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20+ Fabulous Fall Performances to See as a Family

Family-friendly music, performances and entertainment coming up this fall

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If the myriad think pieces on the internet are to be trusted, creativity will be the most marketable skill in the innovation economy in which our kids will be seeking work as young adults. Fortunately, [recent research \(http://nautil.us/issue/73/play/to-be-more-creative-cheer-up-rp\)](http://nautil.us/issue/73/play/to-be-more-creative-cheer-up-rp) points to creativity as a mental process that can be taught. Unsurprisingly, exposure to art can assist in the development of creative processes. And even if science moves on to other theories, everybody already knows that exposure to art broadens our

mental horizons.

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We've scoured the Puget Sound area from north to south and areas in between in search of the best family-friendly shows and exhibits on offer this fall. Here we present a list of our favorite options. It's not complete – many smaller companies were still developing their fall seasons at press time – but it is a great start.



Photo: *The Addams Family*

September

'The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (<https://villagetheatre.org/issaquah/spelling-bee.php>)'

Village Theatre | Sept. 12–Oct. 20 (and Oct. 25–Nov. 17 in Everett)

This playful Tony Award-winning musical follows an eclectic group of middle schoolers as they fight for the glorious title of regional spelling bee champ. \$46–\$80.

'The Addams Family (<https://tmp.org/index.php/2019-2020-tmp-mainstage-single-tickets/>)'

Tacoma Musical Playhouse | Sept. 13–Oct. 6

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In TMP's all-new musical comedy, the unthinkable has happened to Gomez Addams. His daughter, Wednesday, has grown up and fallen in love with a sweet and smart young man from a respectable family – and now that Gomez knows, Wednesday wants him to keep it a secret from Morticia. Pricing TBA.

'Necessary Sacrifices (<http://taproottheatre.org/shows/2019/necessary-sacrifices/>)'

Taproot Theatre Company | Sept. 18–Oct. 26

“Necessary Sacrifices” will help older kids (12+) bring history out of the classroom. Based on documented meetings, public speeches and personal writings, this play has abolitionist and Union recruiter Frederick Douglass challenging his president to act on the statement that “all men are created equal.” \$27–\$50.

'Elephant & Piggie: We Are in a Play (<http://www.secondstoryrep.org/index.html>)'

SecondStory Repertory | Sept. 21–Oct. 13

Based on the delightful “Elephant & Piggie” picture books by Mo Willems. Worrywart elephant Gerald and happy-go-lucky pig Piggie, who are the “bestus” of friends, are invited to a party hosted by the Squirrelles, three singing squirrels. Everyone will have a good time, even as (not terribly bad) obstacles arise and (mildly concerning) problems are solved in typically charming Elephant & Piggie style. \$5–\$10.

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'Black Beauty (<https://www.sct.org/onstage/productions/black-beauty/>)'

Seattle Children's Theatre | Sept. 26–Oct. 27

This beloved horse tale is told using innovative large-scale puppetry, live music and a multigenerational cast. Brimming with compassion, “Black Beauty” invites us to seek kindness in the face of adversity. This work is a world premiere commissioned by the always excellent Seattle Children’s Theatre.



Photo: *The Delicious Revenge of Princess Rubyslippers*

[The Delicious Revenge of Princess Rubyslippers \(https://olyft.org/event/the-delicious-revenge-of-princess-rubyslippers/2019-10-04/\)](https://olyft.org/event/the-delicious-revenge-of-princess-rubyslippers/2019-10-04/)

Olympia Family Theater | Sept. 27–Oct. 20

This irresistibly titled play follows Ruby’s hilarious adventures dressing as a princess, hiding from her big brother Jake and his friend, and magically disappearing into a world of make-believe, where she meets her fairy godmother, the big bad wolf, a giant, a witch and a charming prince. This comically original fairy-tale mash-up unravels sibling rivalry.

\$15–\$20.

