



CONEJO PLAYERS  
THEATRE

# *The* Velveteen Rabbit: *A Toy Story*

by Patrick Flynn

based on the book by  
Margery Williams

Commissioned by  
Adventure Theatre in  
Glen Echo, Maryland  
(Chil Kong, Artistic  
Director) in 2019



**May 2 - 11, 2025**

Fri at 7:00pm • Sun at 1:00pm

Sat at 1:00pm & 4:00pm

THEVELVETEEN RABBIT

is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by  
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# Welcome to CONEJO PLAYERS THEATRE



I am thrilled to welcome you to the 67th season of the Conejo Players Theatre! As the only 100% volunteer-run community theater in Southern California, you have joined us in a truly special place. Our mission — “to share in providing the community with a year-round schedule of affordable live theatre produced to serve the cultural, educational, and entertainment needs of the community” — is deeply important to the wonderful people who give their time here.

As a lifelong theater lover, I have often felt the excitement of the shared live experience between performers and an audience. I have witnessed the power of great storytelling to touch, inform, (and even change) lives. Whether you are here to laugh, cry, or think (often all in one evening), we hope that this performance entertains as well as enlightens.

The theater is an amazing center of collaboration. Each production relies on directors, producers, performers, choreographers, designers, builders, crew members, ushers, and countless others. Working together creates a family of sorts. **We welcome anyone who would like to join our family of volunteers** - a truly generous and talented bunch. Try something new—we are happy to train! And as we are a non-profit organization, tax deductible donations are gratefully appreciated too. Feel free to contact me for more information and opportunities.

Thank you for joining us tonight, and enjoy the show!

Conejo Players Theatre  
is a Proud Member of

**aact**  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF COMMUNITY THEATRE

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana Marley-Kolb".

**Dana Marley-Kolb**  
President

Email: [President@conejoplayers.org](mailto:President@conejoplayers.org)



## Mission Statement

The mission of Conejo Players Theatre is to share in providing the community with a year-round schedule of affordable live theatre produced to serve the cultural, educational, and entertainment needs of the community; and to welcome and provide an avocational opportunity for all volunteers interested in the theatre arts to participate in the many activities of community theatre.

# CONEJO PLAYERS THEATRE

presents

## *The* **Velveteen Rabbit:** *A Toy Story*

by **Patrick Flynn**

based on the book by **Margery Williams**

Commissioned by Adventure Theatre in Glen Echo, Maryland  
(Chil Kong, Artistic Director) in 2019

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**Conejo Players Theatre • Thousand Oaks, CA**

**May 2 - 11, 2025**

Fri at 7:00pm • Sun at 1:00pm

Sat at 1:00pm & 4:00pm

### The **CAST**

Kona Casey.....	The Rabbit
Layna Trafican.....	The Child
Charlotte Voake .....	Nana
Alia Ashworth.....	The Skin Horse
Ava Paolini.....	Wind-up Mouse
Sydney Judd.....	Dinosaur
Logan Judd.....	Model Boat
Eden Carroll.....	Timothy The Jointed Lion
Lyra Eriksen .....	Bear/The Sheriff of Nottingham
Ariana Wolfkiel.....	Jack in The Box/Sheriff's Woman
Cadence Nakos .....	Sheriff's Woman
Macy Van Gelder.....	Shakespeare
Robert Waggoner .....	Mozart
Belle Krause.....	Oxford Bunny
Katia Budrakey.....	Cambridge Bunny
Aiden Paolini .....	Doctor/Jabberwocky
Cassidy Rizzotto.....	Plane
Ethan Purdy.....	Soldier
Vada Filippi.....	Ballerina

