

# Thalian Association Children's Theater

2014-2015 SEASON

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## Teacher Resource Guide and Lesson Plan Activities



Featuring general information about our production along with some creative activities to help you make connections to your classroom curriculum before and after the show.

The production and accompanying activities address **North Carolina Essential Standards in Theatre Arts**, Goal A.1: Analyze literary texts & performances. Look for this symbol for other curriculum connections.



### Free Tickets for Teachers!

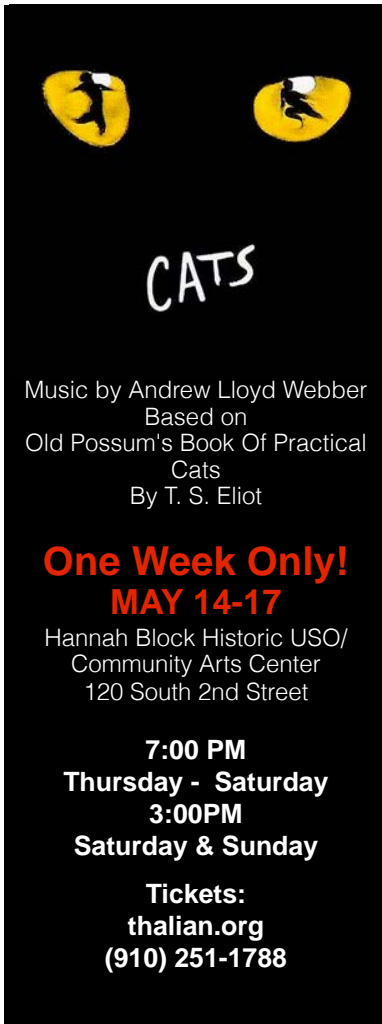
Teachers are welcome to attend our 7:00 PM Wednesday, May 13th preview performance. Additional tickets may be purchased for \$6.00 per person. Reservations are required. Contact Thalian Association Artistic Director: David T. Loudermilk (davidtloudermilk@thalian.org) for more information.

### About the Musical

Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Cats*, based on the universally popular poetry of T.S. Eliot, tells the story, through song and dance, of the annual gathering of Jellicle cats at which time one special cat is selected to ascend to the Heaviside layer. A true musical theatre phenomenon, opened in London (1981) and became the longest-running musical in that city's history, running for 21 years. On Broadway, *Cats* ran for 18 years (7,485 performances). At that time it was the longest-running musical in Broadway history; a record only surpassed by *The Phantom Of The Opera* - also by Andrew Lloyd Webber - which celebrated its 10,000th performance on Broadway February 11, 2012. *Cats* has been performed around the world many times and has been translated into more than twenty languages.

### Trivia

*Cats* has been the largest single generator of theatrical jobs in Broadway history and has had a total economic impact of \$3.12 billion on the city of New York, most of it through foreign tourism, and more than \$195 million in state and local taxes. (The economic impact of The World Series in 1996, generated \$34 million) The original New York cast album has sold more than two million copies. During the show's run on Broadway, *Cats* used more than 1.8 million pounds of dry ice to create fog onstage and 3,247 pounds of yak hair for wigs (that outweighs a Volkswagen Beetle. The song "Memory," has been recorded 180 times by different artists around the world and was a last minute creation for the show. *Cats* has employed over 284 actors, 19 of whom have died. Marlene Danielle was with the show for its entire Broadway run.



Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber  
Based on  
Old Possum's Book Of Practical  
Cats  
By T. S. Eliot

