

## **Accessibility in Action**

### **Raising Awareness about Disability and the Arts**

On Monday, December 15th at 7pm at the Prince Music Theater in Philadelphia, Art-Reach members and invited guests will have the chance to be part of our "Accessibility in Action" program, which partners with arts organizations to present fully accessible performances for audiences with disabilities. This year's event will feature Enchantment Theatre Company's holiday production of Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale "The Snow Queen."

The event will feature the following accessibility accommodations and services:

- Wheelchair seating
- Assisted-listening devices for audiences who are hard of hearing
- American Sign Language for Deaf audiences
- Open captioning for people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Braille and large-print programs for people who are blind or have low vision

In addition, audio description and sensory tours will also be featured. Audio description is a service for people who are blind or visually impaired that provides narration of movement and facial expressions occurring on stage. Similarly, sensory tours allow the same audience members to feel and touch significant show elements like sets, props and costumes prior to the performance to provide a richer audience experience.



**During the 2006 "Accessibility in Action" program Enchantment**

**Theatre Company incorporated sensory tours where audience members who were blind and visually impaired touched costume and set pieces from Cinderella.**

“Accessibility in Action” is important because it raises awareness that audiences with disabilities enjoy the arts and seek to participate when they are made more accessible. It also provides a powerful opportunity to educate the general public about how the arts are made more accessible to audiences with disabilities and the role Art-Reach plays in these efforts. In addition to Enchantment Theatre Company, past “Accessibility in Action” partners include InterAct Theatre Company and VSA arts of Pennsylvania.

“It’s a special effort to really make the event fully accessible,” Executive Director Michael Norris explains. “It’s unique in that we are providing at the same time on the same night all the major accessibility accommodations.”

Art-Reach members will attend the December 15 performance at the Prince Music Theater located at 1412 Chestnut Street. Through Art-Reach, free tickets will be distributed, and a celebratory dessert reception will follow the show.

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“The Snow Queen” features an original score and an array of visual elements that includes life-sized puppets, dance, masks and magic. Directed by Leslie Reidel, the play

tells the story of a young girl, Gerda, searching for Kai, a beloved friend who has been captured by the Snow Queen. Gerda journeys through an enchanted world to find Kai and ultimately rescues him from the queen's ice castle.

"It is a show that is perfect for everyone," says Program Director Stephanie Borton. "Every year we hear adults and children alike raving about what they see, sharing that it is fun, exciting and beautiful to watch. It truly feels good to know that the event raises awareness and makes a difference."

Tickets are free, but seating is limited. To reserve seats contact the Programming Department at 215-568-2115 x 4 or by email [info@art-reach.org](mailto:info@art-reach.org).