

NEWS RELEASE



Media Contact:
Meg Lewis
Public Relations Manager
(334) 271-5326
Email: mlewis@asf.net

The Alabama Shakespeare Festival Announces 2009-10 Season

**Season features *A Christmas Story*, *Hamlet*, *Harriet's Return*
and two Provocative World Premieres!**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Montgomery, Alabama (Wednesday, July 15, 2009)

BB guns, a bull, the Bard and more will be featured in the Alabama Shakespeare Festival's nine-play season of comedy, music and provocative drama during the 2009-10 season.

ASF will open its season with the delightful family musical *Ferdinand the Bull*, Nov. 7-Dec. 19. Based on the children's classic tale by Munro Leaf and Robert Lawson, a bull that would rather sit in the field and smell the flowers and a would-be bullfighter who would much rather dance, teach those around them the importance of finding and being oneself. *Ferdinand* was adapted for the stage by Karen Zacarias and Deborah Wicks La Puma.

With the holiday season comes the stage version of the movie classic *A Christmas Story*, Nov. 27-Dec. 24, 2009 (adapted by Philip Grecian from the works of Jean Shepherd). Will little Ralphie get the BB gun he's been dreaming of from Santa? This beloved story made "you'll shoot your eye out" into a national catchphrase.

From February 5-28, *Harriet's Return*, based on the life of legendary Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman, will be performed. Actress and playwright Karen Meadows Jones plays more than 30 characters in this riveting production.

ASF will also feature two world premieres in 2010, *Nobody* by Richard Aellen and *The Fall of the House* by Robert Ford. Both of these edgy, provocative plays were originally commissioned by ASF's nationally renowned Southern Writers Project.

Nobody (March 12-28) This provocative new musical story is based on the tempestuous lives of African-American vaudeville performers Bert Williams and George Walker, who broke racial barriers by portraying racial stereotypes.

The Fall of the House, originally scheduled for ASF's 2008-09 season, will play April 9-25. The spirit of Edgar Allen Poe haunts this mind-bending new play that brings together magic, betrayal, forbidden love, tragic accidents, secret documents and familial bonds that span 150 years.

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ASF's Repertory Season consists of three plays. Peter Shaffer's *Lettice and Lovage* (April 9-May 22) begs the question, can architecture really be funny? The answer is a resounding, "yes." Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (April 16-May 22) follows the method and madness of a young prince who sets out to avenge the murder of his father. In Shakespeare's comedy *All's Well The Ends Well* (April 23-May 22), a smart, brave and talented woman sets out to win the heart of a man who's just not that into her.

The ASF season concludes with Mary Murfitt and Betsey Howe's hilarious country musical *Cowgirls*, June 11-July 3. When a saloon owner mistakenly hires a band of classical musicians to save her business with a fundraiser, quick thinking and lots of rehearsal will be needed to save the day.

Tickets are only available through ASF's Membership campaign (formerly subscriptions) beginning July 24, 2009. A variety of membership options are offered for everyone, from the casual theatergoer to the die-hard theatre fanatic, starting at just \$25. For Membership information contact the ASF Box Office at **800.841.4273**.

The on-sale date for single ticket sales will be announced at a later time.

The Alabama Shakespeare Festival is located at 1 Festival Drive in Montgomery, Alabama.

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.

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