



NEWS RELEASE

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STAGES ST. LOUIS PRESENTS MEREDITH WILLSON'S THE MUSIC MAN

(St. Louis, MO) – Stages St. Louis will present the final show of its 2008 season, Meredith Willson's ***The Music Man*** at The Robert G. Reim Theater in Kirkwood from September 5 – October 5.

The story of con man Harold Hill, who disrupts small-town River City, Iowa by vowing to form a boys' band, ***The Music Man*** premiered on Broadway in December 1957 at the Majestic Theater and later at the Broadway Theater. Based on Meredith Willson's own childhood in Mason City, Iowa, the show ran for a total of 1,375 performances and was nominated for 11 Tony Awards, winning 5 Awards including Best Musical and Best Actor for the original Harold Hill, Robert Preston. A popular movie version was released in 1962 starring Preston and Shirley Jones.

The Music Man features book, music, and lyrics by Meredith Willson. Appearing in the Stages cast are Graham Rowat as Harold Hill, Christy Morton as Marian Paroo, Edward Juvier as Marcellus Washburn, Whit Reichert as Mayor Shinn, Gretchen Hewitt as Mrs. Shinn, Peggy Billo as Mrs. Paroo, and David Schmittou as Charlie Cowell.

Other cast members include Nic Thompson, Mike Dowdy, John Flack, Steve Isom, Bill Lynch, Ben Nordstrom, Abigail Isom, Tracy Tang, Kyle P. Gunby, Lynn Humphrey, Karin Berutti, Michele Burdette Elmore, P.J. Palmer, Spencer Milford, Berklea Going, Kellie Frohnert, Drew Redington, Erin Kelley, Lindsay Kraemer, Jake Pfarr, Lisa M. Ramey, Matthew Howard, Miranda Miller, Lisa Fiebert, Gabriel Lawton, and Justin P. Wingenroth.

Direction for ***The Music Man*** is by Stages Artistic Director Michael Hamilton, with choreography by Dana Lewis and musical direction by Al Fischer. Completing the artistic team are scenic designer Gene Emerson Friedman, costume designer Dorothy Marshall-Englis, lighting designer Matthew McCarthy, and orchestral designer Stuart M. Elmore.

The Music Man will run for a total of five weeks. Week one performances are Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 4 and 8 p.m., Sunday at 2 and 7:30 p.m. and Tuesday at 8 p.m. The week two schedule is Wednesday through Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 4 and 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Weeks three, four and five will have additional performances on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. and Wednesdays at 2 p.m. Week five will also have an additional Sunday night performance at 7:30 p.m.

The Music Man is sponsored by Bank Midwest. The 2008 Season is made possible with the support of the Regional Arts Commission. Financial Assistance has been provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency, and Stages is also funded in part by the Arts & Education Council.

Stages performs in the intimate, 384-seat Robert G. Reim Theater at the Kirkwood Civic Center, 111 South Geyer Road, 63122. Tickets are \$46.00, with numerous special single ticket and subscription rates available. For more information and to purchase tickets call 314-821-2407 or visit www.stagesstlouis.org.

The recipient of the 2008 Excellence in Arts Award from the Arts & Education Council and 8 Kevin Kline Awards, including Best Musical, in 2008, Stages St. Louis was founded in 1987 and is dedicated to producing the indigenous American art form of musical theater. The mission of Stages is to become the leading company for musical theater performance and education in the Midwest.

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