**One Week Only!**  
**MAY 14-17**

Hannah Block Historic USO/  
Community Arts Center  
120 South 2nd Street

**7:00 PM**  
**Thursday - Saturday**  
**3:00PM**  
**Saturday & Sunday**

**Tickets:**  
**thalian.org**  
**(910) 251-1788**

## About Thalian Association & Thalian Association Children's Theater

Thalian Association was founded in 1788, to provide arts education & bring the excitement of the performing arts to Wilmington, North Carolina & produces five major productions annually on the Main Stage at historic Thalian Hall. In fact, Thalian Hall was proudly named for our organization in 1858. Our mission is to present quality live theater that illuminates the human experience for the citizens of Wilmington, New Hanover County and beyond. We teach life skills through theater education and provide an outlet for artists and technicians to develop and exercise their crafts. Established over 34 years ago Thalian Association Children's Theater (TACT) is an extension of Thalian Association Community Theater non-profit organization & is dedicated to the enrichment of arts education for our community's youth. We offer academy classes (in drama, voice, playwriting, story telling & theatrical makeup) that are aligned with the National Standards for Arts Education. Through generous support from: PPD, Cape Fear Rotary, Wilmington East Rotary (an affiliate of the North Carolina Community Foundation), Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, Landfall Foundation, and the Dan Cameron Family Foundation, we provide Community Outreach Scholarship Classes to over 150 at risk students, every week. We want to turn out great theater artists as well as great doctors, lawyers, teachers and bankers. Thalian Children's Theater is about developing collaborative & thoughtful members of our community.

## About Thomas Stearns Eliot....



T. S. Eliot was born in America, in 1888, but became a British citizen in 1927 after twelve years of living in the United Kingdom. His writing would have been influenced by the different cultures he grew up with, the long years he spent studying at different universities & the political and social changes he experienced, including the First World War.

Eliot wrote *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* during the late 1930's and it was published in October 1939, just after the outbreak of the Second World War. He is widely regarded as

one of our greatest writers, while mostly known for his poetry, he also wrote plays and a range of literary and social criticism. He received many honors including the Nobel Prize for Literature and a posthumous Tony Award for CATS (1983).

Eliot had a lifelong affection for cats, often sending letters and poems about his own cat to his godson, Tom Faber and making up unusual or outlandish names for his friend's cats. For that reason, Possum was Eliot's alias amongst his friends, which is the reason his book was titled, *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*.

Most of the poems were written between 1936 and 1938. Many of the cats were modeled on other literary figures (Macavity is styled on Moriarty, the infamous villain who challenged Sherlock Holmes and Skimbleshanks on a work by Rudyard Kipling – The Long Trail) and some poems Eliot wrote with music in mind (The Marching Song of the Pollicle Dogs was written to the tune of 'The Elliots of Minto').

*Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* was first published in October 1939, with illustrations by Eliot himself on the cover, at 3 shillings and sixpence a copy. Today they are recognized as classics, and have been translated into many other languages. Macavity, the mystery cat was selected as number 66 in a BBC poll of the Nation's favorite poem in 1995, and the popularity of the musical CATS has sustained the worldwide interest in the original poems.

Eliot was writing of cats during a time when cats were owned to be useful – to keep down mice – as much as pets. A time when a different class system existed and when the pace of life was very different to the early 21st Century. His cat poems were mainly set in London, but one that we would not recognize, a London of theatre, gentlemen's clubs and public houses, telling of a bygone age with nostalgia and fondness. Gus the theatre cat mentions Henry Irving, a great actor in the Victorian era, Skimbleshanks travels on steam trains and Mungojerrie and Rumpelteaser live in a house with a cook and other servants to attend to their owners.

## About Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber....



Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber, born March 22, 1948, is British composer of the hit musicals *Cats*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Evita*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat*, *Sunset Boulevard*, to name a few. Over the years he has collected a variety of honors, including a knighthood in 1992 & became a lord in 1996. He was inducted into the American Songwriters' Hall of Fame and given the Praemium Imperiale Award for Music in 1995, followed by a peerage from Queen Elizabeth II for services to Music, seven

Tony Awards, three Grammy Awards, an Academy Award, fourteen Ivor Novello Awards, seven Olivier Awards, a Golden Globe Award, and the Kennedy Center Honors in 2006. He has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, is an inductee into the Songwriter's Hall of Fame and is a fellow of the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors. Several of his songs have been widely recorded and were hits outside of their parent musicals, notably "The Music of the Night" from *The Phantom of the Opera*, "I Don't Know How to Love Him" from *Jesus Christ Superstar*, "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina" and "You Must Love Me" from *Evita*, "Any Dream Will Do" from *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and "Memory" from *Cats*.

His company, the Really Useful Group, is one of the largest theatre operators in London. Producers in several parts of the UK have staged productions, including national tours, of the Lloyd Webber musicals under license from the Really Useful Group. Lloyd Webber is also the president of the Arts Educational Schools London, a prestigious performing arts school located in Chiswick, West London.

