



713 Lake Avenue Lake Worth Florida 33460 (561) 586-6169 lakeworthplayhouse.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 9, 2008

Contact:

Lisa Bankert

Tel: 561-586-6169 (ext. 216)

E-mail: lisa@lakeworthplayhouse.org

Show photos are available for [download](#).

BIG RIVER OPENS NEW SEASON AT LAKE WORTH PLAYHOUSE
Tony Award-Winning Musical Features Singing and Signing

LAKE WORTH, Florida (October 9, 2008) – The Lake Worth Playhouse opens its 56th season with the Tony Award-winning musical ***Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***, directed by Playhouse Artistic Director Jodie Dixon-Mears. The book is by acclaimed playwright William Hauptman, and the score is by well-known country-music songsmith Roger Miller. The show opens Friday, October 24 and runs through Sunday, November 9.

Big River recounts Mark Twain's powerful portrait of classic American characters – Huck Finn, Tom Sawyer and their slave friend, Jim – setting it against a musical backdrop of homespun country infused with soulful gospel. At once comical and poignant, this widely celebrated show takes audiences on an adventure down the Mississippi River to tell the enduring tale of a boy's struggle to escape convention, and a man's struggle to find freedom.

"We've approached these characters with honesty and humanity in order to tell their authentic story," said Dixon-Mears. "What helped immensely is Roger Miller's incredible music. Within his lyrics, we found joy, pain and humor. But, most importantly, we found the hope that someday everyone will be treated with dignity. We hope our audiences will find in *Big River* that same spirit of brotherhood and humanity that motivated us to share this classic story."

New Orleans native Conor Walton and Chicagoan Gregory Johnson play the roles of Huckleberry Finn and Jim, respectively. The actors are reuniting on the Lake Worth Playhouse stage after performing featured roles in last summer's hit musical, *Hair*.

"Conor and Gregory play the classic roles of Huck and Jim with humor and grace," said Dixon-Mears. "I have no doubt audiences will be touched by their moving portrayals, and especially by the blend of their powerful voices on *Worlds Apart*, the duet to racial harmony.

The Tony Award-winning score also includes Broadway favorites, *River in the Rain*, *Muddy Water* and *Free at Last*. The Playhouse production features a unique staging of *Waitin' for the Light to Shine*, enhanced with choreography that includes American Sign Language as a nod to the [2003 Deaf West Theatre revival of *Big River*](#).

Performances of *Big River* are Thursdays through Saturdays at 8:00 p.m., select Sundays at 7:00 p.m., and select Saturdays and Sundays at 2:00 p.m. Single ticket prices are \$25-29. Subscriptions range from \$66 (Snowbird Special) to \$240 (VIP Dinner & Dress). Complimentary valet parking is available to subscribers.

Tickets can be purchased through the Lake Worth Playhouse Box Office at **561-586-6410** or online at www.lakeworthplayhouse.org.

About Lake Worth Playhouse

Lake Worth Playhouse is a not-for-profit, non-equity community theatre with a diverse array of offerings, including award-winning dramas, comedies, musicals, area premieres, reinterpretations of classics, children's shows, ballets and operas on film, jazz concert series and alternative programming. In addition to its main stage theatrical fare, the Playhouse presents year-round independent and foreign films in the Stonzek Theatre, an intimate black-box style theatre equipped with a large viewing screen and high-definition projection. The Playhouse is proud to offer a variety of educational programs for adults and children, as well as community outreach initiatives that bring cultural programs into the neighborhoods of underserved youth and also make theatre available free of charge for disadvantaged citizens in the community.

#