday celebrations, a selection of vocabulary words

Written and hosted by Dania Ramos

Sound editing and design by Michael Aquino

Music from Epidemic Sound

Share-out prompt voiced by Ian Carney

Part 3: Spotlight | *Post-show audio, 12 minutes*

Includes: An exclusive interview with the artistic director of Lightwire Theatre, discussion starters

Written and hosted by Dania Ramos

Sound editing and design by Michael Aquino

Music from Epidemic Sound

Interview guest Ian Carney

About NJPAC On the Mic

NJPAC On the Mic is an audio resource that takes SchoolTime performances to the next level. This podcast series features three exclusive, curriculum-aligned episodes for all of NJPAC's 2022-2023 SchoolTime performances. On the Mic offers students the opportunity to engage their listening skills, deepen their understanding of the performance and learn about the process of bringing a live or recorded production to life. This immersive audio experience features a theme song by students in the NJPAC arts education program.

How to listen to this episode of NJPAC On the Mic

Scan the QR code above or visit: njpac.org/education-program to access the podcast and the following show notes:

inspired ideas in the classroom

Teacher Focus

Student Activity

NJ Student Learning Standards

P

Prepare for the performance

Watch [the trailer](#) for *A Very Electric Christmas* twice with your class. The first time, watch the trailer without sound and ask students to make observations about what they see. The second time, watch the trailer with sound and ask students to make observations about the audio only. Ask students how the combination of both visuals and sound adds to their understanding of the show. Give an overview of the performance and have students solve the maze and physical activity in **Activity Sheet 1**.

After watching the trailer and learning more about the performance, complete the maze and physical activity in **Activity Sheet 1**.

English Language Arts
NJLSA.R7.
NJLSA.SL1.
Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard 7

E

Experience the performance

Remind students of appropriate behaviors for the theater and how to be a good audience member. Encourage students to think about how the performers are able to portray certain actions and feelings, even though their faces are hidden.

Have you ever seen a performance where the actors don't speak? When you experience the show, look and listen for how the story is brought to life using movement, light and sound. To practice understanding a story without dialogue, watch [this cartoon](#).

English Language Arts
NJLSA.R7.
Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard 7
Anchor Standard 8

R

Reflect, respond and read

Reflect: Have a class discussion about what the students remember from the performance. Create an anchor chart to record their observations, including any of the music that was used, specific scenes and characters.
Read: Depending on the age of the students, read "The Build" section from [Lightwire Theater's website](#). Discuss how the actors, costumes and puppets look different up close than they did from the stage. Encourage students to guess what materials might have been used in the creation of the costumes and puppets.
Respond: Group students into partners and ask them to share their observations about the performance.

Partner up with another classmate and discuss what parts of the performance you remember most.
1. What was your favorite part of the performance?
2. How would the story be different if you could see the actors and puppeteers?
3. How would the story be different if there was no music?
4. How do you think the puppets were being operated?
5. Can you demonstrate by using your own body?

English Language Arts
NJLSA.R7.
NJLSA.SL1.
NJLSA.SL2.
Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard 1

F

Focus

Lightwire Theater uses recycled objects and turns them into something completely different. Challenge your students' creativity by playing the game "This is Not a Pencil". Start by holding a pencil and saying "This is not a pencil, this is a microphone!" Then pretend to use the pencil like a microphone by singing into the pencil. Then the object gets passed around (or everyone uses their own) and each person comes up with something else the pencil could be and shows how to use it. Any object can be used to play this game.

When Lightwire Theater uses recycled items to create puppets, they are finding a new way to use objects. Play the game "This is Not a Pencil" with your class and see how many uses for an ordinary object you can come up with.

Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard 1
Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills
9.4.2.CI.1
9.4.2.CI.2

O

Originate

Collect recycled and found materials that the class can use to create their own puppets. Send home a notice/post on Google Classroom to encourage creative collecting of unlikely art materials.
Have a class discussion about where these objects came from and ways they might be reused instead of just being thrown out. Each student should have one base item to be the main body of their puppet (milk container, egg carton, socks, plastic utensil, cereal box, etc.)
Provide students with additional art materials like paper, markers, stickers, pipe cleaners and popsicle sticks to design and build their puppets.
For ideas on how to make some recycled puppets, check out [this video](#). To learn more about recycled arts, visit [this website](#).