His hard work and success has made him one of the 100 richest individuals in Great Britain, with his wealth exceeding the \$1 billion mark. He currently owns six London theaters, including the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane and the London Palladium, and the production company Really Useful Group, one of the largest in London. He also founded the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation to "promote the arts, culture and heritage for the public benefit."

## The Setting:

An abandoned theater

## The Characters:

**Grizabella:** The former Glamour Cat who has lost her sparkle and now only wants to be accepted. Grizabella left the tribe when she was younger to see the world for herself; she has experienced the harshness of the world and is a pariah in the cats' society.

**Munkustrap:** A large, grey tabby tomcat is a guide and protector of the other cats and acts the narrator, helping tell the story. He is Old Deuteronomy's second-in-command.

**Bustopher Jones:** A fat cat, a "twenty-five pounder." Dresses in a snappy tuxedo and spats. Respected by all, as the upper class "St. James's Street Cat" likes nothing more than to eat and be seen in all the best places.

**Old Deuteronomy:** A very old, wise and dignified cat, the leader of the Jellicle tribe. He is loved and respected by all of the cats and decides who journeys up to the Heavyside Layer.

**Mungojerrie & Rumpelteazer:** A pair of notoriously naughty cat-burglars, always up to mischief and tricks, who look so much alike, their family never knows who to blame.

**Jennyanydots:** The old Gumbie tabby cat who is more brown and gold in color than most tabby cats, sits and sleeps by day - but at night she organizes the mice and cockroaches.

**Macavity:** The mystery cat. A scruffy ginger cat with crumpled whiskers and dusty fur. He is a wicked criminal who always gets away with it because he is never caught at the scene of the crime.

**Rum Tum Tugger:** A flashy tomcat who is playful and likes to joke, is difficult to satisfy and is adored by the female cats. He is recognizable by his wild mane.

**Asparagus (Gus):** The theatre cat. One of the oldest tribe members. He is thin and shabby with shaky paws but has many tales to tell of his life in the theater.

**Skimbleshanks:** An active ginger cat with white legs and chest and bright green eyes. He works on the railway making sure everything is in order on the mail trains that travel at night.

**Mr. Mistoffelees:** A young black cat who seems to be quiet and shy, but actually has amazing magical powers.

**Victoria:** A pure white kitten gifted in dancing. The "official" Jellicle Ball begins with her solo dance. She is the second cat/kitten to accept Grizabella, but the first to touch her.

**Growtiger & Griddlebone:** Growtiger has an eyepatch & is missing an ear, while Griddlebone is a white Persian cat.

## Listening for Lines

When you attend *Cats*, listen for these lines; how they are delivered (sang/sung) and observe what that tells you about the different characters and how they feel.

*"She is deeply concerned with the ways of the mice. Their behavior's not good and their manners not nice"*  
- Jennyanydots

*"For waiting up there is the Heavyside Layer  
Full of wonders one Jellicle only will see  
And Jellicles ask because Jellicles dare:"*  
- Munkustrap

*"If you touch me, you'll understand what happiness is  
Look a new day has begun."*  
- Grizabella



North Carolina Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: R.L.1.2: Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message and lesson.

## Vocabulary Words

"Jellicle cats are **rolly poly**. We know how to dance a **gavotte** and a **jig**."

"The greatest magicians have something to learn from Mr. Mistoffelees's **conjuring** turn, **presto**."

"At least we all heard that somebody purred which is **incontestable** proof."

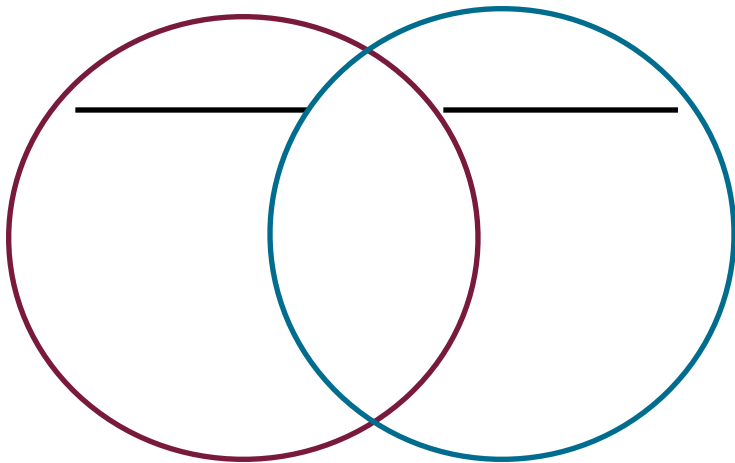


N.C. Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy L.1.4a: Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

*Cats*, is a special kind of musical, performed in non-stop song & dance. The show is continuous music. The entire story is sung, and there is no spoken dialogue without musical accompaniment.

