

# CROW to present "Once Upon A Mattress at FEC April 10-12

"Once Upon A Mattress" was Carol Burnett's star vehicle in the 1960s, and there is very good reason why. The show may re-tell the age-old fairy tale of "The Princess and the Pea," but if you think you know what to expect, you are in for quite a wallop surprise! This classic musical comedy gem is quite possibly the jewel in Mary Rodger's and Marshall Barer's crown. Carried on a wave of beguiling songs, by turns hilarious and raucous, romantic and melodic, this rollicking spin on the familiar classic of royal courtship and comeuppance provides for some side-splitting scenarios. Chances are, you'll never look at fairy tales quite the same way again.

CROW's latest production opens April 10, with shows set for April 11 and 12 on the Florence Events Center's main stage. More than 50 children and young adults have been put through the paces by experienced CROW volunteers, like musical director Jason Wood and assistant musical director Mary Beers.

At the director's helm is Melanie Heard, who has plans for the play's leading lady to make a grand and glorious entrance (backside first) through a window in a castle turret. And that's just a tiny glimpse into the shenanigans audiences can expect in April.

"We are all so thrilled about producing this show...it's one of our favorites," says CROW producer Michael Jacobson. "Last year's production of 'The Little Mermaid Jr.' was

truly wonderful, but this production is going to delight and impress audiences even more."

In addition to an outstanding young cast, which was just selected through a rigorous professional audition process, CROW has assembled the best all-volunteer production team available. Spectacular set pieces have been created by Chris Heard, David Tidball and Crystal Shahan. Karen Mechek and Judy Murphy will once again dazzle with their artistic skill. Margaret McDiarmid has returned to design beautiful stage lighting, and Chris Owens will provide professional soundboard operation. Polly Fleming and Barbie Madden have been sewing costumes like mad in order to creatively clothe the large cast of lords and ladies. Debbie Waiss returned this year to stand guard at the castle doors as stage manager. And many more outstanding volunteers, including Genevieve Meltzer (assistant director and hair/make-up designer) have devoted countless hours to make the show the absolute best it can be for local children — on stage and in the audience.

"There are many unsung heroes who work behind the scenes on our productions," says Heard. "Parent and community volunteers have helped with T-shirt sales, safety team organization, fundraising and prop collection, to name a few. We could not do what we do without these amazing people donating their time and energy."

Tickets for "Once Upon A Mattress" can be obtained by calling the Florence Events Center at 541-997-1994, or visit [www.eventcenter.org](http://www.eventcenter.org). Adults tickets are \$16, and kids' tickets (under age 12) are \$8. More information can be found on CROW's website at [www.crowkids.com](http://www.crowkids.com).

"We hope everyone will mark their calendars and join us in April," says Heard. "Let's just say, a dance number entitled 'The Spanish Panic' will be worth the price of admission."

