



NEWS RELEASE

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STAGES' ALWAYS... PATSY CLINE TO CONTINUE AT THE ALABAMA SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

(ST. LOUIS) – Hot off the heels of STAGES St. Louis' record-breaking production of *Always... Patsy Cline*, STAGES is pleased to announce the show and its creators will head to Montgomery, Alabama as part of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival's 2014 - 2015 Season, **Jan. 13 through Feb. 8, 2015**.

Stars, **Jacqueline Petroccia** (Patsy Cline) and **Zoe Vonder Haar** (Louise Seger), will reprise their award-winning roles for the Alabama production. Joining Petroccia and Vonder Haar are the "Always... Patsy Cline" creative team; Michael Hamilton, Director; James Wolk, Scenic Designer; Lou Bird, Costume Designer; and Matthew McCarthy, Lighting Designer.

The affiliation between STAGES St. Louis and Alabama Shakespeare Festival began when Geoffrey Sherman, Alabama Shakespeare Festival's Producing Artistic Director, heard about the production from "Always... Patsy Cline's" Scenic Designer James Wolk. Sherman then traveled to St. Louis to witness what everyone was talking about. Upon seeing the show at The Playhouse at Westport Plaza, Sherman stated "It is clear to see why St. Louis has been enchanted by this production. The music is timeless and the performance flawless – it's a vibrant musical that is sure to capture the hearts of our ASF audience."

STAGES' production began during the 2013 record-breaking season at the Robert G. Reim Theatre and due to popular demand returned to a new home, The Playhouse at Westport Plaza, on April 22, 2014 and played for 22 weeks. CBS Radio declared *Always... Patsy Cline* as "the biggest success of a musical theatre presentation in St. Louis in decades... and maybe ever." After 184 performances, over 37,000 audience members, and grossing over \$1.6 Million in St. Louis, the show officially closed on Oct. 12, 2014 and set a new precedent for STAGES St. Louis.

STAGES St. Louis' Executive Producer, Jack Lane, commented on the continuation of the production, "This show really is becoming the little show that could; we are thrilled to share this treasure with the Alabama audiences and look forward to working with Alabama Shakespeare Festival in the coming months."

Always... Patsy Cline creator and original director, Ted Swindley proclaimed "I have probably seen well over 100 productions of *Always... Patsy Cline* in its 26 year history and the production at STAGES St. Louis is definitely one of the very best productions I have ever seen! The cast is superb! Patsy (Jacqueline Petroccia) is remarkable. She has every nuance and vocal quirk of Patsy Cline down pat. A beautiful performance – warm, full of life and heart breaking. And Louise (Zoe Vonder Haar) has that very rare quality of being so comfortable with an audience that she has them eating from the palm of her hand from her very first entrance. Hilarious and heartfelt, everything you would want in a friend as she is to Patsy."

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He continued “Michael Hamilton's deft staging is so inventive and moves the action along as fluidly as one of Patsy's ballads. The lighting, sound, sets and costumes are spectacular, too. I must also mention the extraordinary talents of a wonderful group of musicians who make up the Bodacious Bobcats band.”
“**All in all and in every way, as the author of the piece, I could not have been more pleased and excited to see such excellence on stage!** Kudos to producer Jack Lane and everyone at STAGES, a theatre that must make St. Louis very, very proud!”

Ted Swindley first produced the show in Houston, Texas in 1988. During the creative process, Swindley came across an interview with Texas housewife and avid Patsy Cline fan, Louise Seger, and was able to establish the local slant he had been searching for and an ultimate direction for the show. Within the interview, he discovered information about countless letters exchanged between Seger and Cline until the night of her death in 1963. Each letter was signed “Love, Always... Patsy Cline.” *Always... Patsy Cline* is told through the heartfelt and hilarious memories of Seger and focuses on her meeting with Cline at the Esquire Ballroom, and ultimately when Louise hears of Patsy’s untimely passing at age thirty. After many regional productions during the early 90s, *Always... Patsy Cline* made it to Off-Broadway for a successful run in 1997. One of the top 10 most produced shows in twenty years, with performances in the U. S., Australia, the UK and Ireland, *Always... Patsy Cline* has rarely been produced in the St. Louis region.

