

# ONE BOY'S DAY

Conceived, written, and directed by Mikel Rouse

## MARQUEE BIG MIX SERIES

Seeking the extraordinary in the mundane, *One Boy's Day* creates a contemplative space for audiences to consider the past, reflect upon the present, and generate hope for our future. At a time when definitions of community, privacy, and citizenship are becoming increasingly contentious, this deeply poetic work puts children at the center and asks how their lives have changed over the past 70 years, opening up the intimate account of one boy from a largely homogenous, middle-class town to the rich multiplicities of a diverse present-day America.

In 1949, eight social scientists descended upon rural Kansas to engage in a detailed observational study of human behavior. In their quest to document the life of an "ordinary" child, their primary subject became seven-year-old "Raymond Birch," and their resulting 435-page report on one boy's day aimed to describe

"how children actually behave in real-life situations" and offer insight into what makes an "ideal" American community. The study is a meticulous minute-by-minute account of Raymond's every activity—from getting up and eating breakfast to playing with his friends, from studying English and participating in music class to eating dinner and going to bed.

Decades later, composer and director Mikel Rouse—a long-time collaborator with Krannert Center through projects including *Dennis Cleveland*, *The End of Cinematics*, *Gravity Radio*, and *The Demo*—discovered and became fascinated with this study. Along with artistic collaborators Jeff Sugg, Jim Findlay, Christopher Ericson, Matthew Gandolfo, Hideaki Tsutsui, and William Knapp, Rouse created a time-accurate, immersive, multimedia installation and music concert with video, light, sound, and text and architectural environments based on the 1949 research. *One*

*Boy's Day* lasts for 13 hours and 33 minutes—from the time Raymond Birch woke until the time he went to bed. Throughout the duration of this innovative piece, which Krannert Center has helped foster for over three years, audience members are encouraged to come and go as they please, watching the work as a staged performance or moving inside the installation. Live music (string quartet, chorus, and local improv musicians) will combine with live and recorded video capturing teachers and classes onstage for the first time. Orchestrating an "average day" in class will offer the opportunity to reflect on and appreciate the powerful work of teachers while highlighting children and the profound beauty of their contributions.

*Recommended for ages 5 and up.*

**FR APR 30 FROM 7AM TO 8:33PM**  
COLWELL PLAYHOUSE

**FAMILY FUN** **FREE** NO TICKETS  
REQUIRED (DONATIONS ENCOURAGED)

