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HERITAGE THEATRE FESTIVAL OPENS 2009 SEASON WITH *OLIVER!*

*One of Most Beloved Family Musicals of All Time
To Hit The Culbreth Stage Beginning June 25*

Tickets Currently On Sale At Culbreth Box Office or Online at www.uvahtf.org

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – June 15, 2009 – Join *Oliver*, Fagin, The Artful Dodger and more when *Oliver!* kicks off the Heritage Theatre Festival season on June 25, 2009.

One of the most beloved family musicals of all time, *Oliver!* will put a spotlight on a remarkable little boy who had the audacity to want “more,” and the unforgettable cast of characters who propel him along his rags-to-rags-to-riches adventure. The show offers audiences a chance to revisit a score chock-full of Broadway classics, from *Where is Love?* to *Consider Yourself* to *Food Glorious Food* and then some, all while learning once again how a small, pure heart can overcome even the most dire of circumstances.

Oliver! will be presented at Culbreth Theatre from June 25-27, June 30 and July 1-3. Evening performances begin at 7:30 with a matinee on June 27 starting at 2PM. Tickets for the show are \$30 for adults, \$26 for seniors (60+) and U.Va. faculty and staff and \$15 for students. Season and single show tickets are now available at the Heritage Box Office, online at www.uvahtf.org or by calling 434-924-3376.

Oliver! will be directed by Heritage Producing Artistic Director Robert Chapel. “We wanted to start this season off with a show that appeals to a broad range of theater lovers and generations,” Chapel said. “There are few more iconic stories or characters in the history of theater, and very few scores that boast as many remarkable and memorable songs as writer and composer Lionel Bart has given us.”

The extraordinary multi-generational cast is highlighted by eight-year-old Cooper Timberline, a Richmond-based youngster who is splitting his time between wrapping up schoolwork, rehearsing for the play and traveling back and forth to New York for Broadway auditions. “I think audiences are really going to fall in love with this young man, who combines a heart-melting voice and acting talent that is definitely beyond his years.”

Heritage audiences will also be welcoming back a favorite in Catherine Ogden. Ogden, whose performance in the theatre’s production of *Ragtime* is still being talked about, returns to Heritage to play the role of the lovely and tragic Nancy.

Audiences will find familiar faces throughout the cast, and especially in Fagin's band of young pickpockets, which is populated heavily with talented young area actors. Cast members will be on hand for a post-show talkback after the performance on July 1.

This Heritage Theatre Festival production of *Oliver!* is sponsored by Embarq.

The 2009 Heritage Theatre Festival season continues at the Helms Theatre on June 30 with the opening of *Pump Boys & Dinettes*, a sassy and swinging musical about a duo of hash-slinging, song-swapping waitresses and their pump boy neighbors. The show's original country-western tunes have delighted audiences throughout the world as audiences have literally eaten up this fun-filled, twangy slice of small-town American pie.

Pump Boys & Dinettes, directed by Renee Dobson, comes to Helms Theatre on June 30, with performances continuing from July 1-4 and July 6-11.

The season, presented once again in rotating repertory, will continue with the old-time Hollywood farce *Moonlight and Magnolias* (opening July 9 at the Culbreth Theatre); the timeless classic tale of *On Golden Pond* (opening July 16 at the Culbreth Theatre); the uproarious Texas-sized laughs of *Red, White & Tuna* (opening July 21 at the Helms Theatre) and the plant-eats-man mania of *Little Shop of Horrors* (opening July 23 at the Culbreth Theatre).

For complete ticket and schedule information or to order your tickets today, visit www.uvahtf.org or call the box office at 34-924-3376.

Press photos are available at <http://www.virginia.edu/heritagetheatre/pressCenter.htm>.

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