Patsy Cline was born Virginia Patterson Henley on September 8, 1932 in Winchester, Virginia. She was known for helping to break down the gender barrier in country music and received her first recording contract in the 1950s. In the early 1960s, Cline joined the cast of the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee and successfully “crossed over” to pop music with several of her songs. Cline remains as relevant today as she was when she passed, fifty-one years ago. Her legacy as one of the greatest singers of all time continues to resonate among audiences of all ages. In 2005 her album, *Patsy Cline’s Greatest Hits*, was listed as the Longest-Charting Title by a Female Artist in the [Guinness Book of World Records](#), with over 10 million records sold.

New York Actress Jacqueline Petroccia stars as Patsy Cline. Petroccia's critically acclaimed portrayal of Cline garnered her a Connecticut Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Performance, a Broadway World Award for Best Actress and a St. Louis critics circle nomination. Other Credits include *Sweeney Todd* and *Carousel* with NY Philharmonic (filmed for PBS), *The Producers*, *The Sound of Music* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

St. Louis Actress Zoe Vonder Haar stars as Louise Seger. Vonder Haar received the 2013 “Judy Award,” and St. Louis Theatre Circle Award for Best Actress in a Musical, for the role of Louise. She has performed in over 100 productions including leading roles in *Hello, Dolly!* (*Kevin Kline Award*), *Gypsy*, *Mame*, and *A Chorus Line* at STAGES St. Louis. Other credits include the First International Touring Company of *A Chorus Line* and numerous productions at The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis and The Muny.

Always...Patsy Cline features a live six person band directed by **Joel Jones** including **Roger Rettig** (Pedal Steel Guitar), **Mike Rosengarten** (Electric Guitar), **Drew Perkins** (Fiddle/Acoustic Guitar), **Joe Cosgrove** (Bass), and **Andy Martin** (Drums), with Joel Jones on piano.

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Ted Swindley (Author and Original Director) has directed and/or produced over 200 plays for over 20 years. Some of his outstanding directorial credits include world premieres, classics and musicals including, CARNAL KNOWLEDGE, PACIFIC OVERTURES, FOLLIES and CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF, along with rotating repertory projects such as Havel's THE MEMORANDUM with Giradoux's THE MADWOMAN OF CHAILLOT, Thornton Wilder's OUR TOWN and LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES with THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST. Ted was named to Esquire magazine's register of Americans for Outstanding Achievement in Arts and Letters, and was featured in Southern Living Magazine. In 2007 he was a keynote speaker at the Southwestern Theatre Conference. He was also the recipient of the Los Angeles Dramalogue Award for outstanding direction and nominated for the Los Angeles Critics Award for his work at the Pasadena Playhouse. He is the Founding Artistic Director of Stages Repertory Theatre, the second largest theatre in Houston, Texas. There he implemented such diverse programming as the Texas Playwrights Festival, for which he won national recognition in 1986 from the Wall Street Journal and Backstage Magazine. Best known for creating the hit musical, ALWAYS...PATSY CLINE, which was one of the top ten shows produced across the country in 1998, he has also directed in over 60 theatres. THE HONKY TONK ANGELS is his latest hit, and he has completed the trilogy with THE HONKY TONK ANGELS HOLIDAY SPECTACULAR, and BUBBA'S REVENGE, (which can all be done independently of each other). He has just recently premiered his latest work, BACHELOR PAD in New York City, and completed a Southern adaption of THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST, entitled THE IMPORTANCE OF BEIN' EARNEST, and a play, STORIES MY GRANDMOTHER TOLD ME, which had its premiere in Kansas City, MO, January 2008. He is an active member of the Dramatists Guild and The Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, and is a member of the Playwrights/Directors Workshop at the famed Actors Studio in New York City.

"Always... Patsy Cline," will be performed on the 792-seat Festival Stage **Jan. 13 through Feb. 8, 2015**. Tickets are on sale now and range from \$30 to \$60. **For more information** visit the Alabama Shakespeare Festival website at asf.net or call 334.271.5353 or 1.800.841.4273.

The Alabama Shakespeare Festival is among the largest Shakespeare theatres in the world. Designated as The State Theatre of Alabama, ASF has been located in Montgomery since 1985 when it moved from Anniston as a result of Mr. and Mrs. Wynton M. Blount's gift of a performing arts complex set in the 250-acre Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park. This program/project has been made possible by grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

STAGES opened in 1987 with a budget of \$50,000 and a part-time seasonal staff of eight. Today, the company employs a full-time staff of more than 26 overseeing a budget of over \$4 million. During the performance season, an additional 150 actors and crew members bring the productions to life. To date, STAGES professionals have produced 99 musicals, with over 3,200 performances, playing to over 1,000,000 patrons.

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