

"Lookingglass Alice" a Madcap Adventure Great for Kids

return to [Entertainment](#) > [Theater](#)

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Alice is an aerialist, who soars above the audience. Lewis Carroll walks up the wall — yes, he really does. And characters pile out of a picnic basket like Keystone Kops.

Such is the magic of this slightly mad, definitely madcap circus-like version of the classic Lewis Carroll tale about a girl who falls down a rabbit hole and lands in a strange, frantic world where she strives to become a queen but is also in danger of losing her head.

"Lookingglass Alice,"—an outlandish physical comedy choreographed at such speed that you'd like an instant replay—has returned to the [Lookingglass Theatre](#). It is a production recommended for children five and above.

There are just five members in the cast, though it seems like a lot more.

The only person with one role is Alice herself, playing by **Lauren Hirte**, whose lovely child-like face suits the role. Hirte is an amazing acrobat, aerialist, and actress and in this show she is either on the stage or climbing on ropes high above it — without a net!

Other cast members are: **Molly Brennan**, who cavorts about as the Red Queen shouting "Off with her head," and snoozes on cue as the sleepy Dormouse; **Samuel Taylor** as the White Knight on a bicycle and later a unicycle; **Anthony Fleming III** as the Cheshire Cat, menacing in his highway-patrol sunglasses, and **Kevin Douglas** as the Mad Hatter.

Quick-change artists all, they appear as hedgehogs, Tweedledee and Tweedledum, Humpty Dumpty, the caterpillar, played by three actors, and the White Rabbit to name only a few!

The show, a marvel of old-fashioned stagecraft, is directed by **David Catlin**, "Alice" and produced in association with [The Actors Gymnasium](#).

This comic fantasy unfolds without intermission, and a good thing too. The mood is so intense that an intermission would spoil everything. Music was used intermittently to fine effect.

The show runs through September 12, and is presented at the Water Tower Water Works, 821 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago. For information, call (312) 337-0665 or visit www.lookingglasstheatre.org.

Special note: Parking is available for \$25 at Water Tower Place across the street. As you enter the underground garage, a sign indicates a night rate of \$14, but don't be deceived. You have to make a \$10 purchase in a shop at Water Tower Place to qualify for that discount and by the time "Alice" is over all the stores are closed.

Photo by Sean Williams



