

Summer Lyric nurtures next generation of theatre artists

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Alex Ates, right, director of Little Lyric's upcoming production of "Little Mermaid Jr.," directs a scene during rehearsals in the Dixon Performing Arts Center on the uptown campus. Ates says, "Little Lyric is so much more than a show. It's about gaining confidence and getting over fears. The dancing and singing is lagniappe." (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Summer Lyric Theatre (SLT) at Tulane University has nurtured aspiring young performers for 40 years through the Little Lyric musical theater workshop for children. In 2016, artistic director Michael McKelvey expanded the company's education/outreach programs to include Junior Lyric and the High School Intensive to welcome a broader base.

“We need to be a responsible theater company,” said McKelvey of the expansion. With many young families growing and moving in to New Orleans, he hopes to introduce more people to SLT via these programs.

Little Lyric (ages 8-12) will present *The Little Mermaid, Jr.* June 30 and July 1, and Junior Lyric (ages 12-16) will present *Beauty and the Beast, Jr.* July 28 and 29; both will take place in the Dixon Performing Arts Annex Recital Hall.

The High School Intensive, in partnership with The NOLA Project, prepares students ages 15-18 for auditions and other aspects of theater; it took place earlier this summer.

This summer SLT will also present a Theatre for Youth production: a new musical version of Roald Dahl’s *James and the Giant Peach*. It will be presented in conjunction with The Story Road Project, McKelvey’s service-learning class with a mission to expose theater to youngsters who would not typically get to experience it. The show will run Thursdays-Saturdays from June 22 to July 1 in Rogers Memorial Chapel, former home of the Patchwork Players.

“It exposes kids to something fun that they can do for the rest of their lives,” said Emily Chatelain, a Tulane student who participated in Little Lyric and can now be seen in this summer’s mainstage productions.

For tickets and other information, call (504) 862-3214 or visit [Summer Lyric online](#).

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