

**CARL THE COLLECTOR, PBS KIDS’ First Series Centering on an Autistic Main Character, Premieres November 14, 2024**

*New Animated Series Created by ‘New York Times’ Bestselling Illustrator and Author
Zachariah OHora and Produced by Fuzzytown Productions and Spiffy Pictures Aims to Nurture Empathy and Celebrate the Varied Ways that Kids Think*

**Pasadena, CA, July 15, 2024** – Today at the Television Critics Association Press Tour, [**PBS KIDS**](http://www.pbskids.org/)announced the premiere date for [**CARL THE COLLECTOR**](https://pbskids.org/videos/carl-the-collector), a new 2D animated series for children ages 4-8. Created by *New York Times* bestselling illustrator and author Zachariah OHora (“My Cousin Momo”), the series breaks new ground as the first PBS KIDS show to feature central characters on the autism spectrum. Through its relatable stories, characters, and messages, and with a production team that includes neurodiverse writers, production staff, animators, advisors, and voice talent, **CARL THE COLLECTOR** showcases and celebrates our differences and commonalities, and that we all have something unique to offer. The series is produced by Fuzzytown Productions and Spiffy Pictures and will premiere on November 14, 2024, on PBS KIDS in English and Spanish.

“By portraying a close group of neurodivergent and neurotypical friends, **CARL THE COLLECTOR** models how all of us can be helpful, supportive and appreciative of each other’s ways of thinking,” said Sara DeWitt, Senior Vice President and General Manager, PBS KIDS. “We are thrilled to introduce Carl, his friends, and his amazing collections to young audiences and help them build the social skills they will need as they make friends and engage in their communities.”

**CARL THE COLLECTOR** follows the everyday adventures of Carl, a warm-hearted autistic racoon who enjoys collecting things and loves his friends and family in Fuzzytown. Carl pays extraordinarily close attention to detail and comes up with unique ideas that others might not consider. These traits have helped him amass his extensive collections—from autographs and bottle caps to fake mustaches, pet rocks, sweaters, and virtually everything in between—which can come in handy for solving problems around the neighborhood with his friends.

Carl’s friends include Sheldon, an empathetic beaver with a knack for connecting people and soft spot for the underdog. As Carl’s best friend, he is attuned to Carl’s unique logic and ways of looking at the world, sometimes helping him navigate complex social nuances when necessary. Carl’s friend Lotta, a quiet and self-assured fox, is also autistic. She experiences hypersensitivity to loud sounds, powerful smells, and certain food textures, and has exceptional talents in art and music. Other friends include Nico and Arugula, identical twin bunny sisters whose personalities couldn’t be more different, making their quest to define their individual identities extra complicated. And Forrest, a hyperactive and impulsive squirrel with a tree nut allergy, who is always down for an impromptu adventure.

In each episode, Carl and his friends work and play together, and in the process, find out what makes each of them who they are. As a perfectionist, when Carl does something, he wants to do it well. He sometimes struggles with anxiety in new situations and has difficulty when things don’t go according to plan, like in the episode “The Fall,” when Nico trips and falls and Carl freezes up, unsure of how to help. In “The Fake Mustache Collection,” Nico grows frustrated that no one can tell her and Arugula apart until Carl uses his great eye for detail to help address Nico’s concern. Another episode, “Whole Lotta Lotta,” finds Lotta determined to express the fullness of her personality after she is nicknamed “Headphone Girl” by another kid at school, because of the headphones she wears for her sensitivity to loud noises.

“**CARL THE COLLECTOR** spotlights neurodiverse characters while exploring and celebrating the entire spectrum of humanity,” said Creator and Executive Producer, Zachariah OHora. “The world of Fuzzytown is designed to be a place where all viewers will see themselves or someone they know in it. We hope Carl and his friends will encourage empathy and understanding, and ultimately show that everyone benefits when we recognize and embrace our differences.”

"We are so proud of this show and the cast and crew of talented individuals who are bringing Zach’s beautiful world of Fuzzytown and its unique characters and stories to life," said Caroline Bandolik, Supervising Producer and Vice President of Production for Spiffy Pictures. "We are excited for young viewers and their families to meet Carl and his friends."

“As an autistic writer, it’s so exciting for one of my first TV writing gigs to be on a series that highlights part of my lived experience,” said staff writer, Ava X. Rigelhaupt. “There’s a saying, ‘If you’ve met one autistic person, you’ve met just one autistic person,’ which is something this show authentically demonstrates in every episode. It’s a joy writing for this show and working with a team that includes so many talented neurodiverse people. I am hopeful that **CARL THE COLLECTOR** will expand perspectives of autism and neurodiversity, creating a better understanding and further acceptance for future generations.”