### The **SETTING**

A stately country home in Britain, 1920

## Production **STAFF**

Director .....	<b>Beth Eslick</b>
Producer .....	<b>Kristin Krause</b>
Stage Manager/Fight Choreographer .....	<b>Mark Suarez</b>
Costume Designers .....	<b>Beth Eslick, Kristin Krause, Susan McNeill</b>
Costume Assistants .....	<b>John Eslick, Betty Fuhrmann, Karen Graham-Hanna, Belle Krause, Joe Krause</b>
Set Designer/Propmaster .....	<b>John Eslick</b>
Sound Designer/Mic & Soundboard Operator .....	<b>Joe Krause</b>
Sound Operators .....	<b>Julie Jensen, Doug Trafican</b>
Sound Design Assistant .....	<b>Hunter Krause</b>
Lighting Designer .....	<b>Jack Allaway</b>
Light Operator .....	<b>Eve Kiefer</b>
Head of Construction .....	<b>Rick Steinberg</b>
Construction Crew .....	<b>Jim Diderrich, Judy Diderrich, John Holroyd, Max Honigsberg, Rick Steinberg, Mike Watrobski</b>
Wig Designer .....	<b>Haley Marie</b>
Make-up Artist .....	<b>Kristin Krause</b>
Make-up Assistants .....	<b>Kristie Ashworth, Lyra Erikson, Belle Krause</b>
Backstage Crew .....	<b>Cadence Nakos, Rylee Stafford</b>
Parent Coordinators .....	<b>Diana Trafican, Michele Waggoner</b>
Photography (Headshots) .....	<b>Christin Caswell</b>
Photography (Publicity) .....	<b>Ritchie Filippi</b>
Photography (Production) .....	<b>Scott Quintard</b>
Mozart Music Recording .....	<b>Scott Donohue</b>
Opening Music Assistant .....	<b>Jeremy Zeller</b>
Paint Crew .....	<b>Danielle Anneman, Alia Ashworth, Jared Ashworth, Kona Casey, Sean Casey, Lyra Eriksen, Beth Eslick, John Eslick, Madi Gray, Julie Jensen, Chad Judd, Logan Judd, Sydney Judd, Belle Krause, Hunter Krause, Joe Krause, Kristin Krause, Rowan Lewis, Elena Mills, Alyssa Nakos, Cadence Nakos, Alexis Purdy, Andy Purdy, Elaine Purdy, Ethan Purdy, Cassidy Rizzotto, Mark Suarez, Diana Trafican, Doug Trafican, Evan Trafican, Layna Trafican, Michele Waggoner, Robert Waggoner</b>
Specialty Painting .....	<b>Elena Mills</b>
Strike Crew .....	<b>Lyra Erickson, Matt Ericksen, Beth Eslick, John Eslick, Madi Gray, Chad Judd, Logan Judd, Hunter Krause, Joe Krause, Kristin Krause, Lee Marks, Alyssa Nakos, Cadence Nakos, Aiden Paolini, Ava Paolini, Brandy Paolini, Alexis Purdy, Elaine Purdy, Ethan Purdy, Cassidy Rizzotto, Tony Rizzotto, Rick Steinberg, Mark Suarez, Diana Trafican, Layna Trafican, Mike Watrobski</b>

## **Special Thanks**

**Verity Ashworth, Madi Gray, Rylee Stafford  
Evan Trafican, Alyssa Wolfkiel, National Charity League**

## From **THE DIRECTOR**

*The Velveteen Rabbit* was the first show anyone in my family had ever done. My oldest child Chelsea, when she was 10, insisted that she wanted to be in a musical. I was a little confused, as she had never mentioned it before, but we gave it a go! Well...Chelsea told the costume designer "my mommy knows how to sew" ... and thus began the next part of my life. When it came time to think about what show I would like to direct, I decided to play homage to Chelsea and how her one desire led to me now, 21 years later, being fully immersed in the theatre, in more ways than one.

From the first day of auditions, my staff and I have worked incredibly hard to ensure the children that they are free to be themselves, always. We encouraged kindness, gentleness, understanding, and fun. I also welcomed (and usually implemented) any and every suggestion from all who offered them – cast, staff, and crew alike. It's my theory that a show isn't about the director – it's a piece we have all put on stage together.

Parents, thank you for loaning your precious children to me for this time. It has been a wonderful journey that will live on in my heart forever. Please always foster your child's interest in the arts, in theatre, in music, in dance – and in living life to the fullest.

