



PRESS CONTACT:

Sam Gould (she/her)
President & Executive Producer
Open Door Theater of Acton
(781) 760-0543
sam@opendoortheater.org

OPEN DOOR THEATER TAKES FLIGHT WITH *HONK!* MARCH 20-29

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Acton, MA - February 8, 2026: Open Door Theater of Acton, one of the only integrated and accessible theater companies in the country, will stage the award-winning musical *HONK!* this March. *HONK!**, a musical telling of “The Ugly Duckling” story is a heartwarming celebration of being different that is sure to delight audiences of all ages during its run next month at the Dragonfly Theater at R.J. Grey Jr. High School in Acton, MA.

Ugly looks quite a bit different from his siblings, and others are quick to notice and point this out. Ugly is kind-hearted, awkward and innocent, and his journey of self-discovery is the heart of the show. This messaging supports the mission of Open Door Theater and will resonate with audiences now more than ever. On the surface of the pond, this show appears to be a charming adaptation of the classic children’s fairy tale, but when you dive deeper, you discover profound social commentary disguised in feathers and farmyard whimsy.

“The inclusive messaging of *HONK!* embodies Open Door’s philosophy,” said **Sam Gould, President** of Open Door Theater. “Ugly’s journey mirrors the real experiences of Black and Queer youth, immigrants, the disability community, and anyone marked as ‘other’ who must navigate hostile environments simply to exist. Just like Open Door Theater, this show dares to assert that the default state of community should be inclusion and that “fowl” behavior will no longer be tolerated.”

“*HONK!* is a joyful reminder that being different is something to celebrate. At its heart, it’s about belonging, kindness and learning to see value in what makes us unique,” said **Director Teri Shea**. “Directing *HONK!* at Open Door Theater feels like coming home. When my kids were young, they grew up doing theater at Open Door, in a space where everyone was welcome, and that spirit still defines Open Door today. Being able to return now and share this experience with my adult children and their loved ones makes this production especially meaningful.”

“It’s very healing to my younger self, getting to be part of a production that is so welcoming and uplifting of everyone, no matter what,” said **Raye**. They play the central character, **Ugly**. “Ugly eventually finds a place that celebrates things about him that others had mocked, and I think finding that community is what this show is all about.”

"I have a little 'duckling' of my own," said **Maddie Freeman** who plays Ugly's mother, **Ida**, "so these themes of motherhood are hitting extra hard. Ida is fiercely supportive of her son when the rest of the farm animals bully him. I admire that she doesn't care what others think; she listens to her gut and loves him unconditionally."

Open Door's high-quality productions feature actors who are Deaf, Disabled, Autistic, Neurodiverse, Blind and/or have mobility and cognitive disabilities. Open Door is a recognized leader in Best Practices in Arts Access in New England and was awarded the Most Accessible Cultural Organization in the Commonwealth from the Massachusetts Cultural Council Up Initiative in 2019.

Now in its 46th year, Open Door has provided accessible opportunities for all including underserved audiences and participants to enjoy live theater. All performances are relaxed/sensory friendly and feature ASL interpretation and open captioning. There will be audio-described performances on the second weekend. We are a proud participant in the Card to Culture Program. Discounted tickets for EBT, WIC and ConnectorCare Cardholders. Tickets and accessibility information at www.OpenDoorTheater.org.

BILLING

*“HONK!” A Musical Tale of “The Ugly Duckling” Music by GEORGE STILES Book and Lyrics by ANTHONY DREWE is presented through special arrangement with and authorized materials supplied by Music Theater International (MTI) all authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI (www.MTISHOWS.com).

FEATURED CAST

Raye (Ugly), Maddie Freeman (Ida), Chris Merritt (Cat), Adam Winograd (Drake)

PRODUCTION TEAM

Teri Shea, Director

Jeongweon ‘John’ Lee, Musical Director

Symphony Shea, Choreographer

Lisa Jensen-Fellows, Stage Manager

Sam Gould and Dawn Gomez, Producers

Kristin Johnson, Director of Artistic Sign Language

PHOTOS

Press photos and captions available online [here](#).

PERFORMANCES

- Friday, March 20, 2026 at 7:00 pm / ASL, open captioning, sensory-friendly
- Saturday, March 21, 2026 at 1:00 pm / ASL, open captioning, sensory-friendly
- Sunday, March 22, 2026 at 1:00 pm / ASL, open captioning, sensory-friendly
- Friday, March 27, 2026 at 7:00 pm / ASL, open captioning, sensory-friendly, audio described
- Saturday March 28, 2026 at 1:00 pm / ASL, open captioning, sensory-friendly, audio described
- Sunday, March 29, 2026 at 1:00 pm / ASL, open captioning, sensory-friendly, audio described

LOCATION

Dragonfly Theater, R.J. Grey Jr. High School, 16 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720

TICKETS

Tickets available at www.OpenDoorTheater.org. Discounted tickets for EBT, WIC and ConnectorCare Cardholders. Contact Tickets@opendoortheater.org with questions.

ACCESSIBILITY

All performances are relaxed/sensory friendly and feature ASL interpretation and open captioning. Audio-described performances on the second weekend. All gender/family bathrooms available during performances. Visit <https://www.OpenDoorTheater.org/accessibility> for more information.

SPONSORS

Sponsored in part by the Community Foundation for Metrowest, Astra Foundation, Mass Cultural Council, Middlesex Savings Bank, Main Street Bank, Acton Lions, AB Community Compass and the Local Cultural Councils of Acton-Boxborough, Ayer, Carlisle, Concord, Harvard, Littleton, Stow, Sudbury and Westford.

SHOW POSTER & SOCIAL MEDIA

Links to show flyer: [HONK! Flyer](#) (PDF) and [HONK! Flyer](#) (PNG). Follow Open Door on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).