Using recycled materials, found materials and art supplies provided by your teacher, create your own puppet! Your puppet could look like an animal, plant, food or something new that has never been seen before. Later you will be asked to have your puppet perform — so make sure it has a face and that you can move it around.

Student Learning Standards - Science
K-2-ETS1-2
Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard 1
Anchor Standard 2
Anchor Standard 3
Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills
9.4.12.CI.1
9.4.2.CI.2

R

Rehearse

Students will create puppet charades with their creations, either individually or in groups and using **Activity Sheet 2** as a guide. As the students rehearse, remind them that the audience needs to see the puppets, not necessarily the puppeteers. You can encourage students to sit on chairs or the floor, and have the puppets on a desk or table to make it easier for the audience to see the puppets.

Using **Activity Sheet 2** as a guide, create a charade using your puppet. You can choose to perform a holiday, an activity, a feeling, etc. Think about the different ways that you can move your puppet to portray the words you chose. Practice a few times to solidify your performance.

English Language Arts
NJLSA.SL2.
Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard 2
Anchor Standard 3
Anchor Standard 4
Anchor Standard 5
SEL: Self Awareness Sub-competency
01, 04

M

Make magic

When the students are ready to share their puppet charades, remind them again about appropriate audience behavior. The audience should watch each presentation quietly and applaud at the end. Depending on the age of your class, you may have a brief audience reflection after each charade to find out what the kids saw and what they think the puppets might have been doing and feeling. With younger students you might want to tell them what the charade is before they share and ask them to notice what the puppets and puppeteers are doing to show the activity and emotion.

Take a breath and do your best — share your puppet charade with the class!
Be an audience superstar — quietly watch your classmates and notice what the puppets are doing and how they might be feeling. Applaud everyone for trying their best!

Visual & Performing Arts
Anchor Standard 6
Anchor Standard 10
SEL: Self Awareness Sub-competency
04
SEL: Social Awareness Sub-competency
08, 10

curriculum standards

NJ Visual & Performing Arts Standards

- 1: Generating and conceptualizing ideas.
- 2: Organizing and developing ideas.
- 3: Refining and completing work.
- 4: Selecting, analyzing, and interpreting work.
- 5: Developing and refining techniques and models or steps needed to create products.
- 6: Conveying meaning through art.
- 7: Perceiving and analyzing products.
- 8: Interpreting intent and meaning.
- 10: Synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences to create products.

common core state standards

NJ Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

9.4.2.CI.1

Demonstrate openness to new ideas and perspectives.

9.4.2.CI.2

Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work.

NJ English Language Arts

NJSLSA.R.7.

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

NJSLSA.SL1.

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

NJSLSA.SL2.

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

NJ Student Learning Standards - Science

K2.ETS1.2

Develop a simple sketch, drawing, or physical model to illustrate how the shape of an object helps it function as needed to solve a given problem.

FIND THE STANDARDS

For more detailed information on the standards, visit these websites:

NATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy

NATIONAL SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

socialstudies.org/standards

NATIONAL CORE ARTS ANCHOR STANDARDS

nationalartsstandards.org

SEL: Self Awareness Sub-competency

01: Recognize one's feelings and thoughts

04: Recognize the importance of self-confidence in handling daily tasks and challenges

SEL: Social Awareness Sub-competency

08: Recognize and identify the thoughts, feelings and perspectives of others

04: Demonstrate an understanding of the need for mutual respect when viewpoints differ

vocabulary

Actor

A person who portrays a character in a performance.

Electroluminescent Wire

Usually called El Wire; is a thin copper wire coated in a phosphor, which glows when an electric current (battery) is applied to it. The wire is extremely thin and flexible and produces a solid line of light.