- **Beth Eslick**, Director







# Be part of the CPT family!

## Volunteering at Conejo Players Theatre

At the heart of Conejo Players Theatre is its volunteer members. Our theatre is unique in the Conejo Valley, as it's operated on a solely volunteer basis since its inception in 1958; the theatre's board members, actors, production staff, and technical crew do not receive any monetary compensation for their services. But the rewards of volunteering with our theatre are many -- we provide a medium for creative self-expression, with opportunities to get involved both onstage and behind-the-scenes ... acting, directing, producing, stage managing, scenic design and construction, theatrical lighting and sound, costuming, and the list goes on.

We're proud of the dedication of our volunteers, and the services they provide are invaluable to our success. It's our volunteers -- both adults and children -- that have allowed Conejo Players to thrive since its humble beginnings. In return, our volunteers gain invaluable creative experiences while enjoying the fun and friendships that come with working in the ever-evolving atmosphere of live theatre. We invite you to join us in our efforts to support the cultural, educational, and entertainment needs of the community through the arts!

These are some of the volunteer opportunities available:

**Usher/Ticket Taker/Snack Bar • Costumes • Props • Set Builders  
Sound Board Operator • Light Board Operator • Outreach Committee**  
Email us at [info@conejoplayers.org](mailto:info@conejoplayers.org) for these and other volunteer options.

## We are often asked, "Why should I spend \$1 to become a Conejo Players Theatre Member?"

### There are 4 reasons that we share:

1. By becoming a member, you are part of our CPT family for life. You are on our rosters and members can follow up with you to let you know what is going on at CPT.
2. When you fill out the form, you can opt in to receive our weekly newsletters and let us know what you are interested in doing, whether it be on stage or off stage. We can share with the Directors and Producers, Front of House Coordinators, Stage Crew team etc. what you are interested in doing.
3. By becoming a member and an active member, it gives you the opportunity to be a part of the direction of the theatre. You have a vote to make a difference on the direction the board takes. You can become a part of the board. You have decided you care about the theatre and want to make your voice heard.
4. You will receive invitations to exclusive Member Only Events!

We hope you do choose to become a member and join our family. We will work to find the best opportunities that match your interests!

## Meet THE CAST



**Kona Casey** (The Rabbit) is thrilled to be starring in her fourth show at Conejo Players. Her love for this theater began with her role as Harriet in *Harriet the Spy*. Kona is in 6th grade and enjoys pointe ballet, choir, rollerblading, and skateboarding. She would like to thank her wonderful director, producer, cast, and crew for this amazing opportunity to play the role of a stuffie she knows all too well. Her best friend for many years was her velvet-lined lovie, "Bunny," who was very real to her. Enjoy the show!



**Layna Trafican** (The Child) is thrilled to be back at Conejo Players Theatre for this sweet telling of a childhood favorite. She fell in love with stories and theater as a toddler, and has been singing, dancing and acting them out ever since. She has appeared in *The SpongeBob Musical Youth Edition*, *Shrek Jr.*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *101 Dalmatians*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Tempest*, and *The Little Mermaid Jr.* Layna thanks the fantastic production team for this opportunity, along with her fellow cast members, family and friends for all their support.



**Charlotte Voake** (Nana) is incredibly excited to be making her Conejo Players debut in *The Velveteen Rabbit*. She has been involved with the arts since she was two years old. Having a love for singing, dancing, playing music, writing songs and performing in all of those areas, the next natural progression was giving theatre a try. She wants to thank her family, the cast, and the production team for their warm welcome and support throughout this new adventure of hers. She's looking forward to performing in many more plays in the years to come.



**Alia Ashworth** (The Skin Horse) is fourteen years old and ecstatic to be in her third show at Conejo Players. She previously performed with Conejo Players in *The SpongeBob Musical Youth Edition* as the French Narrator and *Sleeping Beauty* as The Spider King. You may have also seen her in Hillcrest Productions of *The Hobbit* as Gollum, *Much Ado About Nothing* as Verges, *The Witch's Princess* as the Knight of Oranges, and countless other productions. She would like to thank the incredible production team, tech crew, cast, and her parents for fostering her love of theatre and encouraging her to audition for roles outside of her comfort zone (especially ones where she doesn't crawl around and ask people riddles). She hopes you enjoy the show!



