



**Family Series: Children of Dharma**

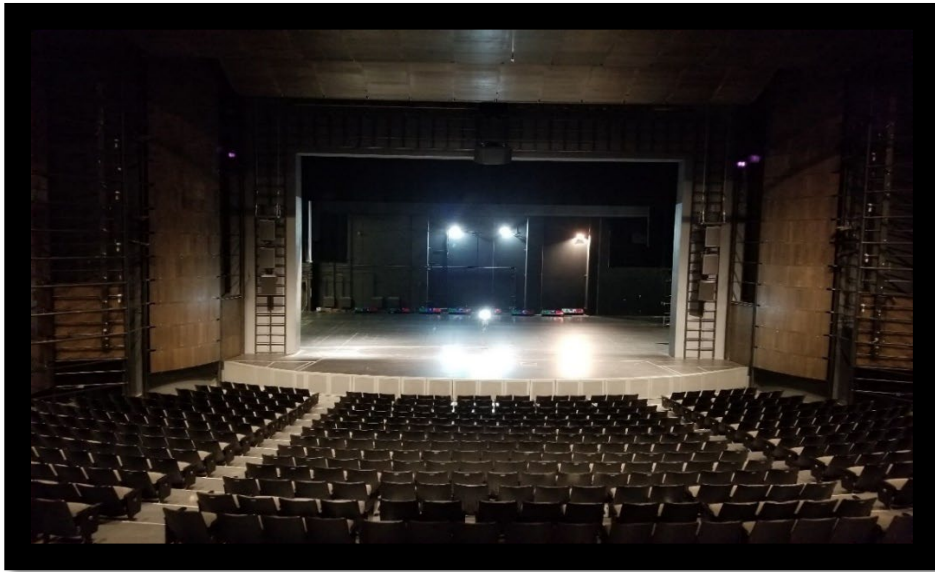
# Welcome Guide

**HARRIS THEATER**  
MILLENNIUM PARK



## Why do we go to the theater?

Watching a performance in a theater is like watching something at home on a TV or computer, except everything is bigger and we are sharing the experience with lots of other people. There is a stage with live performers wearing costumes or playing instruments, or sometimes there are moving images and colors on the stage as well. The sounds in the theater and on the stage are closer and bigger than they would be watching at home. Live performance is a way for different cultures, arts, and experiences to be shared in a community.



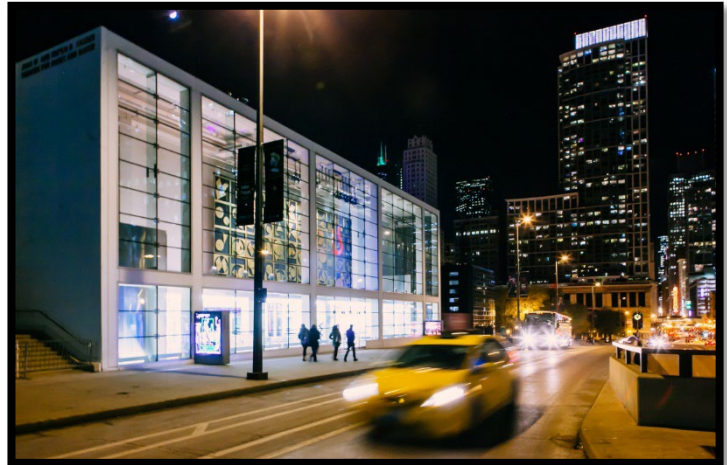
Ragamala Dance Company returns to the Harris Theater *Family Series* with an abbreviated performance of *Children of Dharma*— including additional narration specially created for attendees of all ages. *Children of Dharma* explores life— forever sprouting, transforming, dissolving, and renewing— through three characters from the Hindu epic *The Mahabharata*. These myths reveal the power of ancient cultures to reaffirm humanity’s relationship with nature and the sacred, and provoke a visceral response to crises over the ages, from environmental devastation and oppression to unjust wars.

Centering ancestral wisdom and creativity to contextualize the immigrant experience, Ragamala Dance Company upholds dance as a spiritual practice that can inspire, heal, and transform communities—an important message for all ages.

Through lush visual imagery, an original recorded score, and poetic movement that integrates intimate solos with powerful ensemble choreography for the company’s seven dancers, *Children of Dharma* channels South Indian culture to unearth some of the most enduring questions of conscience facing humanity.

## Arriving at the theater

The performance I am seeing today is at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance. My family, friends, and I will enter the street level lobby entrance on Randolph Street.



