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CHICAGO THE MUSICAL SET TO SIZZLE IN KANSAS CITY!

Chicago brings “All That Jazz” to Starlight Theatre on Aug. 11-16

KANSAS CITY, Mo. –The national tour of *Chicago The Musical* will entertain Starlight Theatre patrons with its scintillating story and showstopping song and dance numbers on Aug. 11-16. Now the seventh-longest-running musical on Broadway, this tale of sin and intrigue is sure to give Kansas Citians a sample of the intrigue of 1920s’ Chicago.

Chicago tells the story of Roxie Hart, a night club dancer who murders her lover. When she hires Chicago’s shrewdest lawyer, Billy Flynn quickly turns her crime into celebrity headlines and gains Roxie an acquittal. The Tony Award-winning team of John Kander and Fred Ebb collaborated on *Chicago*’s memorable score that features “Razzle Dazzle,” “All That Jazz,” “Mr. Cellophane” and more. *Chicago*’s stylistic dance numbers, choreographed by the famed Bob Fosse, match each toe-tapping tune with bold emotion and resonance.

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“When *Chicago The Musical* last appeared at Starlight Theatre during the 2004 season, the venue was sold out several nights,” said Denton Yockey, Starlight Theatre president and executive producer. “Apparently it made a lasting impression on Kansas City theatre-goers because *Chicago* perennially finishes among the top requested shows in our annual audience survey.”

The musical is based on actual 1920s’ events in Chicago and a play written by Maurine Dallas Watkins. Watkins, a writer for *The Chicago Tribune*, caught readers’ attention when she covered stories of women accused of killing their significant others. The incidents were followed so closely by *Tribune* readers that one of the women, Beulah Annan, even reached somewhat of a celebrity status and, eventually, was declared found not guilty at trial. Watkins went on in 1926 to write a Broadway comedy about lady killers turned celebrities and called it, what else but...*Chicago*.

In 1975, Fosse, Kander and Ebb took Watkins’ play and made it into a musical fit for two of Broadway’s best stars, Gwen Verdon and Chita Rivera. But on Broadway that year, the show was overshadowed by a more sentimental competitor, *A Chorus Line*.

The revival of *Chicago* opened on Broadway in November 1996 and soon took home six Tony Awards® and a Grammy. *Chicago* has since found tremendous success internationally, touring in more than 23 countries including Holland, Russia, Brazil, South Africa, China, Japan and the UK.

“Each song...evokes the 1920s, reveals character, makes us laugh, drives the story and simultaneously sustains an insistent beat, an edge which (like its characters) is as desperate to entertain as it is entertaining,” said director Walter Bobbie.

In the national touring production coming to Starlight Theatre, Bianca Marroquín is cast as leading lady Roxie Hart. Born in Monterrey, Mexico, Marroquín launched her career in multiple Mexico City productions, including *Chicago*. For her Spanish-language portrayal of Roxie Hart, she received five awards from the Mexican Critics Association. In 2002, she was invited to cross over from Mexico to Broadway and made her debut as Roxie Hart. Marroquín is the first Latina actress to cross over to Broadway from her native production in a leading role.

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Chicago's minimalist set differentiates this show from many Broadway productions. Its costumes are primarily black, and the tour relies on limited stage lighting to create its themes of entrapment. The lack of distraction from elaborate sets and “razzle dazzle” allows the audience’s full attention to be focused on the characters and storyline.

Tickets for *Chicago The Musical* are on sale now at Starlight Theatre, 4600 Starlight Road. Ticket prices range from \$9 to \$79 and are available at the Starlight Theatre box office, at www.kcstarlight.com or by calling 816.363.STAR (7827). Discount prices for groups of 15 or more are available by contacting Bob Potemski at 816.997.1137 or bob.potemski@kcstarlight.com.

All performances of *Chicago The Musical* begin early at 8 p.m.

For more information about the touring production, visit www.chicagothemusical.com.

Starlight Theatre

Presenting Broadway entertainment since 1951, the non-profit Starlight Theatre Association is Kansas City’s oldest and largest performing arts organization. The Association operates, programs and maintains the largest stage in the United States, as well as the 16-acre Starlight Theatre complex. While assuming all annual operating costs for the complex, the Association also raises funds for capital improvements and a variety of programs, including national Broadway musical performances, concerts, community outreach and education. Since 2000, the Association has contributed more than \$25 million of privately funded improvements to the Kansas City, Mo.-owned Starlight Theatre. Each Broadway season, Starlight donates more than 11,000 tickets to its performances to regional non-profit organizations serving the disadvantaged.

In 2008, Starlight Theatre was selected as the “Favorite Performing Arts Venue or Organization” in the Kansas City Convention & Visitors Association’s Visitors’ Choice Awards program. Starlight also received a Gold Award for “Best Performing Arts Venue” and a bronze award for “Best Theatre” in *Ingram's* 2008 Best of Business Kansas City Awards. The theatre seats approximately 8,000 and is located in Swope Park.

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