Character

People, animals, items or creatures in a story that can think, feel or move.

Dancer

A person who moves their body in rhythm or time, usually to music.

Migration

A long journey to a new home. Many animals move seasonally from one area or region to another. Often, they are moving for certain food or weather conditions.

North Pole

Northern most point on earth. It is very cold.

Puppet

A movable model of a person or animal. They are typically moved either by strings controlled from above or by a hand inside it.

Puppeteer

A person who moves an inanimate object (a puppet) to create the illusion that the puppet is alive. Puppeteers are often not seen by an audience.

Recycled Objects

Items that are made from materials that would have otherwise been discarded or thrown away.

Seasons

The four parts of the year that are distinguished by their weather conditions and the lengths of the day. They are winter, spring, summer and fall.

resources

Websites

A Very Electric Christmas NJPAC resources
njpac.org/arts-education/teacher-resources

Lightwire Theatre
lightwiretheater.com

America's Got Talent: Lightwire Theater Quarterfinals
youtube.com/watch?v=xISouYmju24&it=4s&ab_channel=LightwireTheater

Fake Off: Lightwire Theater, "The 1970s"
youtube.com/watch?v=Ux-s7HnLsC8&ab_channel=LightwireTheater

The Nutcracker ballet & story in 10 minutes
youtube.com/watch?v=HRuhsiq79ag&ab_channel=DanceLineBallet

North Pole Facts
today.com/news/10-things-you-never-knew-about-north-pole-1C7657750

Life at the North Pole
scienceabc.com/eyeopeners/what-is-at-the-north-pole.html

Ready Jet Go: Bird Migration
youtube.com/watch?v=Nrkvp3xOCpM&ab_channel=PBSKIDS

Book Read aloud | Lights of Winter: Winter Celebrations Around the World
youtube.com/watch?v=s6cEZoxPQ6o&ab_channel=JoyfulLearningforYoungMinds

Holiday Bright Lights | A Brief History of Holiday Lights
holidaybrightlights.com/a-brief-history-of-holiday-lights

TIME | Here's How Christmas Lights Came to Be
time.com/4152307/christmas-tree-lights-history

National Geographic Kids | Hanukkah
kids.nationalgeographic.com/celebrations/article/hanukkah

National Geographic Kids | Kwanzaa
kids.nationalgeographic.com/celebrations/article/kwanzaa

NJPAC's Arts Education programs
njpac.org/arts-education

About NJPAC
njpac.org/about

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NJPAC Arts Education performances team:

Randal Croudy, Natalie Dreyer, Rosa Hyde, Danielle Vauters. On the Mic is an NJPAC Arts Education production, produced in partnership with CM Studios. NJPAC and CM Studios are located in Essex County, New Jersey, situated on the traditional territory of the Leni Lenape people.

the arts in your school

In-School Residencies: NJPAC teaching artists come right to your school to teach the performing arts to your students. Our super-flexible in-person residencies are designed to meet your needs, and you'll have a dedicated program manager to help you every step of the way. It's the perfect program to keep your students creating, connecting and expressing themselves through the magic of the arts.

Professional Development: Calling all educators! Expand your teaching skills, deepen your curriculum and give yourself a creative boost in NJPAC's forward-thinking professional development workshops. Our virtual PD programs are for teachers all the way from pre-K to high school, and include hip hop, dance, storytelling, theater, music and more. Not only will you learn something... you'll also have fun and be inspired.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please email our education sales team at artseducation@njpac.org. Or visit njpac.org/education

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Generous support for SchoolTime provided, in part, by



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+ deceased

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study the arts at njpac

Saturday Programs: NJPAC's Saturday programs are geared towards students at every level — from those who dream of starring on Broadway to those who are still learning their scales. Students work with professional artists to build technique and develop their own creative style in hip hop, jazz, theater, musical theater and symphonic band.

Summer Programs: Want to begin to explore the arts? Or immerse yourself in the study of one genre? Then join us at NJPAC next summer in one of seven programs that spark the creativity in every child through the study of music, dance and theater.