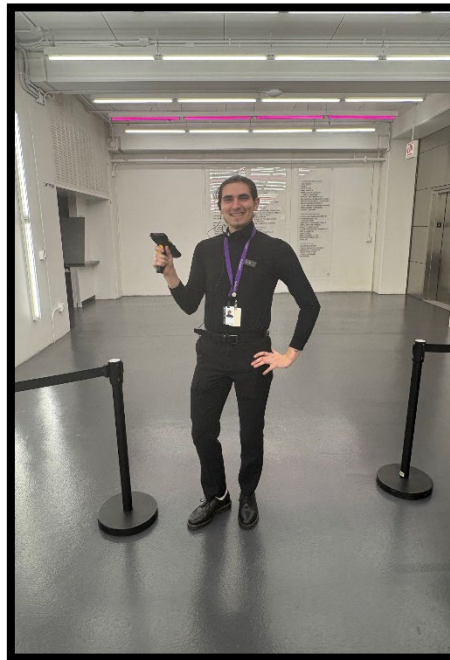
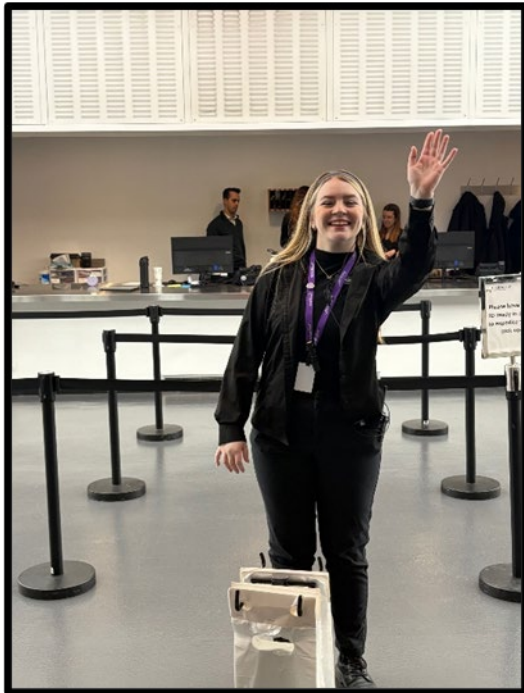
The Millennium Park Garage is attached to the theater. If we park here, we will take the Millennium Park Garage elevator up to Level 7 (Street/Park Level 7 in their Directory) to find the lobby entrance on Upper Randolph Street. If we don't drive, there are other ways to get to the theater like taking a bus, a train or a cab.



## Arrival and Box Office

When I enter the street level lobby at the Upper Randolph entrance. Upon arrival, I can wear my face mask if I want to, but it's not required. I will see the box office (bottom left) – this is where my family, friends, and I can pick up our tickets if we don't have them printed or on our phones. I will see that the Harris staff and volunteers are wearing masks as part of their uniform.

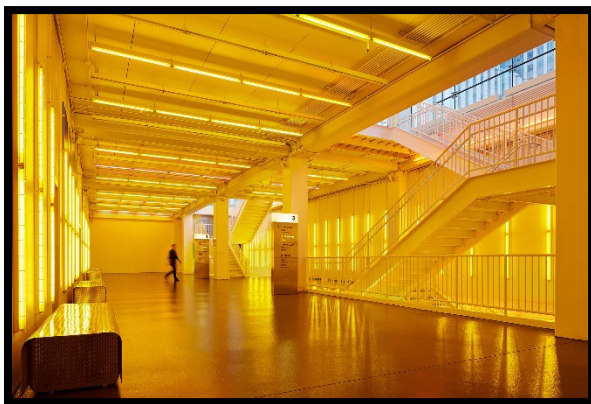
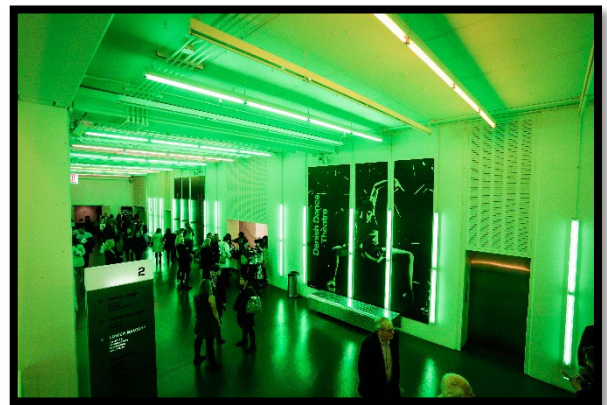
Our tickets will be scanned at this lobby (bottom right) before we can go down to other levels of the theater. The person who scans our ticket will use a ticket scanner. I might hear the ticket scanner make beeping sounds.



