

W  
Welcome  
to  
Kindergarten

2



# SYNOPSIS

## **Prelude:**

*Introduction to Froebel  
and the gifts*

## **Movement 1:**

*Yarn Balls*

Lesson: To help children begin to distinguish form, color, and movement.

## **Movement 2:**

*Sphere, Cylinder, and Cube*

Lesson: Essentially, they were used to help children discover a unity of the forms throughout their world. They could first practice comparing the three shapes to different objects. Then, they could spin the shapes to realize that each shape can actually be found within the other: When the cube is spun it looks like a cylinder, when the cylinder is spun it looks like a sphere. This would effectively lay the foundation for creative exploration and learning.

## **Movement 3:**

*Building Blocks*

Lesson: This gift would present the simple idea of parts making up a whole and how when one of those parts is taken away, the whole is no longer whole. It would emphasize the possibilities of what all those parts can become when creatively combined in different ways.

## Movement 4:

### *Parquetry Tablets*

Lesson: With these 2D shapes, each of which is derived from the surfaces of the previous 3D shapes, children could now begin to shift from the real to the abstract by arranging them into different patterns, shapes, and images.

## Movement 6:

### *Framework Gift*

Lesson: With this gift, kids are able to creatively combine the abstract concepts of points and lines to recreate the framework of the solid forms. Kids have now moved from the concrete to the abstract and back to the concrete. It's the beginning of understanding how one's own abstract thoughts and ideas can be recreated in the world outside one's brain.

## Movement 5:

### *The Point*

Lesson: This gift highlights yet another aspect of the 3D prism: the points of intersection. With this gift, kids are encouraged to create their own creative images using these points, helping them to understand the concepts of space and distance and how they relate to form and the world around them.

## Conclusion:

### *Clay*

Lesson: The block of clay, being malleable but solid, could be shaped into virtually any form and thus allow for endless possibilities.



# PRODUCTION TEAM

## **Audrey Tieman**

*Sophomore  
Director/Playwright*

Bio:

Audrey is a sophomore earning a BFA in Theatre Design and Production, concentrating in scenic design, and a BA in History of Art. She has previously directed *Headsets: A View from the Light Booth* with Basement Arts last year, and was so excited they took a chance on this crazy idea.

Director Statement:

This production is testament to the commitment of the entire production team. We've nearly been cancelled about eight times, and have restructured/rewritten the show at least three times. That's how this show morphed to being both about the Froebel's Gifts and about the process of creating *Welcome to Kindergarten*. Initially, this was a pipe dream I pitched with the full expectation no one would go for it. It was only after meeting with Ryo and hearing *Movement 1: Yarn Balls* for the first time that I realized we might be onto something. This has been such a wonderful collaborative process and I've learned so much for all these incredible people. I couldn't have asked for a better team and it's because of them that *Welcome to Kindergarten* exists at all. It is my heartfelt hope that you all enjoy this piece— I'm incredibly proud of the work we've done and the fact that we've made it through hell or high water to perform it for you.

Special thanks to Ruby Pérez, Emily Hanlon, Cole Newburg, Miles Zoellick, William Webster, Ellie Vice, and Exposure Productions

## **Ryo Kamibayashi**

*Sophomore  
Composer/Choreographer/  
Dancer*

Bio:

Ryo is a Sophomore Musical Theatre Major. He has done musical theatre professionally in Japan, and just moved to America in fall of 2019 to become a Broadway STAR. He says hi to you all! Also please follow him on Instagram:

Its\_officially\_ryo

Composer Statement:

This is my first time letting people hear my composition. I'm also not an experienced dancer yet, so it feels like you all are seeing the purest form of Ryo's creative brain, which honestly scares me to death. But considering how much I've learned, it's all so worth it.

## **Briana Barker**

*Sophomore  
Production Stage Manager*

Bio:

I am a sophomore student studying Theatre Design and Production, as well as a minor in PAME. Credits at UofM so far include 2nd ASM for *Romeo and Juliet*, as well as the Stage Manager for *Rude Mechanicals* and *Choir Boy* this past fall. I am 1st ASM on *Hair* this semester so be sure to check it out!