**Ava Paolini** (Wind-up Mouse) is very excited to be in her next Conejo Players show! Her previous Conejo Players show was *The Music Man Jr.* She has really enjoyed having fun with her castmates. She is a member of the Conejo Players Youth Improv Team. With her school, she has been in *Peter Pan Jr.*, and as Uncle Henry in *The Wizard of Oz, Jr.* Ava has also performed with Fairy tales in the Park as Little Red Riding Hood in *Hansel and Gretel*. "Thank you to all the people who support me."



**Sydney Judd** (Dinosaur) is overjoyed to step into the role of the Toy Dinosaur in *The Velveteen Rabbit*, continuing her journey with Conejo Players Theatre. Since her first taste of the stage in third grade, Sydney has embraced her passion for performing, shining in productions like *Moana Jr.*, *The Tempest*, *Finding Nemo Kids*, and two renditions of *101 Dalmatians Kids*. When she's not bringing characters to life, Sydney loves spreading joy and laughter as a proud member of CPT's Youth Improv Team starting in 2023. Outside of the theatre she loves writing her own stories, reading, and snuggling her four pets. She sends heartfelt thanks to her incredible family, the dedicated production team, and her wonderful castmates for their endless support and inspiration.



**Logan Judd** (Model Boat) is thrilled to bring the Model Boat to life in *The Velveteen Rabbit*, continuing his journey with Conejo Players Theatre. A versatile performer, Logan recently took on the role of Old Man Jenkins in *The SpongeBob Musical Youth Edition* and has been creating laughter and memories as a proud member of CPT's Youth Improv Team since 2023. He also charmed audiences as Prince Eric in *The Little Mermaid Jr.* Beyond the stage, Logan immerses himself in the universe of Star Wars and enjoys spending time with loved ones over tabletop and board games. Logan extends his deepest gratitude to the fantastic production team, cast, and his loving family for their boundless support.



**Eden Carroll** (Timothy, The Jointed Wooden Lion) is thrilled to be part of *The Velveteen Rabbit*! This marks her first production with Conejo Players Theatre, and she is so grateful to the cast, production team for their immense support. Eden has loved bringing characters to life through her school's mock trial team and is excited to bring her energy, imagination and joy to the stage. She's had a blast getting to know the cast and crew and hopes the audience enjoys the magic of the show as much as she does.



**Lyra Eriksen** (Bear/The Sheriff of Nottingham/Makeup Asst.) is thrilled to join the cast of *The Velveteen Rabbit*. This is Lyra's fourth production at Conejo Players! Whether she is part of the cast, crew or helping with hair and makeup, Lyra loves the theater. Lyra would like to thank all the cast and crew at Conejo Players for all the support and fun! She would also like to thank her family and her biggest fans, her sisters Chloe and Posey.





**Ariana Wolfkiel** (Jack in The Box/Sheriff's Woman) has been in several productions through her school over the years – *Mary Poppins Jr.*, *Madagascar Jr.*, and *Alice in Wonderland Jr.* She is excited to be in her first community theater play and has been enjoying making friends. Her other activities include roller skating, playing the clarinet, drawing and creating art. Hoping you enjoy the show as much as she has enjoyed being part of this cast.



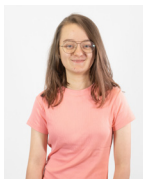
**Cadence Nakos** (Sheriff's Woman/Stage Crew) is thrilled to make her Conejo Players acting debut in *The Velveteen Rabbit* and assist behind the scenes. She has performed in various school productions including the annual school talent show since 2nd grade, the Christmas choir, and the *Gold Rush* play as the lead narrator.



**Macy van Gelder** (Shakespeare) is so excited to be a part of CPT's youth production of *The Velveteen Rabbit*. Only being a part of this theatre for a bit over a year performing in the holiday show and in *Sleeping Beauty* as Modron she already has so many memories and was thrilled to be cast into the production of *The Velveteen Rabbit* to premier in her third show at CPT. She is excited to play the fun and quirky role of Shakespeare, and would like to thank anyone who comes to see the production and the people who helped create it!