## Lobby Levels and Lights

There are 4 lobby levels at the theater and each one has colored lights. Some lobby levels can be quiet, and some are busy. Most lobby levels will have a lot of other people in the space, but I can move to a different lobby if I need a break.

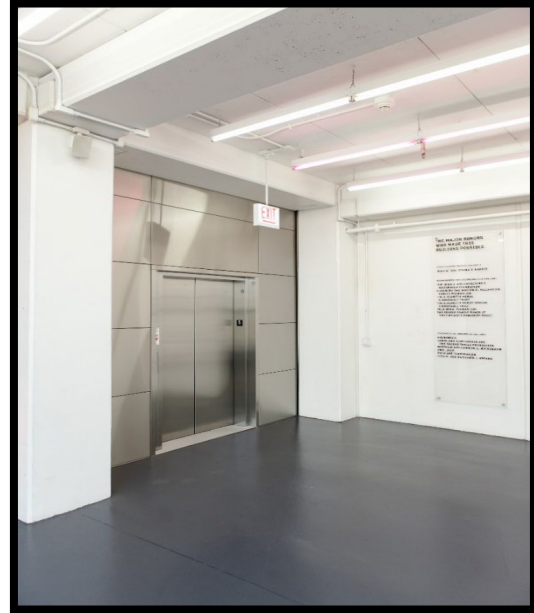
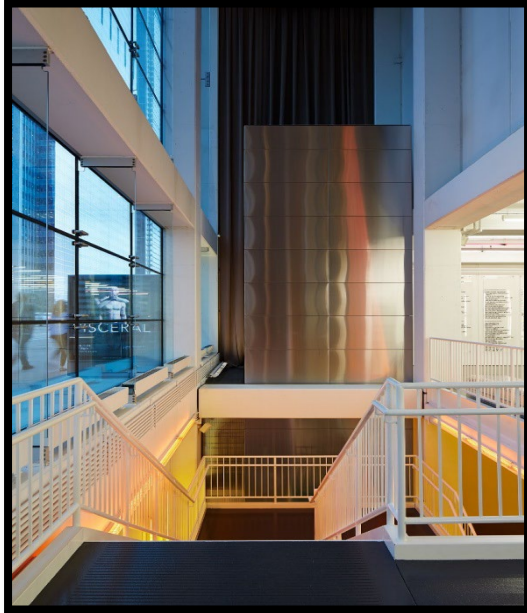
Lobby level 1 has pink and blue lights and is usually louder and busier (top left picture). Lobby level 2 has green lights and is usually quieter (top right picture). Lobby level 3 has orange lights and is usually quieter (bottom left picture). Lobby Level 5 is where I will come in with my family and is usually louder and busier (bottom right picture).



## Getting Around

Once I have my ticket scanned, I can buy a snack or drink at concessions, go to the restroom, or enter the auditorium to find my seat. I may take an elevator (top right) or

stairs (top left) to get there. There are two big sets of stairs that go down to all the lobby levels. There are also four elevators on each lobby level—two large silver ones in the far left and right corners and two smaller silver ones closer to the center of the lobby. If I need help finding my way, I can ask the audience services staff or a volunteer usher. Volunteer ushers will be wearing all black with nametags, and I might see them at the theater doors or inside the theater to help with seating.



If I need to use the restroom, I can find one on levels 1, 2, and 3 of the theater. There are inclusive accessible single stalls located at each level of seating as well.

