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ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2013-2014 SEASON

**Highlights include Oscar Hammerstein II and Jerome Kern's beloved American musical *Show Boat*,
a new musical about an aspiring comic book artist *Hero*, and**

Frank Galati's Tony Award-winning adaption of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*

(SARASOTA, March 18, 2013) —Michael Donald Edwards, Asolo Rep Producing Artistic Director, and Greg Leaming, Asolo Rep Associate Artistic Director and Director of The FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training, today announced their selections for the 2013-2014 season. Opening the 55th season --- or what is already being called the hottest season yet --- is perhaps the greatest American musical of all time, ***Show Boat***, with unforgettable songs, dazzling choreography and a moving story that has withstood the test of time. The repertory season launches in January 2014 with Tony Award-winning director Frank Galati's production of ***Philadelphia, Here I Come!*** by Brian Friel, followed by ***Other Desert Cities*** by Jon Robin Baitz (creator of television's "Brothers and Sisters"), and Broadway's current smash comedy written by Christopher Durang, ***Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike***. In March the season continues to electrify with Frank Galati's epic adaptation of John Steinbeck's ***The Grapes of Wrath*** directed by Michael Donald Edwards, the regional premiere of a new musical, ***Hero***, and "the best new play of 2012, hands down" according to *TIME Magazine*, ***4,000 Miles*** by Amy Herzog. The season will also include a summer musical to be announced at a later date. Asolo Rep's ***Unplugged*** new play festival will return for a fifth season in late spring 2014. Also returning is the Asolo Rep/FSU Conservatory for Actor Training ***New Stages Tour*** with a production of Shakespeare's romantic tragedy, ***Romeo and Juliet*** in the fall of 2013.

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“We are very excited about this new season. It’s a brilliant combination of world-class artists, and a mix of rediscovered classics and innovative new works. Each year when we are in the planning stages, we think ‘how do we top the last,’ and this time, I think we have outdone ourselves,” said Michael Donald Edwards, Producing Artistic Director for Asolo Rep. “This is the second of our five-season American Character Project, a concept that has been overwhelmingly embraced by audiences, artists, academics, and critics alike. Each one of the shows this season is about an amazing journey in some way, with characters moving forward to embrace change. I think with this season, people will really get a sense now of what we mean when we say these plays are speaking to each other. Taken as a whole, this season is another step forward for this theatre’s own bold artistic journey.”

Exciting Changes to Season Format

In response to feedback from audiences and subscribers, Asolo Rep also announced some exciting changes to its season format. The fall musical, which in previous seasons closed immediately before Christmas, will be extended for an additional week to run through the December holidays. This extension will enable visiting friends and family the opportunity to attend, and will provide a programming option for people who would like to celebrate the holidays by taking in a show. Also new for this year, Asolo Rep will bring the spring musical on board much earlier, with previews in April, so that more people have the opportunity to see it before departing Sarasota for the summer. This means that a second, full-scale musical is part of the rep season, a concept that is sure to please both subscribers and single-ticket buyers alike.

“This new format greatly increases our artistic flexibility. The spring musical slot is getting a great deal of attention from artists and producers who see it as an ideal time to develop new work with us, a strong part of our mission. It has become apparent that it serves the new work best if it can open earlier and expect a larger audience as part of the subscription base as well as attracting residents before they leave town,” said Linda DiGabriele, Managing Director of Asolo Rep.

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Subscriptions are available now. Single tickets go on sale in September 2013. For information on purchasing a subscription or individual tickets for Asolo Rep's 2013-2014 season, please contact the box office at 941.351.8000 or toll-free at 800.361.8388, or visit the website at www.AsoloRep.org.

ASOLO REP 2013-2014 SEASON LINE-UP

NEW STAGES TOUR: *ROMEO & JULIET*

By William Shakespeare

Adapted by Lauryn E. Sasso and Dmitry Troyanovsky

Directed by Dmitry Troyanovsky

Touring dates and locations to be announced.

