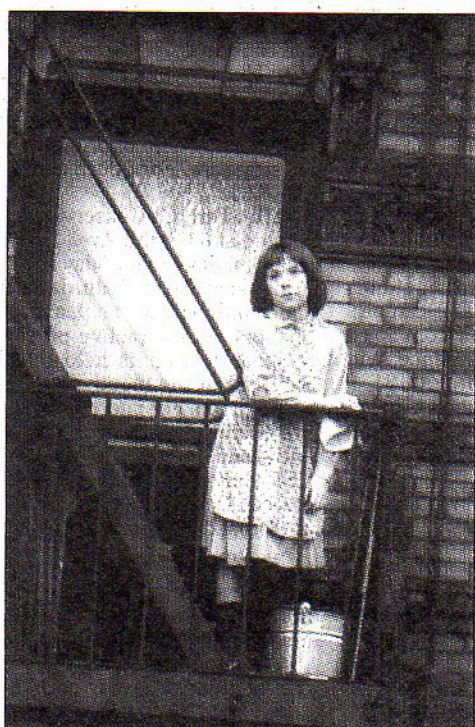


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'Annie' Comes to Tarrytown



'Annie'

The Random Farms Kids Theater will be staging "Annie" Aug. 1 through 10 at The Performing Arts Center at Purchase College, Anderson Hill Road in Purchase. Performances are Fridays at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Saturdays at 3 and 7 p.m.; and Sundays at 1 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults; \$13 for children; and \$8 for groups of 20 or more. For information or to make reservations, call 251-6200.

Children love to see the tenacious, spirited Annie belt out, "The sun'll come out tomorrow." This year, **Random Farms Kids Theater (RFKT)** will delight audiences with their production of *Annie* at the Tarrytown Music Hall, August 2-5.

Anya Wallach, director, producer and founder of Random Farms, shares Annie's charisma, spunk, and determination. At age 10, Wallach started acting, and at age 16, formed her own company with 13 children who responded to a flyer she put in her neighbors' mailboxes. Her directing career began in her parents' basement and the group performed at the neighborhood clubhouse in the Random Farms section of Chappaqua.

Seven years later, Random Farms has moved from small venues in public libraries and schools to larger ones — this year the Tarrytown Music Hall. Along with the venues, the productions have become larger and more impressive. *Annie* boasts a live orchestra and a cast of professional adult Broadway actors, plus a group of up-and-coming child performers.

Random Farms has acquired a reputation for being a quality children's theater company, and for offering a stepping stone for children who want to learn the craft. Some Random Farms alumni have gone on to roles on Broadway, in musicals including *Annie Get Your Gun* and *Les Miserables*.

Yet many return every summer to Random Farms simply because they enjoy it.

Sarah Fenno, who shares the title role of Annie in this year's production, explains what makes Random Farms a success: "Even though you don't always get a big part, you feel like the play couldn't go on without you." Fenno, who played minor parts in two other Random Farms productions before winning the title role this summer, enjoyed her roles in the chorus as well. "Anya treats everybody one by one," she says. "Everybody gets a costume and a line. She makes you feel special."

"When you make someone feel important, they feel better about themselves and they perform better," explains Wallach, who attributes her directing philosophy to her own acting experiences along with her background in theater education at New York University. Wallach tries to uncover each child's talent and use it to enhance the production. "Almost all kids have a talent — maybe a cartwheel or a funny voice — and if I can put it in the show, it makes it more interesting."

Wallach believes stage presence isn't something you teach. "You learn by doing," she says. "That's why I bring in professional adult actors to do roles alongside the kids. The kids watch how these actors behave and begin to pick up on the nuances of performing."

This year Random Farms is expanding from a summer to a year-round program. For more information about auditions, productions and workshops, call (212) 217-6134 or visit www.rfkt.org.

Annie will be performed at the Tarrytown Music Hall, 13 Main Street, August 2-5. Performances are Friday at 11am and 7pm; Saturday at 3pm and 7pm; Sunday at 1pm; and Monday at 11am. Tickets are \$15; group rates are available. Call the box office for tickets at (914) 682-3707, ext. 10.



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