

THE PREMIERE PLAYHOUSE
PRESENTS

Willy Russell's

EDUCATING RITA

*A Passion
Project*



**Salsbury Science Center @
University of Sioux Falls**

April 24 - 27, 2025

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April 24 - 27, 2025



Presents

Willy Russell's **EDUCATING RITA**

Production Team

Stage Director & Production Designer: Mo Hurley

Stage Manager & Assistant Director: Kevin Wintering

Social Hour & Silent Auction Coordinator: Amber Sumner

Producer & Site Coordinator: Oliver Mayes

Production Design Coordination by The Premiere Playhouse Staff

The Premiere Playhouse Staff

Managing Artistic Director: Oliver Mayes

Production & Education Manager: Alex Newcomb Weiland

Facilities & Scene Shop Foreman: Pierce Humke

Administrative Finance Supervisor: Amber Sumner

Production & Education Coordinator: Abby Kustak

Costume Shop Manager & Development Associate: Brittney Lewis

Scenic & Technical Supervisor: Jill Clark

Web & Media Developer: Chris Berke

Board of Directors

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Kent Hartsuiker, Pedro Assis, Casey Kustak

WARNINGS

Please be aware that this production contains the use of adult humor/themes and some dated terms.

THE PREMIERE PLAYHOUSE

*would like to take this opportunity to
express our extreme gratitude to*



UNIVERSITY OF **SIoux FALLS**



**Erica & Todd
Stahl**

for sponsoring our production of

Willy Russell's

**EDUCATING
RITA**

A Note From The Managing Artistic Director



Welcome to Educating Rita – a story that continues to resonate with timeless questions about self-discovery, education, and transformation. Set in an open tutor room of the United Kingdom, this intimate two-person play finds a fitting home in this dynamic lecture hall within the University of Sioux Falls' Salsbury Science Center, blurring the lines between classroom and stage.

This production is part of our "Passion Project" series: a space for experimental theatre performances that speak directly from the heart. Community members pitch their ideas through a multi-step submission process and we select the most visionary of projects – this year being Mo Hurley's production you are about to witness. These performances allow us to take creative risks while building community, and today, you are part of that. Your presence supports both this storytelling and the broader mission of our non-profit theatre.

Thank you for joining us for an evening of thought-provoking performance, meaningful conversation, and a little indulgence during our pre-show social hour. Enjoy the show!

Oliver Mayes

Managing Artistic Director

Director's Note



No one can take your education away from you. Early in her tutoring sessions with Frank, Rita says of her unsupportive husband, "He can burn me books and me papers, but if it's all in me head, he can't touch it." This is true of traditional education, but it also applies to self-knowledge and personal growth. Any effort you make to better yourself – or space you create for others to do the same – is worthwhile. Nothing is wasted or lost.

"Educating Rita" tells a story of mutual affection and mutual learning. In Frank and Rita's lessons, education is as much about unlearning limiting beliefs and resisting resignation as it is about William Blake's poetry or the tragic ambition of Macbeth. Are you living a life of meaning? If not, what are you willing to risk to start over? You don't need anyone's permission to change course or pursue something new and challenging, but I hope this story encourages you in that direction.

Thank you for your support and attendance. Enjoy the show!

Mo Hurley

Stage Director



Meet The Cast



Macie Lupica / *Rita*

Macie has been performing in Sioux Falls and surrounding areas since 2018. Some of her favorite roles have been as Annelle in *Steel Magnolias* (SECT), Rachel Corrie in *My Name is Rachel Corrie* (Storytellers Anonymous), Jamie in *American Hero* (MCAP) and Jerrie Cobb in *They Promised Her the Moon* (MCAP). It has been an honor to help bring Mo's passion project to life, and Macie is grateful to have been trusted with that responsibility.



Mike Richards / *Frank*

Mike is thrilled you are here and excited to be a part of the fantastic group bringing Mo's Passion Project to you! He is enormously appreciative of everyone who supports him! Most of all, he wants you to know you are loved and hopes you can help spread kindness through the world. For as E.M. Forster wrote: "Kindness, more kindness, and even after that more kindness. I assure you it is the only hope."



Production Team

Kevin Wintering / *Stage Manager, Assistant Director*

Kevin loves a good Passion Project and *Educating Rita* is a play that deserves to be in that category! You've seen Kevin in many roles at the Playhouse. He's excited to be on both the directing and stage management team for this wonderful show. Rita and Frank have a truly unique relationship that Kevin hopes we can all learn from. 'Thank you, Elizabeth. Coming home to you is better than any night in the pub.'

Mo Hurley / *Stage Director & Production Designer*

Mo is excited to direct TPP's second Passion Project production. Previous experience with The Premiere Playhouse includes writing *The Theater at Night*, directing *Annie Jr.*, and performing in shows such as *The Glass Menagerie* (Laura Wingfield) and *The 39 Steps* (Clown #2). Mo is grateful to collaborate with such a talented and creative cast and team to share this story.

In Loving Memory



This production is lovingly dedicated to the memory of **Phil Kappen**, whose light, laughter, and legacy will forever echo on our stages and in our hearts.

For decades, Phil brought stories to life in our community – moving us to tears, making us laugh until we cried, and reminding us of the power of live theatre to unite, inspire, and transform. Whether inhabiting a role of great depth or great humor, he did so with authenticity, generosity, and a love for the craft that lifted everyone around him.

Beyond the stage, Phil was a mentor, a collaborator, a dear friend, and a steadfast supporter of the arts in our community. His presence touched countless lives, and the impact of his work will resonate for generations to come.

We honor his memory not only with this performance, but with our continued commitment to the magic and meaning of theatre – a passion he so deeply embodied.

Thank you, Phil, for everything. You are deeply missed, and forever celebrated.

- The Premiere Playhouse

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Events in Downtown Sioux Falls offer travelers an unforgettable experience, blending local charm with a lively, inclusive atmosphere. From bustling art walks and farmers markets to seasonal celebrations, the city's events showcase the best of its culture, creativity, and community spirit. With live music, diverse food vendors, and interactive activities, these gatherings provide an authentic glimpse into the heart of Sioux Falls.