**Robert Waggoner** (Mozart) loves making people smile! He is excited to be in his third production here at Conejo Players Theatre. He has previously performed as an Elf (*Elf the Musical*), Tweedle Dum (*Alice in Wonderland Jr.*), Electric Skate (*The SpongeBob Musical Youth Edition*), Neleus (*Mary Poppins Jr.*) and Gryff the 1/2 Dragon (*Sleeping Beauty*). He is also on the Conejo Players Youth Improv Team. Offstage you can find Robert at Boy Scouts, reading comic books and playing the drums. He loves to attend plays in his spare time to support his friends and local theaters. He hopes you enjoy the show!



**Belle Krause** (Oxford Bunny) is performing in her fifth CPT production. She has found her home here at Conejo Players and as well as acting in the youth productions, she has expanded her talents to include spotlight and stage crew on the main stage shows. She wants to thank the production staff, stage crew and cast for making this another great show memory. She hopes this show will bring the story to a whole new crowd and take others back to a simpler time. Enjoy the show!



**Katia Budrakey** (Cambridge Bunny) is thrilled to be a part of *The Velveteen Rabbit*, playing the role of Cambridge Bunny. She loves singing, dancing, acting, and procrastinating. She has done other shows before, but this is her first play at Conejo Players Theatre. Katia would like to thank her family, friends, and all the other people in her life that she finds tolerable. She hopes you enjoy the show!



**Aiden Paolini** (Doctor/Jabberwocky) is very excited to be in this Conejo Players show with a great group! Some of his previous shows with Conejo Players were *The Music Man Jr.*, *The Phantom Tollbooth Jr.*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Jr.*, *Home for the Holidays*, and *Schoolhouse Rock, Jr.* He is a member of the Conejo Players Youth Improv Team. Aiden has also performed as Jack in *Newsies, Jr.*, The Beast in *Beauty and the Beast, Jr.*, and Rooster in *Annie, Jr.* with his school. He was also Hansel in *Fairy Tales in the Park's Hansel and Gretel*. "I would like to thank my family and my mom for driving me to all the rehearsals."



**Cassidy Rizzotto** (Plane) is thrilled to join the cast of *The Velveteen Rabbit* at Conejo Players. With a theatrical journey that began in first grade, she's honed her skills through various school plays, including memorable roles such as the Who Ensemble and Fish Ensemble in *Seussical The Musical*, Lucky and Ensemble in *101 Dalmatians*, Lullaby Munchkin and Beautician Diana in *The Wizard of Oz*, and Jetsam in *The Little Mermaid*. She made her debut at Conejo Players in the role of Telwyth Teg 1 in *Sleeping Beauty*. She is grateful for the opportunity to be part of this production; she eagerly anticipates the many performances yet to unfold in her future.



**Ethan Purdy** (Soldier) is so excited to be in his first play, *The Velveteen Rabbit*. He has also appeared on stage at Conejo Players Theatre as Gary the Snail in *The SpongeBob Musical Youth Edition*. Other performances he has done include choir and annual shows with his dance studio. He enjoys learning about plays, acting, singing, dancing, and playing games with friends and family. He would like to thank the *Velveteen Rabbit* staff for this special opportunity and hopes you enjoy the show!



**Vada Filippi** (Ballerina) is excited to return to the Conejo Players Theatre stage! She was previously seen in CPT's production of *Harriet the Spy*. Other credits include Squirt in *Finding Nemo Jr.* (the PAEC) and Sandy in *Annie Jr.* (BTPS). She has also appeared in *Matilda Jr.* (BTPS) and *Frozen Jr.* (HSAC). She gives love and thanks to her parents, brothers, cast mates, crew, and everyone that comes to see the show! Have a hopping good time!



## Meet THE STAFF

**Beth Eslick** (Director) Directing, like many other things, came a little later in my life. After 18 years of teaching elementary school, it just seemed to come naturally. And I must say I love it! I am beyond blessed with the amount of dedication and love that this cast (and their parents, too, mind you) have put into this production. I watch these delightful, funny, precious kids perform their hearts out on stage, and I'm amazed. And my amazing producer Kristin and her incredibly hard-working family, Jack the superior light designer, the collective efforts of many to design the costumes, my wonderful stage manager Mark, our erstwhile set builders who make everything look perfect, and my incredible husband John who not only designed the set, painted the set, and designed the props – this never would have happened without you and a multitude of others. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for working so hard.

