



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (5-20-10)

## NEWS RELEASE

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## **BIG RIVER Opens the 2010 Season at STAGES ST. LOUIS**

ST. LOUIS (May 20, 2010) – STAGES ST. LOUIS will open its 2010 season with “**Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**” at The Robert G. Reim Theatre in Kirkwood from May 28 – June 27.

Bursting from the pages of Mark Twain’s classic novel “Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,” this Tony Award-winning musical is filled with humanity, wisdom and a homespun humor all its own.

STAGES is known for bringing Broadway-quality musical theatre to St. Louis, and **Big River** continues with this tradition. The 2010 season opener features the most sophisticated set design STAGES has ever built - a \$70,000 investment, with full-stage decking and a multi-tiered set that allows scenes in multiple locations to bring the epic adventures of Huck Finn to life.

Join Huck and Jim as they take you on a thrilling journey down the mighty Mississippi. **Big River** features a score by Roger (“King of the Road”) Miller that reminds us the quest for freedom and seduction of a new frontier lives in every American soul. Music and lyrics are by Roger Miller with book by William Hauptman, adapted from the novel by Mark Twain.

Direction and musical staging are by Michael Hamilton, with choreography by Dana Lewis and musical direction by Lisa Campbell-Albert. Completing the artistic team are scenic designer James Wolk, costume designer Lou Bird, lighting designer Matthew McCarthy and orchestral designer Stuart M. Elmore.

Appearing in the cast are Adam Shonkwiler, who recently was featured in the motion picture “The Private Lives of Pippa Lee,” as Huck Finn; Ken Robinson as Jim is making his STAGES debut; Richard Pruitt, who spent three years on Broadway in “42<sup>nd</sup> Street” as Pap Finn; along with St. Louis audience favorites David Schmittou, who won the 2010 Kevin Kline Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in the STAGES production of “The Drowsy Chaperone,” Ben Nordstrom and Zoe Vonder Haar.

**Big River** is sponsored by the Edward Chase Garvey Memorial Foundation, Lynne & Jim Turley, Wayne & Patti Withers and AEP River Operations. The 2010 season is made possible with financial assistance from the Missouri Arts Council and the Regional Arts Commission. STAGES is also funded in part by the Arts & Education Council.

**Big River** will run for a total of five weeks with evening performances Tuesdays through Sundays and matinees on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. For more information and to purchase tickets call 314-821-2407 or visit [www.stagesstlouis.org](http://www.stagesstlouis.org).

The 2010 season also will feature “Promises, Promises” (July 16 – August 15), Disney’s “The Aristocats” (August 4 – 15) and Rodgers & Hammerstein’s “State Fair” (September 3 – October 3). Tickets are \$49, with numerous special single ticket and subscription rates available. STAGES performs in the intimate, 384-seat Robert G. Reim Theatre at the Kirkwood Civic Center, 111 South Geyer Road, 63122.

The recipient of six Kevin Kline Awards in 2010, including a tie for Outstanding Musical Production, STAGES was founded in 1987 and has become the leading company for musical theatre performance and education in the Midwest.

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