Theatre Bristol presents Beauty and the Beast

Theatre Bristol presents "Disney's Beauty and the Beast" at the Paramount Center for the Arts, opening June 16 and running for two weekends with evening and matinee performances. Tickets are on sale at www.paramountbristol.org.

Theatre Bristol brings this Tony-nominated musical and Grammy-award-winning soundtrack with the area's talented actors, singers, dancers, designers and musicians.

"Disney's Beauty and the Beast" includes favorite songs with music composed by Alan Menken and the late Howard Ashman, as well as songs by Menken and Tim Rice, with book by Linda Woolverton telling the "tale as old as time" of Belle and the Beast.

Belle sees past appearances and ends the Beast's curse with blossoming love. The castle inhabitants show their hospitality, entertaining for their very humanity with humor and beautiful music.

Directing "Disney's Beauty and the Beast" is the Theatre Bristol veteran Glenn Patterson ("The Music Man," "Les Misérables," "Scrooge! The Musical," "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" and "Miracle on 34th Street"). Patterson is joined by a production team including assistants Leticia Peltzer and Ben Fitton, stage manager Nicole Intagliata, designer and technical director David Hyde, costume designer/dance captain Camille Gray, choreographer April Grace, scenic artist Bert White and special effects technician David Maloney.

The bookworm Belle is played by Makenna Arnold and the Beast by Josh Cassels. Her father Maurice is played by Steve Baskett. James Francis is her suitor Gaston, and Jake Price his sidekick Lefou. Mike Locke is Monsieur D'Arque. The Silly Girls are Rebecca Catalano, Hope Dingus and Rachel Locke. The castle inhabitants are Dan Gray as Cogsworth, Nick Reynolds as Lumiere, Laura O'Bryan as Mrs. Potts with Whitney Brooks as son Chip, Savannah Shaver as Babette, and Mary Ellis Rice as Madame De La Grande Bouche.

"The story of Beauty and the Beast has been around a long time. The story itself is simple and engaging," said Patterson. "Each generation that encounters it finds that it has something to say to them. That's why it has been told and retold, adapted and been popular on stage and in film," he added. "What more could you want in a play? It has a misfit girl who finds her home, a prince who discovers that without love nothing matters, a villain who gets it in the end, and magic — lots of magic. It's a wonderful show. Putting it together will challenge us as we bring to the magic to life for you. We can't wait to see you at the Paramount in June."

"Theatre Bristol is blessed with talent, devoted volunteers and supporters," said Samantha Gray, Theatre Bristol board president and producer of the show. This production of "Disney's Beauty and the Beast" is a celebration of the magic of music and love. Audiences of all ages will be delighted. This is the summer event not to miss."

To add to the celebration, Theatre Bristol is hosting its 2017 Gala fundraiser Friday, June 16 with music, food, drinks and a performance of "Disney's Beauty and the Beast." Tickets for the 2017 Gala are available on the Theatre Bristol website. Sponsorships and advertising are also available for this production and the 52nd season by contacting info@theatrebristol.org.

Theatre Bristol's production of "Disney's Beauty and the Beast" opens June 16 and runs for two weekends with evening and matinee performances at the Paramount Center for the Arts, with which they share a long history, resulting from the determination of Theatre Bristol founder Cathy DeCaterina, catalyst for restoring the Paramount to its grandeur.

Tickets are available online at www.paramountbristol.org and by contacting the Paramount Center for the Arts at 423-274-8920. Theatre Bristol's productions are priced at $16 for adults and $12 for seniors and children, plus processing and preservation fees.

For more information, visit www.TheatreBristol.org, contact Theatre Bristol at 423-212-3625, or email info@theatrebristol.org.

June Brings Stellar Line-Up to International Storytelling Center

Storytelling Live!, the International Storytelling Center's teller-in-residence series, continues its season. The program features 26 of America's best-loved storytellers, one each week May through October. Each teller appears in matinee performances Tuesday through Saturday at 2 p.m. at the Mary B. Martin Storytelling Hall.

Liz Weir, of Northern Ireland, performs May 30-June 3. Formerly a children's librarian for the city of Belfast, she travels the world including appearances on five continents. A genuine senachie (Irish storyteller), Weir spins classic lore, and folklore packed with the little people, songs and stories. Weir is the recipient of the NSN ORACLE International Storybridge award, which cited her "exemplary work promoting the art of storytelling within Ireland and between other countries."

Award winning storyteller and ordained minister Geraldine Buckley, of Maryland, appears June 6-10. With her signature quick wit and warm humor, she specializes in weaving true tales to make people laugh, think deeply, and leave wanting more. Buckley also hosts her workshop, Rock the Flock, Thursday, June 8 from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Attendees to use stories as an outreach tool to write better sermons, transform lives, or shape personal stories.

June 13-17 favorite Andy Offutt Irwin, from Georgia, as Storytelling Live's resident storyteller. With a manic, Silly Putty voice, heart-filled stories, and amazing mouth noises, Irwin has been described as "The Marx Brothers meet Eudora Welty." Irwin's appearances have taken him across the U.S. He is the recipient of the NSN ORACLE Circle of Excellence award. Irwin offers a special children's concert Saturday, June 17, at 10:30 a.m.

Storytelling Live! welcomes two-time Grammy winner Bill Harley, from Massachusetts, June 20-24. A songwriter, storyteller, author, performing and recording artist, Harley uses song and story to paint a vibrant and hilarious picture of American life. He is also the recipient of an NSN ORACLE Circle of Excellence award. Harley will give a special evening performance, It'll Be Funny Someday, June 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Rounding out the month of June, June 27-July 1, is Ed Stivender of Pennsylvania. Called "the Robin Williams of storytelling" by Miami Herald, Stivender has toured the world since 1981 presenting his one-man shows. Known for his mixture of whimsy, wit and wisdom, he invites his audience into an interactive dance of the imagination. Stivender is an NSN ORACLE Circle of Excellence award recipient.

For more information about Storytelling Live! or to purchase tickets call 800-952-8392 ext. 222 or 423-913-1276.