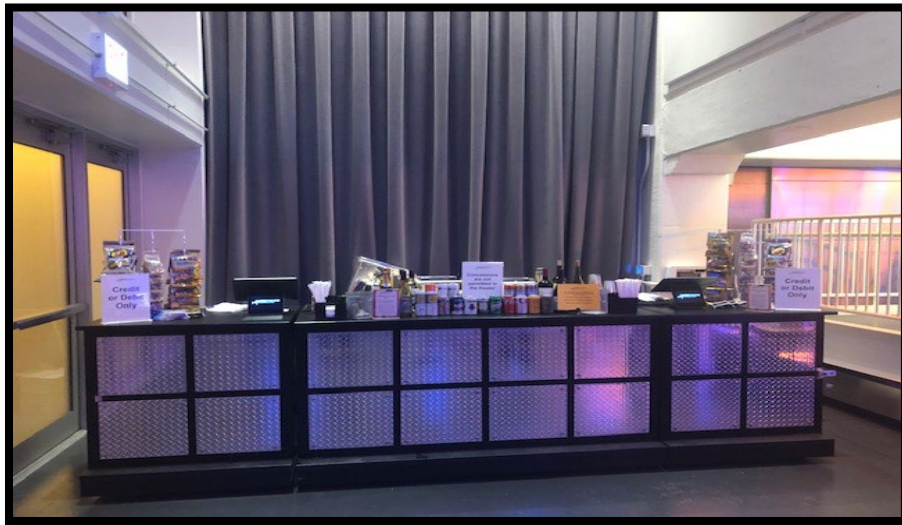


In the lobby and throughout the theater, I will see people in all black outfits with masks, wearing nametags on a purple lanyard— these are the Harris’ audience services staff, and they are here to welcome me and help me find my seat or anything in the building I need, like restrooms or the quiet room. They are all friendly, and I can talk to the staff and ask them questions or say hello, but I don’t have to.



## Concessions

If I am hungry or thirsty, I can visit the Harris Concessions areas on Lobby Level 1. I can even bring things inside the auditorium that I want to drink or eat. If I want to keep my mask on during the performance, it's ok to take it off when eating and drinking.

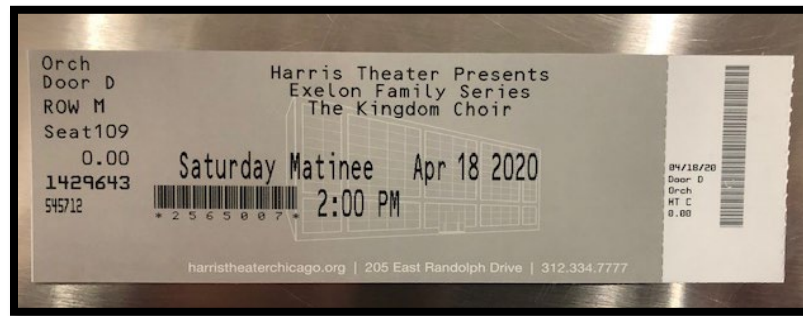


## My Seats

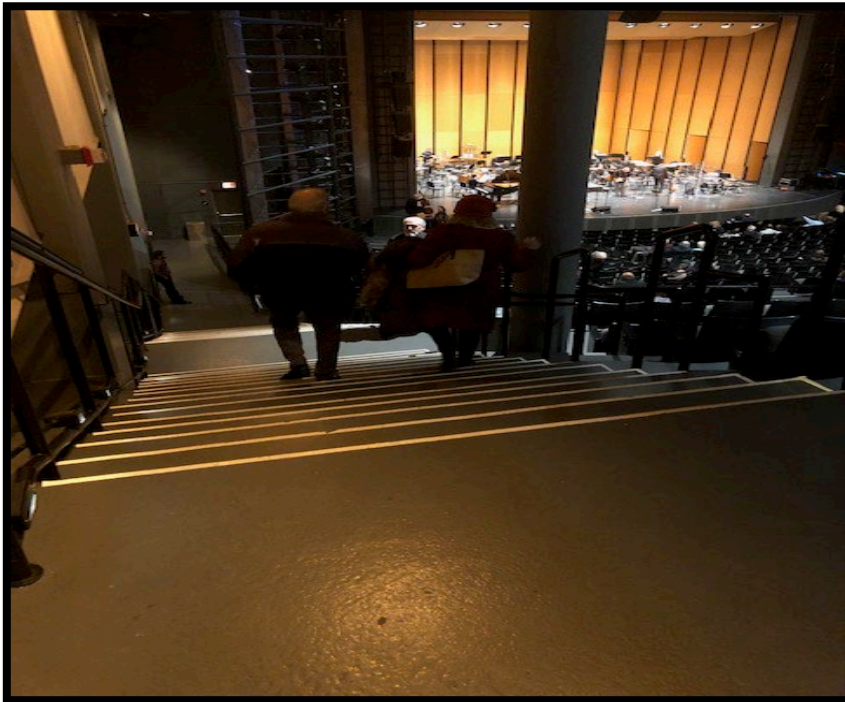
When I enter the auditorium, an usher will look at my ticket and tell me where to sit and give me a program book. The letter on my ticket will show me which row in the theater I should go to. The number on my ticket will show me which seat to sit in my row. This is