[‘Monet, Renoir, Degas, and Their Circle: French Impressionism and the Northwest \(https://www.tacomaartmuseum.org/explore/upcoming-exhibitions/\)](https://www.tacomaartmuseum.org/explore/upcoming-exhibitions/)

Tacoma Art Museum | Opens Sept. 28

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Artistic radicals in their own time, the French Impressionists are what most people today think of when they think of painters. This exhibition provides a unique opportunity to enjoy art by Monet, Renoir, Gauguin, Morisot and Degas right here at home. It also includes work by American artists they influenced, including some local to the Northwest. \$15 (\$40 family rate).

October

[‘Warner Bros. Studios Presents Bugs Bunny at the Symphony \(https://www.seattlesymphony.org/\)](https://www.seattlesymphony.org/)

Seattle Symphony | Oct. 4-6

Let’s face it, if it weren’t for Looney Tunes, most of us would not be very familiar with classical music. “Bugs Bunny at the Symphony” screens the world’s most beloved Looney Tunes cartoons with live accompaniment by the Seattle Symphony. This 30th-anniversary program highlights classics like “The Rabbit of Seville” alongside new Warner Bros. 3-D theatrical shorts. Pricing TBA.

[‘Robert Williams: The Father of Exponential Imagination \(https://www.bellevuearts.org/exhibitions/upcoming/robert-williams/\)](https://www.bellevuearts.org/exhibitions/upcoming/robert-williams/)

Bellevue Arts Museum | Oct. 4-Feb. 2, 2020

Focusing exclusively on the artist’s paintings and sculptures from the past decade, this exhibit of Robert Williams’ fun and appealing artwork has a lot for kids to enjoy. Think wildly colorful paintings and playful structures featuring a lot of monsters and unexpected images. That said, there are still some themes and imagery in the paintings that might be issues for some parents. Be prepared for some nudity and the potential for some pieces to spark family discussions.

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[‘Shakespeare in Love \(https://www.tacomaartslive.org/events/calendar/eventdetail/1435/9/shakespeare-in-love?filter_reset=1\)’](https://www.tacomaartslive.org/events/calendar/eventdetail/1435/9/shakespeare-in-love?filter_reset=1)

Theater on the Square | Oct. 17–Nov. 3

Based on the rom-com film of the same title, “Shakespeare in Love” imagines the behind-the-scenes origin story for “Romeo and Juliet.” In it, Will Shakespeare, suffering writer’s block, is inspired by a young woman so enthralled with theater that she disguises herself as a boy in order to become an actor. It’s a sweet romance in which lovers help each other achieve their individual goals (in stark contrast to the actual “R & J”!), and if the play stays true to the movie, it also makes the point that happy endings and weddings are not the same thing. \$19–\$39.

[‘Flesh and Blood: Italian Masterpieces From the Capodimonte Museum \(https://www.seattleartmuseum.org/Exhibitions/Details?EventId=65005\)’](https://www.seattleartmuseum.org/Exhibitions/Details?EventId=65005)

Seattle Art Museum | Oct. 17–Jan. 26, 2020

Give your kids a classical arts education in one exhibit. Renowned artists of the High Renaissance, such as Titian and Raphael, join Neapolitan masters, including Artemisia Gentileschi, Jusepe de Ribera and Bernardo Cavallino. The show reveals the many ways the human body can express love and devotion, physical labor and tragic suffering – so, yeah, there’s some nudity and violence depicted. But your family won’t get another chance to see this many works by such historically significant artists in one exhibit again (or until you make that big trip to Europe). Special exhibition pricing is \$30 (14 and younger free).



Photo: *Seussical the Musical*

[Seussical the Musical \(https://studio-east.org/seussical/\)](https://studio-east.org/seussical/)

Studio East | Oct. 18–Nov. 3

Teaching theater Studio East’s cast of 8- to 19-year-old performers presents this fantastical, spectacular musical extravaganza. The Cat in the Hat is your magical master of ceremonies in this smorgasbord of Dr. Seuss stories, featuring beloved characters Horton, Gertrude McFuzz and others. \$15–\$20.

[Cinderella \(https://www.seattleopera.org/\)](https://www.seattleopera.org/)

Seattle Opera | Oct. 19–Nov. 1

Rossini’s flowery adaptation of the ultimate rags-to-riches story mixes tenderness and frivolity with fabulous results. Taking a lighthearted, comedic approach to the story, this production sets the fairy tale in a Victorian emporium, with costumes and dances reminiscent of “Mary Poppins.” \$35 and up.

