



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (5-18-15)

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **PURRRRRR-FECT FAMILY FUN! STAGES ST. LOUIS PRESENTS DISNEY'S THE ARISTOCATS**

**(ST. LOUIS)** – STAGES St. Louis takes you on a feline adventure in **Disney's *The Aristocats*** this June 3-28 at the Playhouse at Westport Plaza in Maryland Heights. With an unforgettable mix of colorful characters, amusing antics, and swingin' music, this modern version of the familiar Disney classic is just purrrrrr-fect for the entire family.

Walt Disney based the 1970 animated film on a story about a mother cat and her kittens by Tom McGowan and Tom Rowe. The 20<sup>th</sup> animated feature in the Disney Animated Film series, *The Aristocats* marks the final film project Walt Disney himself personally approved and the studio's first animated film fully produced after Disney's death in 1966. The creative team assembled many recognizable actors from previous Disney films as well as current television personalities to voice the charismatic cast of characters, including Eva Gabor (*Green Acres*), Phil Harris (Baloo in *The Jungle Book*), Sterling Holloway (Winnie the Pooh), and French entertainer Maurice Chevalier even came out of retirement to sing the title song. The production gained positive reviews on first release and remains to this day a timeless treasure in the Disney canon.

Disney's delightful tale transports you to Paris where Thomas O'Malley, a smooth-talking tomcat, and his rag-tag bunch of Alley Cats spring to the rescue of cat-napped Duchess and her Aristokittens. What happens next is anyone's guess! With songs like "The Aristocats," "Scales and Arpeggios," and "Ev'rybody Wants to Be a Cat," you'll be clapping your paws and wagging your tail to our hep, jazzy beat!

**David Schmittou** returns to STAGES and to the role of Thomas O'Malley, which he previously played in STAGES' 2010 production of Disney's *The Aristocats*. Other STAGES credits include the 2012 production of *The Sound of Music* and the 2009 production of *The Drowsy Chaperone*. During the past year, Schmittou has performed in many regional productions, including *Side by Side by Sondheim*, *West Side Story*, and *Lend Me A Tenor*.

**April Strelinger** also returns to STAGES, where she was last seen as Merryweather in STAGES' 2014 production of Disney's *Sleeping Beauty*. A familiar face with St. Louis audiences, Strelinger also appeared at The Muny last summer in their productions of *Seussical* and *Hello, Dolly!* Off-Broadway and regional roles include *Best Foot Forward*, *The Last Five Years*, and *Man of La Mancha*.

**-More-**

Rounding out the cast in alphabetical order are **Stephen Barnowski** (Hep Cat/Vichy), **Craig Blake** (Scat Cat/Lafayette), **Michele Burdette Elmore** (Madame/Amelia), **John Flack** (Edgar), **Erik Keiser** (Wacky Cat/Napoleon), **Maria Knasel** (Marie), **Laurie McConnell** (Roquefort/Abigail), **Alex Meuret** (Berlioz), and **Ronan Ryan** (Toulouse).

The creative team for the production includes: **Michael Hamilton** (Direction), **Ellen Isom** (Choreography), **Justin Smolik** (Musical Direction), **James Wolk** (Scenic Design), **Garth Dunbar** (Costume Design), **Matthew F. McCarthy** (Lighting Design), **Stuart M. Elmore** (Orchestral Design).

- *Complete biographical information is listed on STAGES' website at [www.StagesStLouis.org](http://www.StagesStLouis.org)*

Single tickets are on sale now and prices range from \$19 - \$23. Price includes pre-show activities one hour prior to start of the show presented by STAGES' Pre-Show Entertainment Partner, Dave & Buster's. The STAGES Theatre for Young Audiences productions perform at the Playhouse at Westport Plaza located at 635 Westport Plaza, St. Louis, MO 63146. For more information or to purchase tickets call 314-821-2407 or visit [www.StagesStLouis.org](http://www.StagesStLouis.org).

*STAGES St. Louis is the region's foremost not-for-profit company committed to preserving and advancing the art form of Musical Theatre through excellence in performance and education. In 2015, STAGES celebrates its 29<sup>th</sup> year of producing Broadway-quality theatre, presenting 144 performances from May through October to nearly 50,000 patrons, during its mainstage season.*

**STAGES would like to thank Corporate Sponsor Emerson, Educational Sponsor Lindell Bank, Production Sponsor Susan M. Hale, and Outreach Sponsors Sakiyama Family Foundation and Elizabeth Green.**

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*Media Partners: 103.3 KLOU, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, KSDK News Channel 5, and St. Louis Magazine.*

*New York Casting is done by Scott Wojcik and Gayle Seay of Wojcik/Seay Casting.*

*Interviews are available with the cast and/or director based on availability.*

*Production photos are available upon request.*

*Performance Schedule follows on the next page.*

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**Disney's *THE ARISTOCATS***  
The Playhouse at Westport Plaza  
Performance Schedule  
June 3 – June 28, 2015

Wednesday	June 3	11:00 AM
Thursday	June 4	11:00 AM
Friday	June 5	11:00 AM
Saturday	June 6	11:00 AM & 3:00 PM
Sunday	June 7	11:00 AM & 3:00 PM
Wednesday	June 10	11:00 AM
Thursday	June 11	11:00 AM
Friday	June 12	11:00 AM & 7:00 PM
Saturday	June 13	11:00 AM & 3:00 PM
Sunday	June 14	11:00 AM & 3:00 PM
Wednesday	June 17	11:00 AM
Thursday	June 18	11:00 AM
Friday	June 19	11:00 AM
Saturday	June 20	11:00 AM & 3:00 PM
Sunday	June 21	11:00 AM & 3:00 PM
Wednesday	June 24	11:00 AM
Thursday	June 25	11:00 AM
Friday	June 26	11:00 AM & 7:00 PM
Saturday	June 27	11:00 AM & 3:00 PM
Sunday	June 28	11:00 AM & 3:00 PM

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