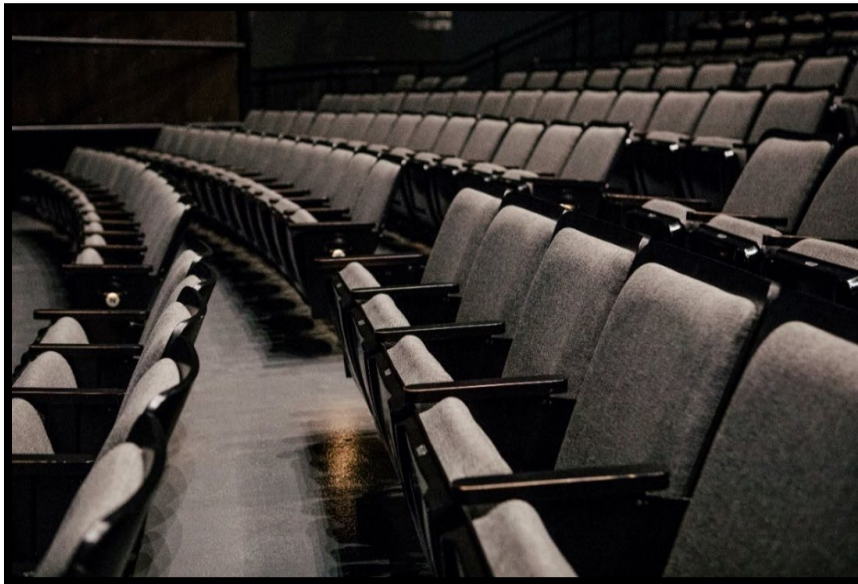
my assigned seat. There will be other ushers and security staff inside the theater who can help me find my seat if I need assistance.



The lights in the auditorium will be turned on when I enter the theater and remain on during the performance. If I'm sitting closer to the front of the stage, or if navigating stairs isn't an option for me, I can take the accessible elevator on Lobby level 1 to the front of the auditorium.



Once I am in my assigned seat, I can sit back and relax, or look at the program book activities.



Many people will come into the theater to find their seats, and some might need to walk by my seats on their way. It's ok if someone walks by me because I know they are also trying to find their assigned seats so they can enjoy the performance!



## The Performance

The lights will dim when the performance is about to begin. I might hear announcements, music, or other people cheering or clapping. I can cheer and clap along with them if I want to.



When the performance begins, I will see the performers and production staff on the stage getting ready to start. The performance might not start exactly at the time printed on my ticket, but that's ok because the theater wants to make sure as many people coming to the event are in their seats before it starts.

The lights and music will change during different parts of the performance. Sometimes there will be lots of performers on stage, and other times there could be few. Sometimes a person on the stage might speak about what is happening in the story. I can clap, dance, move, or react in my own way to the performance!



If I need a break or the performance gets too loud, I can cover my ears, put on my headphones, or ask to go to the Quiet Room on Lobby level 2. If I don't have my own headphones, that's ok. The theater has some that I can borrow.

I might need to take the stairs or elevator to get to the quiet playroom, and there might be a group of people there, or just a few.



Lots of people will clap and cheer at the end of the performance. When the lights above me turn all the way up, I will know the performance is over.



## The End

At the end of the performance, the performers may come out to the stage to take a bow. Lots of people will clap and cheer to show how much they like the performance, and they might stand up at their seats. I can clap, cheer, and stand too if I want.

After the clapping, people will start to exit the theater. I can leave right away or wait until the crowd of people is less. I will walk up the theater stairs to exit into the lobby or can

take the accessible elevator to the lobby. I can go to Level 1 to meet some of the performers or other audience members, or I can visit the quiet playroom on Level 2 before heading home.



I can exit the building on Level 5 to go back out to the street or to the garage.





**Thank you for visiting the Harris Theater!  
We hope you had a wonderful time.**

**Quick tips for exploring this Welcome Guide with your family:**

- Try reading the story in chunks as opposed to all at once
- Re-read this story, placing emphasis on the pictures
- Remind family members about the date of the performance by pointing to the calendar dates and counting down the days
- Bring this story with you to the theater or ask us for a printed copy when you arrive

**aspire**

Thank you to our partners at Aspire Chicago for helping to make today's sensory-friendly program possible.