**Kristin Krause** (Producer) has found a family here at Conejo Players Theatre. This is her second time being a producer. She loves being involved with all aspects of the theater but especially seeing the youth productions come together. She thanks her family for all their support and love.

**Mark Suarez** (Stage Manager) has worked with Conejo Players, on and off, for over a decade. Since 2020, he has contributed to the Conejo Players Theatre's ability to safely provide entertainment for Thousand Oaks and the surrounding communities. A few of the works he has contributed to in this time include *Mark Twain's Adam & Eve*, *Last Train to Nibroc*, *The Complete Works Of William Shakespeare (Abridged) [REVISED]*, and *The Belle of Amherst*. He has also participated as a cast member in a few productions, most recently in *The Secret Garden*.

**John Eslick** (Set Designer) has designed sets for several Conejo productions over the years, most recently for last season's *The SpongeBob Musical Youth Edition*. Some of his favorite designs have been for *Joseph....Dreamcoat*, *Singin' In The Rain*, and *The Women*. He also designed the productions of *Bad Seed* in 2012 and *Farragut North* in 2016, both of which won him a Four Star Theater Award. When not in a theater, John works as a graphic designer and illustrator. Keep shining, Sunshine!

**Joe Krause** (Sound Designer/Operator) This is Joe's fourth time helping with a Conejo Players youth production. He is multi-talented and jumps-in wherever needed, from construction to chauffeur. He loves being able to support the theater and his daughter in her acting journey.

**Rick Steinburg** (Head of Construction) has been involved with the Conejo Players in one way or another since his first adventure in *Pipe Dream*, way back in 1981. He has been seen on stage in a variety of shows. He has won awards in both Directing and Set Design. He is an honorary lifetime member and multiple Harlequin Award recipient.

Board of **DIRECTORS** and Theatre **MANAGEMENT**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President ..... **Dana Marley-Kolb**  
Vice President ..... **Elena Mills**  
Secretary ..... **Eve Kiefer**  
Business Director ..... **Toni Thompson**  
Facilities Director ..... **Joe Krause**  
Media Director ..... **Ritchie Filippi**  
Treasurer ..... **Deidre Parmenter**

**THEATRE MANAGEMENT**

Box Office Manager ..... **Sarah Ely**  
Box Office Assistant ..... **Jess Filippi**  
House Mgr. Coordinator ..... **Elena Mills**  
House Managers ..... **Ken Endress,**  
..... **Mike Mills, Bridget van Gelder,**  
..... **Danielle Romo, Penny Krevenas,**  
..... **Dana Marley-Kolb, Erin Fagundes,**  
..... **Christine Evangelista, Beth Eslick,**  
..... **Dona Pugh, Amie Smith, Elena Mills**  
..... **Michele Waggoner, Jeremy Richter**  
Front-of-House Coordinator. **Eve Kiefer**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Exec. Director ..... **Rick Steinberg**  
Exec. Producer ..... **Beth Eslick**  
Exec. Tech. Director ..... **Jim Diderrich**



Director Emeritus.....**Dick Johnson**

Snack Bar Coordinator ..... **Jim Bukowski**  
Legal Advisor ..... **Jason Kirkpatrick**  
Costume Custodian ..... **Beth Eslick**  
Furniture Custodian ..... **Rick Steinberg**  
Sound Maintenance Master .. **Joe Krause**  
Props Custodian..... **John Eslick**  
Graphic Designer ..... **John Eslick**  
Pre-Show VO..... **John Eslick**  
Wig Custodian ..... **Haley Marie**  
Key Master ..... **Jim Diderrich**  
Theatre Ghost ..... **Albert**

**NEXT ON THE BOARDS**

**THE BOOK OF WILL**  
A HISTORICAL DRAMATIC COMEDY  
by Lauren Gunderson  
**Jun 6 - 28, 2025**  
Fri & Sat at 8:00pm • Sun at 2:00pm  
Thu Jun 12 at 8:00pm • Sat Jun 21 & 28 at 2:00pm

**CONEJO PLAYERS THEATRE**  
**Youth IMPROV Team**  
ESTABLISHED 2024  
**Jun 29, 2025**  
6:00pm