



A guide to the sensory-friendly performance of **Milo the Magnificent**

Estimated Running time: 48 minutes

About the Show

Milo the Magnificent is a live theatrical production performed for an audience. The audience includes boys and girls, moms and dads, and other grown-ups, like grandparents, teachers, family, and friends. All of them have come for the same reason—to enjoy the show!

Both a tribute to and parody of magic stage shows, *Milo the Magnificent* is a story told using puppets. The puppets are made to move and vocalize by specially trained actors called puppeteers. The two puppeteers for this show perform the puppets and move props to create the illusion of magic. They will introduce themselves before the play starts to show you how the various types of puppets work.

The Story

Milo the Magnificent is a magician who performs his act for us. He is assisted by an adorable mouse, a rabbit with an attitude problem and numerous props that do magical things. Milo does not speak. Instead, he uses body language and a set of facial expressions to communicate. Milo performs tricks great and small, often with comically unintended results. While he would like to think he's in control, his bunny and even his props have different ideas.

The Production

A live theatre performance usually has special lighting, sound effects, music, sets, costumes, and props that help tell the story. Here are a few examples of stagecraft you might want to note in advance. Milo is a body puppet, worn by the puppeteer. The puppeteer's hands and feet become part of Milo. His head is a cartoon outline with a face that can be flipped to display different expressions. The puppeteers are in all black to blend into the background, almost like they're invisible, so that it looks like the puppets, balls and other objects are moving on their own. Most of the stage is dark to help hide the performers. Because he doesn't speak, instead of shouting "Ta-da!" Milo loudly rings a bell with his foot to indicate the end of a trick. He plays music from records throughout most of the show of the perky, retro, background-music variety.

Other Things to Note

As a story of magic that occasionally goes wrong, some of the results might be shocking, but remember it's all an illusion! The ball Milo makes appear, teleport, and get bigger and smaller has a mind of its own, floating away at will. The rabbit is cute but is also aggressive. The rabbit runs away, bites Milo, and at one point steals his magic wand, causing Milo to shrink down to a mini-Milo. The sweet brave mouse reluctantly agrees to be shot from a cannon and launched in a rocket. Things don't go as planned with one classic magic trick, and the mouse is cut in half! The mouse is still able to wander around in two pieces until he can be rejoined, incorrectly at first. The mouse's rocket ship becomes lodged in Milo's eye. Milo performs shadow puppets that become more and more real, eventually moving on their own. At the end of the performance, Milo teleports his hand from a box, across the stage to another box, seemingly detached. Eventually an entire arm appears from the box that turns out to be Milo's, even though Milo still has both his arms! While the disembodied arm is playful at first, it becomes frustrated with card tricks, walks on its fingers like a spider, and angrily grabs Milo by the neck, leaving room for an unlikely hero to come to his aid.

The Experience

In most theaters, the audience sits quietly in the dark, sometimes right next to someone, and they usually stay seated. While they may clap or laugh, they usually don't talk except in whispers. This is nice because it doesn't interfere with the other audience members or the performers. For this performance, there will be some extra sitting space for wiggle room, and if audience members want to make sounds, get up and walk around, or to go to a quiet place outside the theater, that's okay. Fidget toys, headphones, and sunglasses are available for anyone who would like them. The house lights won't dim completely so it won't be totally dark in the audience during the show. Although not usually the case, for this performance eating a snack quietly is allowed for people who've brought them. If you need anything to make your time in the theater more comfortable, just ask a staff member wearing a Center for Puppetry Arts badge for help.