In October 2013, Asolo Rep's New Stages Tour returns for its fifth season with *Romeo & Juliet*, a 45-minute adaptation providing an exciting new perspective on Shakespeare's beloved classic. The New Stages Tour showcases the talents of the entire third year class of The FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training in thrilling productions specifically chosen to enrich the lives of young and multi-generational audiences. The touring shows are fully costumed and propped, using minimal or no sets, so they can be performed almost anywhere from school auditoriums, to botanical gardens, to an intimate engagement at an art gallery. In 2012, its production of *Macbeth* was seen by more than 18,000 students across the state of Florida, in Miami at the Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center, in Tallahassee and the Cook Theatre.

SHOW BOAT

Music by Jerome Kern

Book and Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

Based on the novel by Edna Ferber

Directed by Rob Ruggiero

November 12-December 29, 2013

It was the first great American musical and may still be, after 86 years, the greatest of all time. With unforgettable songs, dazzling choreography, and a story that moves us with its humanity — *Show Boat* is both great entertainment and great art.

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Spanning the years from 1890 to 1927, this lyric masterpiece follows the lives, loves and losses of theater folk on the Mississippi, while illuminating the racial and social changes that were shaping the country. Jerome Kern's unforgettable music includes "Ol' Man River," "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man," and "You Are Love." Don't miss this timeless triumph of the Broadway stage, playing through the holidays!

PHILADELPHIA, HERE I COME!

By Brian Friel

Directed by Frank Galati

January 7-April 12, 2014

Gar O'Donnell is leaving Ballybeg and the Ireland of his childhood. Leaving his father and the lads. Leaving Kate. For across the ocean there's a dream of Cadillacs, Coke floats, and girls — a dream of America. The play that established Brian Friel (*Dancing at Lughnasa*) as one of the greatest theatrical voices of the English language, *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* paints a touching and humorous portrait of a young man on the verge of a new beginning. Frank Galati's production will inject music and merriment into the storyline with the addition of song, dance and actor/musicians.

OTHER DESERT CITIES

By Jon Robin Baitz

Directed by Greg Leaming

January 15-February 27, 2014

This riveting new play by the creator of TV's hit drama "Brothers & Sisters" brings dysfunctional family drama to new heights. In their Palm Springs home, ex-Senator Lyman Wyeth and his wife Polly welcome their family home for Christmas for the first time in six years. The reunion seems hopeful, until their daughter announces she's written a memoir about their family and the incident that changed their lives. With biting wit and razor-sharp insight, *Other Desert Cities* is "the most richly enjoyable new play for grownups in many a season" (*The New York Times*).

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VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE

By Christopher Durang

Directed by Peter Amster

January 22-April 13, 2014

It's a lovely day at Vanya and Sonia's farmhouse in Bucks County, PA. But instead of spending the morning strolling through their cherry orchard, these wacky siblings have their hands full with a prophetic cleaning woman, a neighborhood costume party, and a surprise visit from their movie star sister Masha and her sturdy new boy-toy, Spike. One of the funniest dramatists writing today, **Christopher Durang's** latest Broadway hit turns Chekhov on its head and his signature blend of comedy and absurdity has never been more endearing — or relentlessly funny.

THE GRAPES OF WRATH

by Frank Galati, from the novel by John Steinbeck

Directed by Michael Donald Edwards

March 12-April 19, 2014

Frank Galati's groundbreaking adaptation of Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel won the Tony Award for Best Play and has become a national theatrical treasure. This quintessential American story of hope and survival follows the Joad family's epic journey from the dust bowl of Oklahoma to the promised land of California in search of land, jobs and dignity. A soaring affirmation of the goodness, strength and perseverance of the human spirit, *The Grapes of Wrath* provides the perfect canvas for an examination of a nation in search of itself.

4,000 MILES

by Amy Herzog

April 2-27, 2014

In the Historic Asolo Theater

Called by *TIME* magazine "The best play of 2012, hands down," this funny and moving masterpiece looks at how two outsiders find their way in the world today. 21 year-old Leo has just bicycled 4,000 miles from Seattle to the West Village apartment of his grandmother, Vera.