## Compare and Contrast

Research other musicals (Broadway, T.V. & Film) that are a similar in format to compare and contrast. What do they have in common? What makes them different?



Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy RL9.  
Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.

## Act I

Overture

Jellicle Songs for Jellicle Cats

The Naming of the Cats

The Invitation to the Jellicle Ball

The Old Gumbie Cat

The Rum Tum Tugger

Grizabella: The Glamour Cat

Bustopher Jones

Mungojerrie and Rumpelteazer

Old Deuteronomy

Battle of the Pekes and the Pollicles

The Jellicle Ball

Memory

## Act II

The Moments of Happiness

Gus: The Theatre Cat

Skimbleshanks: The Railway Cat

Macavity

Mr. Mistoffelees

Journey to the Heaviside Layer

The Addressing of Cats



'Memory', one of the show's classic songs, became an instant worldwide hit in 1981

- Discuss the reasons certain songs become hits; analyze what it is about "Memory" that made it so popular?
- Select currently popular songs to research and analyze their success.
- Using research, list other pop songs now and in recent years that were taken from stage and film musicals?



**N.C. Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy SL.2:** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. **North Carolina Essential Standards, Information and Technology Standards 2.IT.1.1:** Use a variety of technology tools to gather data and information.

In the original Broadway show of *Cats*, the fur embellishing the heads and tails of the costumes, isn't a relation to the cat family. All fur incorporated into Cats' unique costumes and wigs is Yak hair. (except Grizabella's, which was human hair) No human or synthetic hair could withstand the feline frenzy of *Cats*, but Yak hair is coarse and durable, impervious to water and perspiration, and springs back when crushed.

A bovine, like a cow or ox, the Yak is found primarily in China where it is used in the mountains as a pack animal. Like sheep, the Yak is sheared; its treated and bleached hair is available through a New York importer.

**Research the meanings of the following:**

**Bovine**

**Undercoat**

**Wild golden Yak**

**Piebald**

**Leucism**

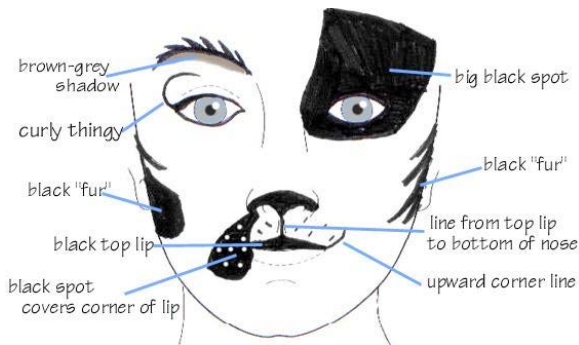


# Becoming a Cat!

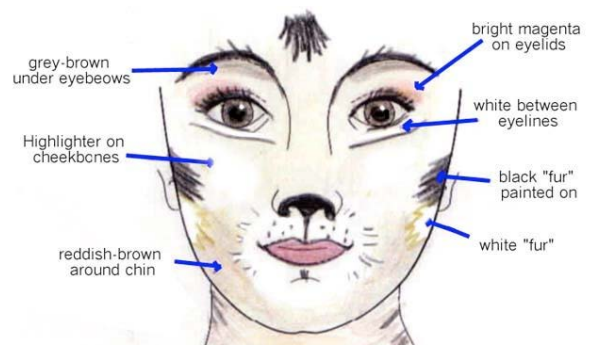
How does makeup in the show help each actor create his or her own cat character? Describe both the makeup & costumes for various cat characters; how do they help identify each as independent personalities? How does the clothing worn by you, a friend or relative, your teacher, a rock singer reflect and/or help define the wearer?



