

Village Theatre

KIDSTAGE

PRESS RELEASE

July 12, 2010
For Immediate Release

MEDIA CONTACT:

Michelle Sanders
PR & Communications
(425) 392-1942 x124
msanders@villagetheatre.org

KIDSTAGE AMBITIOUSLY PRODUCES *RAGTIME* THIS SUMMER

Issaquah, WA – Village Theatre’s KIDSTAGE SummerStock produces *RAGTIME*, July 31-August 8, 2010 at the Francis J. Gaudette Theatre in Issaquah.

In the KIDSTAGE SummerStock program, after a rigorous audition process, over 40 young people have the opportunity to join together to perform on the Mainstage. SummerStock is the perfect answer for the passionate performer looking to stay happy and very busy in the summer months. Their musical experience is fully directed and designed by theatre professionals and features a live orchestra, beautiful sets, costumes, lighting, and sound.

Taking place in turn-of-the-century America, the musical production, *RAGTIME*, centers around three different socio-economic groups in New York City: upper class white-Americans, African Americans, and Eastern European immigrants. The heavy subject matter makes the piece challenging for KIDSTAGE students, given the age range of participants—8 to 18 years old. Considering the creative leadership, however, the rehearsal process has proven to be an “even more in-depth learning experience,” comments Suzie C. Bixler, KIDSTAGE Programs Manager in Issaquah. “It has been exciting for the team and kids to truly learn about and experience our country’s history.”

The students participating in SummerStock this year are directed by Mainstage veteran, both on and off stage, Eric Polani Jensen. He was last seen in *Chasing Nicolette* (2009) playing Count Valence meanwhile also serving as assistant director of that production. Jensen comments about the heavy subject matter, “Since we’re exploring an era where racism was overt and damaging, we have created an environment for the kids to feel safe with each other in as they delve into these emotional moments. Hopefully, they take away an awareness of how far we’ve come as a country and still realizing how much we still need to work on it.”

Jensen is supported by a creative team consisting of KIDSTAGE alumni Brandon Ivie handling the musical staging, longtime Village Theatre affiliate R.J. Tancioco (*The Gypsy King*) as musical director, and Village Theatre regulars, Alex Berry (*Beauty and the Beast*) as scenic and lighting designer, and Deane Middleton (*Beauty and the Beast*) as costume designer.

Village Theatre

KIDSTAGE

RAGTIME features 44 actors from the following cities: Bellevue, Black Diamond, Covington, Issaquah, Kent, Kirkland, Newcastle, North Bend, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, Seattle, and Snoqualmie. Pre-production photos are now available at: http://www.villagetheatre.org/photos_ks_Ragtime.php. Please also see a performance preview guide for more details about the show here: <http://www.villagetheatre.org/Ragtime.php>.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Michelle Sanders at (425) 392-1942 x124 or msanders@villagetheatre.org.

SYNOPSIS:

A powerful portrait of life in turn-of-the-century America, this relevant musical for today intertwines the stories of three extraordinary families, as they confront history's timeless contradictions: wealth and poverty, freedom and prejudice, hope and despair. Featured are such show-stopping songs as "Your Daddy's Son," "Wheels of a Dream," and "Make Them Hear You." This thrilling musical is sure to inspire!

What: *Ragtime*

Book by Terrence McNally

Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens

Music by Stephen Flaherty

Based on the novel, *Ragtime*, by E.L. Doctorow

Where: Francis J. Gaudette Theatre

303 Front Street North

Issaquah, WA 98027

When: July 31-August 8, 2010

Wednesday-Saturday 7:30 PM

Sunday August 1 at 2 PM & 7:30 PM

Sunday August 8 at 2:00 PM

Tickets: \$15 (General), \$13 (Youth & Seniors) – ON SALE NOW

Box Office: (425) 392-2202 or

www.villagetheatre.org