Designer Statement:

Stage Managing this production was such a cool and different experience. It didn't call for all of the paperwork normally needed, and I mainly just served as a person of contact and a liaison in the rehearsal room. It was a huge collaborative process from the beginning which I loved. Audrey and I made every decision together, and I am just so glad to have gotten the chance to see everyone showcase their art form while working on WTK.

Fav Movement and Why:

It is so hard to pick a favorite as all of the composition by Ryo is outstanding. Combined with the dancing from Kate, David, and Ryo and still wow. I do have a soft spot for Movement 2, I love the story behind it, and it is just so pretty.

## **Ainsley Grace**

*Junior*

*Stage Manager*

Bio:

Ainsley is super excited to join this project!

## **Ryan Espitia**

*Senior*

*Scenic Designer*

Bio:

Ryan is a Senior Art & Design Major at STAMPS minoring in scenic design and is very excited to demonstrate his visual artistry into a theatre production. He is currently working as associate set designer for MUSKET's Winter show Once On This Island.

Designer Statement:

I have never fully had an opportunity to include my visual art into a theatrical performance so it was wonderful to be able to illustrate and design with so many creative people. While covid has brought some challenges that we as designers have all faced and worked through, it has been such a blessing to appreciate art in every form it comes in! I hope you enjoy this truly beautiful piece!

Fav Movement and Why:

It's really hard to have a favorite movement until you've seen them at full showing capabilities, they're all so unique!

## **Sydney Geysbeek**

*Sophomore*

*Lighting Designer*

Bio:

Sydney is a sophomore Theatre Design & Production major concentrating in Lighting Design. Sydney is currently the Assistant Lighting Design for University Production's Hair and has worked as Assistant Head Electrician at Saugatuck Center for the Arts.

Designer Statement:

This is the first show I have had my lighting make it to a performance. I had designed a few things in the past, but covid canceled them. It brings me such joy to be able to bring this art to the eyes of people. This show has such an impactful story, and has allowed me to build and acquire many new skills. The people working on this piece are nothing short of amazing. They are some of the most joyful creative people. They never hesitate to celebrate the breakthroughs, and eagerly find ways to reinvent the show, when everything goes wrong. Thank you all so much, y'all are the best! And to you reading this, I hope you enjoy the show!!

Fav Movement and Why:

My favorite movement is Clay, the last piece. It really encompasses what designing is, and really what the hardships and joys of life feel like.

## **Mila McCoy**

*Sophomore*

*Costume Designer*

Bio:

Mila McCoy is a sophomore design and production student, focusing on costume design. This is her first Basement show! She is currently working on Dogfight with Last Night Productions and Basement Arts. Enjoy the show!

## **Alex Li**

*Freshman*

*Props Master*

Bio:

Alex is the Props Master for Welcome to Kindergarten and they are so excited for everyone to see the show! They are a first-year Design and Production student with a concentration in lighting and props, and this is their first show as a Props Master. Their upcoming projects include Color Cabaret and Next to Normal, so be sure to check those out!

Fav Movement and Why:

Alex's favorite movement is Movement 4, because it is beautifully composed (by the wonderful Ryo) and gives them feelings of nostalgia, longing, joy, and hopefulness.

## **David Midkiff**

*Sophomore*

*Choreographer/Dancer*

Bio:

David is elated to be a part of this incredible production. A Texas native, David's previous credits include Swing in The Wild Party here at The University of Michigan, Henry/Associate Choreographer/Dance Captain in Newsies at Lyric Stage, and Jesse Tuck in Tuck Everlasting at Casa Mañana. David sends his love to his mom and dad, and to Cole for putting him in this show! @davidmidkiff

Fav Movement and Why:

David's favorite movement is movement two because, God, he's a cube.

## **Kate Klassa**

*Sophomore*

*Teacher (Narrator)*

Bio:

Kate is so honored to have been a part of this amazing collaboration. She is a Sociology major, with minors in Dance and PAM. She is so passionate about art that does just what this show has- brought together artists from so many different backgrounds to create a piece as authentic as this one. Kate sends love to the WTK team (thank you Audrey for taking me on this adventure!)

Fav movement:

I can't choose just one. This entire process was completely magical and she loved every second of it.

## **Artists Influenced by the Froebel's Gifts:**

*Illustrations by Ryan Espitia*

*Photos by Ellie Vice*