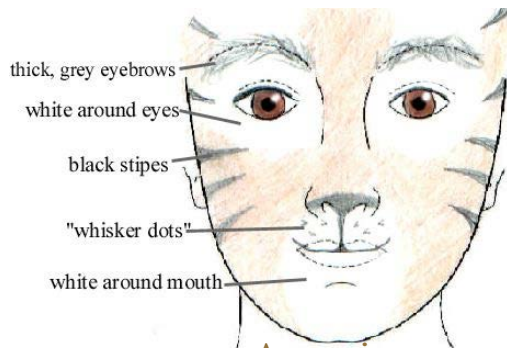
**North Carolina Essential Standards Theater Arts AE.1.2:** Understand how the use of costumes, props, and masks enhance dramatic play.



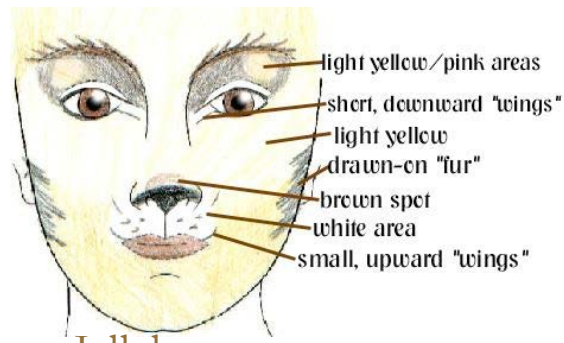
Alonzo



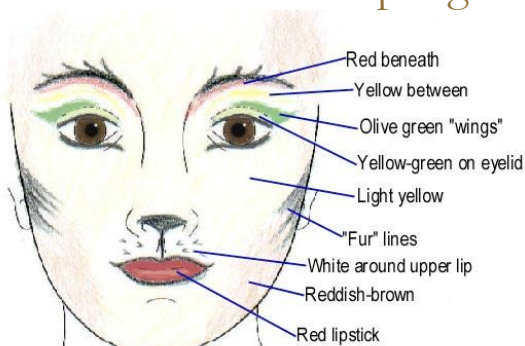
Jemima



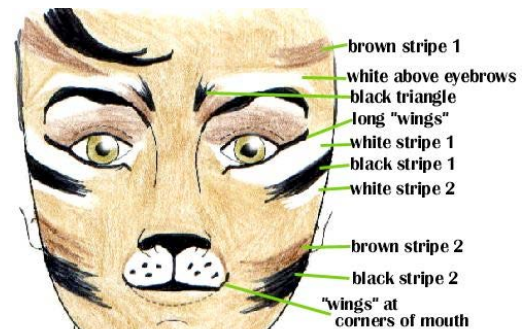
Asparigus



Jellylorum



Bombalurina



Rum Tum Tugger

A cat's colorpoint pattern (where the ears, face, legs and tail are darker than the main body) is affected by temperatures. The pattern is caused by a gene that prevents color in warm parts of the body and allows color in cooler areas, such as face, ears and tail.

## Research Activity

- What is a "gene"?
- How do genes effect how people and animals of the same "family" are similar and different from those from a different "family".
- Give 5 examples where "genes" can effect *your* personal health, due to the health of someone in your family.



**North Carolina Essential Standards Health Education 5.NPA.3:** Understand the benefits of nutrition and fitness to disease prevention.

## Cat Facts

- The cat's nose has a unique pattern, just like a finger print.
- Cats "meow" often to humans, but hardly ever to other cats.
- An average adult cat has an average of 30 teeth.
- On average, cats spend 2/3 of every day sleeping. That means a nine-year-old cat has been awake for only three years of its life.
- Cats spend nearly 1/3 of their waking hours cleaning themselves.
- A cat can't climb head first down a tree because every claw on a cat's paw points the same way. To get down from a tree, a cat must back down.
- There are more than 500 million domestic cats in the world & approximately 40 recognized breeds.
- Approximately 1/3 of cat owners think their pets are able to read their minds.
- Cats have 32 muscles that control the outer ear (humans have only 6).
- A cat can independently rotate its ears 180 degrees.
- Cats have about 130,000 hairs per square inch.

## Test your Senses Activity

Like many animals, cats rely on their senses to explore their environments. A cat can smell another cat 330 feet away. What is the furthest distance you can identify a particular smell?

- Go outside. On a blank sheet of paper draw a star in the middle of the paper to represent you.
- Close your eyes. Listen & smell the world around you.
- With your eyes closed, make small marks on the paper to describe the sounds you hear, smells you smell and the directions they are coming from. For example, you could draw a swirl to represent a gust of wind through trees or flower to represent something pleasantly fragrant.
- After a few minutes, open your eyes and examine your paper.
- How much could you tell about your surroundings just by "opening your senses"?