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When his overnight sleepover turns into an extended stay, Vera's surprising political views collide with Leo's carefree hippie lifestyle and the two become a veritable odd couple. Slowly, Leo begins to reveal the mysterious events of his journey and the two discover the narrow line between growing up and growing old.

Regional Premiere!

HERO

Book and concept by Aaron Thielen

Music and lyrics by Michael Mahler

Directed by David H. Bell

April 29-June 1, 2014

Instantly engaging and full of heart, *Hero* was a smashing success in its world premiere run at Chicago's Marriott Theatre in 2012. Now, Asolo Rep presents this delightful musical as it continues its journey toward a very promising future. Aspiring comic book artist Hero Batowski lives anything but a superhero life — he's 28 years old, works in his family's Milwaukee comic book shop, and still lives at home with his dad. A long-ago tragedy left Hero unable to move on, but when a series of unexpected events occur, he must decide whether he's ready to get his life on track. With a sensational pop/rock score, this bright new musical depicts the extraordinary moments in ordinary life that bring out the superhero in all of us.

UNPLUGGED 2014

Greg Leaming Curator

Asolo Rep's new play festival returns, with readings planned for April 2014.

Full details, titles and final dates will be confirmed in 2014.

SUMMER MUSICAL

To Be Announced

June 10-29, 2014

THE FSU/ASOLO CONSERVATORY FOR ACTOR TRAINING

2013 - 2014 SEASON LINE-UP

The FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training also announced its 2013-2014 season, which features some of the country's most talented acting students performing in a series of four plays in the Cook Theatre in The FSU Center for the Performing Arts. In addition to the season featuring the second year class, third year Conservatory students perform on the Asolo Rep mainstage with the professional company.

THE SCHOOL FOR LIES

by David Ives (adapted from Moliere's *The Misanthrope*)

Directed by Greg Leaming

October 30 - November 17

It's 1666 and in the glittering salons of Paris, a surly misanthrope falls in love with the very fashionable Celimene, causing chaos and catastrophe in everyone's lives. Written with brilliant verbal dexterity by one of America's greatest farceurs, and inspired by the titan of French theatre.

LOOT

by Joe Orton

January 2 - January 19

A wild, black farce by one of the 20th century's most anarchic playwrights. Hal and Dennis try to hide the loot from a bank robbery while juggling a grieving widower, a mother's corpse, a predatory nurse, and a sinister police inspector in this brilliant English comedy.

HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE

by Paula Vogel

February 19 - March 9

L'il Bit has put her past behind her, but her dark and dangerous relationship with her Uncle Peck continues to haunt her in this Pulitzer Prize winning play about disturbing family relationships and a culture that sexualizes young women.

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ANTIGONE

by Jean Anouilh

Directed by Andrei Malaev

April 9 - April 27

A retelling of the famous Greek tragedy about the collision between the state and personal responsibility, in a modern version that reveals just how dangerous it is for the individual to take a stand in the 20th century.

For information on purchasing a subscription or individual tickets to The FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training 2013-2014 season, please contact the Box Office at 941.351.8000 or 800.361.8388, or visit the website at www.AsoloRep.org.

ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE is Florida's premier professional theatre and one of the most important cultural forces in the Southeastern United States. As a center for theatrical excellence, Asolo Rep crafts the highest quality productions of classical, contemporary, and newly commissioned work all performed in the rarest form of rotating repertory. Featuring an accomplished resident company – complemented by distinguished guest artists – Asolo Rep offers audiences a unique and dynamic theatre experience. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards and Managing Director Linda DiGabriele, this world-class institution has taken bold steps toward the future, building landmark partnerships and collaborations which will add to its success for generations to come.

Asolo Repertory Theatre is able to bring its productions to the stage because of the generosity of our corporate sponsors and individual supporters. Paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues. Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

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