[‘Pippi Longstocking \(https://www.lakewoodplayhouse.org/our-current-season.html\)’](https://www.lakewoodplayhouse.org/our-current-season.html)

Lakewood Playhouse | Oct. 24–Nov. 23

Performed for all ages, by all ages, the hilarious and outrageous adventures and misadventures of Astrid Lindgren’s beloved heroine, Pippi Longstocking, will delight the whole family.



Photo: *Beauty and the Beast*

[‘Beauty and the Beast \(https://storybooktheater.org/beauty-and-the-beast/\)’](https://storybooktheater.org/beauty-and-the-beast/)

StoryBook Theater, multiple venues | Oct. 26–Dec. 21

For Beauty, having nice manners is a way to make friends and help others. But for the Beast, manners don’t seem to matter at all since the way he looks scares everyone away. Can Beauty be a good influence on the Beast, or will he remain mannerless in his manor forever?

This short play is appropriate for kids ages 3 and older. Most performances will be held at Kirkland Performance Center, but there are also shows planned for Renton, Everett, Shoreline and Seattle locations. \$12.

November

'Disney on Ice Presents Mickey's Search Party (http://www.angelofthewindsarena.com/)'

Accesso ShoWare Center: Oct. 30–Nov. 4

Angel of the Winds Arena: Nov. 7–10

Nowadays, Disney on Ice is as much a childhood tradition as a visit to the actual Magical Kingdom, but it's much cheaper than traveling to a theme park. Kids will be sucked into the story worlds and musical numbers from "Coco," "Frozen," "Moana," "Beauty and the Beast," "Aladdin," "Toy Story" and "The Little Mermaid," while parents will marvel at the skaters' skill. \$28–\$98.

'Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook (http://www.secondstoryrep.org/index.html)'

SecondStory Repertory | Nov. 2–23

Someone stole Junie B.'s new furry mittens, so it's only fair that she keeps the many-colored pen she found, right? And guess what? There's a new boy in kindergarten, and he is the handsomest. Will he love Junie B. or Grace or Lucille? And is it okay to keep the pen? \$5–\$10.

'Casa Patas Flamenco: Raíz de 4 (https://www.seattlesymphony.org/concerttickets/calendar/2019-2020/live-at-bh/benaroyahall/casa-patas)'

Benaroya Hall | Nov. 22–23

Yes, flamenco has a steamy side, but it is the classical dance style of Spain. And for this program, performers dig down to the roots of this energetic dance tradition to celebrate the purest expression of flamenco styles. Three performances only. \$31–\$41.

'Mrs. Doubtfire (https://www.5thavenue.org/show/mrs-doubtfire/#overview)'

The 5th Avenue Theatre | Nov. 26–Dec. 29

Based on the Robin Williams film, this musical, in its world premiere, celebrates fatherhood and family. When a struggling actor loses custody of his children, he disguises himself as a British nanny in order to spend time with them, and in doing so, learns a lot more about fatherhood than he bargained for. Prices TBA.

[‘Howl’s Moving Castle \(https://book-it.org/events/howls-moving-castle-2019/\)](https://book-it.org/events/howls-moving-castle-2019/)

Book-It Repertory Theatre | Nov. 29–Dec. 29

Book-It premiered the musical stage adaptation of Diana Wynne Jones’ beloved fantasy novel in 2017, and now it’s back by popular demand, with Sara Porkalob returning to the stage in the lead role of Sophie. Your kids might not be able to keep up with the intricacies of the plot, but they will be singing “Why have a dull life when you can have cake?” for weeks to come. Pricing TBA.

[‘The Wind in the Willows \(https://olyft.org/event/the-wind-in-the-willows/2019-11-29/\)](https://olyft.org/event/the-wind-in-the-willows/2019-11-29/)

Olympia Family Theater | Nov. 29–Dec. 22

This joyful musical adaptation of Kenneth Grahame’s beloved children’s classic was created by local writers and composers. Family members of all ages will enjoy this story of adventure and self-discovery that celebrates the enduring power of friendship. \$15–\$20.

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