**NC Essential Standards Science K.P.1:** Understand the positions & motions of objects & organisms observed in the environment. **K.P.1.2:** Give examples of different ways objects & organisms move.

## Get Creative Activity

Make a cat mask of your favorite cat using recycled materials (cardboard, paper, old socks, etc.)

Masks can be for different uses and sizes. (artwork to hang on the wall, sit on a shelf or to wear as a costume) Take a photo of your artwork and email it to us to enter the "Creative Cat" Competition! 10 winners will be selected & displayed on our Facebook page starting Saturday May 2nd. The entry with the most "likes" by noon May 9th wins two free tickets to our special preview night of *Cats*, on Wednesday May 13th and one free theater arts class for the entire six month Academy semester, 2015-2016.

Email: [davidtloudermilk@thalian.org](mailto:davidtloudermilk@thalian.org)

Deadline for entry is Saturday April 27th

All entries must include: Student's name, age, parent's names, name of school, grade and teacher's name.



**North Carolina Essential Standards in Visual Art: 2.V.2.3:** Create art from real & imaginary sources of inspiration. **3.V.1.2.** Understand that artists use their art to express personal ideas. **4.V.1.2.** Apply personal choices while creating art. **5.V.3.3.:** Create art using the processes of drawing, painting, weaving, printing, stitchery, collage, mixed media, sculpture, ceramics, and current technology. **North Carolina Essential Standards in Social Studies 2.C&G.2.2** Explain why it is important for citizens to participate in their community.

## Name The Famous Cartoon Cats

Using the clues below, identify the famous cartoon cats and their origin. (example: A ginger house cat with a blue collar on his neck. His common catchphrase is "I hate meeces to pieces". Mr Jinks, from *Pixie & Dixie* and Mr Jinks.

A fat, lazy orange tabby, who wants nothing more out of life than to eat and sleep. He enjoys tormenting Odie & consuming lasagna. \_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_

The pet cat of Lady Tremaine, who tries to catch & devour mice. \_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_

A black & white cat, often mistaken for a skunk due to a white stripe of paint across her back. \_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_

Famous for his rivalry with a crafty mouse, this cat also has to deal with Spike the dog. \_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_

A tuxedo cat known for his lisp, brains & determination. \_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_



**N.C. Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy L.1.4a:** Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Study Guide References: MTI, Wikipedia, [ncpublicschools.org](http://ncpublicschools.org), [playbill.com](http://playbill.com), [commoncore.org](http://commoncore.org), Song Writers Hall of Fame, [stlyrics.com](http://stlyrics.com), Chicago Theater, [www.stagesproductions.com](http://www.stagesproductions.com), PBS, Webweaver, Booth Tarkington Theater, Center Place Brandon, St Catherine University Department of Music and Theater, Theater Bam, Disney Wikia, [pophistorydig.com](http://pophistorydig.com), Illustrated Cat Watching, Cat Encyclopedia, Summer Bridge Activities, Write Your Own Storybook, A Cat Owner's Problem Solver, New York Times, Playbill, <http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/articles/pages/6300/Webber-Andrew-Lloyd.html> Webber, Andrew Lloyd - Overview, Personal Life, Career Details, Social and Economic Impact, Chronology: Andrew Lloyd Webber, Coastal Animal Rescue Effort, The Sound Cat, Wilmington, NC.

# Creative Cat Competition!

Make a cat mask of your favorite cat using recycled materials (cardboard, paper, old socks, etc.) Masks can be for different uses and sizes. (artwork to hang on the wall, sit on a shelf or to wear as a costume) Take a photo of your artwork and email it to us to enter the "Creative Cat" Competition! 10 winners will be selected & displayed on our Facebook page starting Saturday May 2nd. The entry with the most "likes" by noon May 9th wins two free tickets to our special preview night of *Cats*, on Wednesday May 13th and one free theater arts class for the entire six month Academy semester, 2015-2016.

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**Mail:** Thalian Association Children's Theater

PO BOX 1111 Wilmington NC 28402

Deadline for Entry Saturday April 27th



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## About My Creative Cat & Artwork

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## About Me:

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Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Signing authorizes to send this letter & art.