The series’ digital content for kids, families, and teachers, launching in tandem with the series, will reinforce its core messages of self-discovery and identity as well as recognizing and encouraging empathy for the many ways people think and behave.

**CARL THE COLLECTOR** was created by Zachariah OHora and is produced byFuzzytown Productions and Spiffy Pictures (DONKEY HODIE, NATURE CAT). The series is animated by Emmy®- and Annie Award-nominated Yowza! Animation (WELCOME TO THE WAYNE, GREEN EGGS AND HAM). Caroline Bandolik (NATURE CAT, DONKEY HODIE) is Supervising Producer. Lisa Whittick (NATURE CAT) of Yowza! Animation is Director. Jesse McMahon (NATURE CAT, CYBERCHASE, MAGIC SCHOOL BUS RIDES AGAIN) is Content Producer. Adam Rudman (NATURE CAT, DONKEY HODIE, SESAME STREET), Emmy®-winning writer and co-founder of Spiffy Pictures, is Head Writer. The team of contributing writers includes Emmy®-nominated television and picture book writer Samantha Berger; advocate, consultant, and actress Ava X. Rigelhaupt; Emmy®-winning writer, director, and puppeteer Joey Mazzarino; and award-winning children’s book authors Kelly DiPucchio, and Bob Shea.

Advisors for the series include Dr. Geraldine Oades-Sese, Ph.D, a licensed psychologist, children’s book author, and former Adjunct Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; Dr. Stephen Shore, an autistic professor of special education at Adelphi University and adjunct professor at New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development; and Deborah Farmer Kris, M.A., educator, author, parenting columnist, and consultant for PBS KIDS for Parents.

**About PBS KIDS**
PBS KIDS believes the world is full of possibilities, and so is every child. As the number one educational media brand for kids, PBS KIDS helps children ages 2-8 learn lessons that last a lifetime. Through media and community-based programs, PBS KIDS wants children to see themselves uniquely reflected and celebrated in lovable, diverse characters who serve as positive role models, and to explore their feelings and discover new adventures along the way. Families can [stream PBS KIDS for free anytime](https://help.pbs.org/support/solutions/12000004780), no subscription required. A large collection of mobile apps and [pbskids.org](http://pbskids.org/) provide accessible content that spark kids’ curiosity. PBS KIDS and local stations across the country support the entire ecosystem in which children learn and grow – including their teachers and caregivers, parents, and community – providing resources accessible anytime and anywhere. For more information, visit [pbs.org/pressroom](http://pbs.org/pressroom), or follow PBS KIDS on [Twitter](http://twitter.com/pbskids), [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/pbskids) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/pbskids).

**About Fuzzytown Productions and Zachariah OHora**
Fuzzytown Productions produces film and TV projects that are a natural and fuzzy outgrowth from the creative mind of *New York Times* bestselling illustrator and author Zachariah OHora. OHora’s award-winning books including *The Today Show*-featured parent trap for cats epic *Niblet & Ralph*; *My Cousin Momo!*; *The Not So Quiet Library;* and *Fuzzy (Inside & Out).* His illustrations have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic* and NPR, as well as campaigns for public libraries, the Southern Poverty Law Center and the National Park Service. OHora also created the Rivian Gear Guard™ character seen in Rivian electric vehicles all over the world over. For more information, visit [www.fuzzy.town](http://www.fuzzy.town/).

**About Spiffy Pictures**
Founded by brothers, David Rudman and Adam Rudman, Spiffy Pictures is a creative development and production company specializing in both animated and live-action puppet-based entertainment for kids and families. Known for its whimsical humor- and music-filled shows, the inventive award-winning Chicago-based company has created, produced, written, and directed series for PBS KIDS, Nickelodeon, Disney, MTV, Comedy Central, Sesame Street and Warner Brothers. Spiffy’s current series include PBS KIDS’ Emmy® Award-nominated and critically-acclaimed *Donkey Hodie*, a co-production with Fred Rogers Productions, and PBS KIDS' Emmy® Award-nominated and Environmental Media Award-winning animated series *Nature Cat.* Past series include Nick Jr.'s Emmy® Award and Prix Jeunesse-nominated *Jack’s Big Music Show;* Disney's Emmy® Award-nominated *Bunnytown;* and Nick Jr.’s *Curious Buddies*. The company's additional credits include Warner Brothers' *Scooby-Doo! Adventures: The Mystery Map* and Nick Worldwide's *Frankie and Frank*.  For more information, visit [www.spiffypictures.com](http://www.spiffypictures.com/).

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