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## M E D I A R E L E A S E

***REVOLUTION FINDS A NEW RHYTHM IN PCS' SEASON OPENING RAGTIME***  
*Portland Center Stage presents a syncopated celebration of the rebels and rabble-rousers who made the American Century possible, Opening September 25<sup>th</sup> on the Main Stage.*

**August 27, 2009 – PORTLAND, OR.** Portland Center Stage invites Portland to return to the turn of a different century for [\*Ragtime\*](#), the Tony-Award winning musical about the anarchist crusaders, death-defying magicians, race apologists and renegade musicians who fomented revolutions in the drawing rooms and fought injustice in the streets of an America that laid the groundwork for the America we live in today. [\*Ragtime\*](#) previews on Tuesday September 22nd, opens on **Friday, September 25th and runs through November 1, 2009**. Tickets range from **start at \$24**, with student and under 30 discounts available. Rush tickets for *Ragtime* are \$15. Show times are 7:30 pm Tuesday through Saturday, with a 2:00 pm Sunday matinee and alternating Saturday 2:00 pm and Sunday 7:30 pm performances. See the show calendar <http://tickets.pcs.org/buytickets/calendar.asp> for the complete performance schedule.



E.L. Doctorow's sweeping novel comes vividly to life in this sprawling epic set against the backdrop of the ragtime craze in 1908 New York City. In it, three disparate families intertwine: a wealthy white woman and her son, whose lives are shaken up when she takes in a baby abandoned by a young black girl; a Jewish immigrant father and daughter who find unexpected fortune at the dawn of the motion picture age; and an ragtime musician (Coalhouse Walker) whose world unravels after a group of bigoted fireman destroy his brand new car to "teach him a lesson" about

"appropriate" place in the burgeoning prosperity of a new American century.

Woven through these more private tales of injustice fought and dreams deferred are cameos by **Harry Houdini, Booker T. Washington, Evelyn Nesbit, J.P. Morgan and Henry Ford...** the celebrities of the day... whose glittering successes and high minded idealism provided the public face of the 20<sup>th</sup> century American dream (while also masking its more private hopes and heartbreaks).

Variety Magazine said of the recent Kennedy Center revival of *Ragtime* (now headed to Broadway in the fall),

*"Ragtime's stark reminder of how far the country has traveled could not be more timely... a tonic for the nation's economic blues."*



Portland Center Stage is collaborating with the Multnomah Library, the Oregon Historical Society, the Multnomah Bar Association, the Oregon Psychoanalytic Association and the AIA Architecture Center to produce a series of **free conversations** and panel discussions on the themes of justice, law, race, class and culture that are raised by *Ragtime*, with a special emphasis on how these same issues played out in Ragtime-era Portland. For a complete schedule of events related to *Ragtime*, go to [http://www.pcs.org/ideas\\_in\\_play](http://www.pcs.org/ideas_in_play).

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The book for [Ragtime](#) was written by **Terence McNally**, (*Love/Valour/Compassion* and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*), with music composed by **Stephen Flaherty** and lyrics by **Lynn Ahrens**. The musical is based on the novel *Ragtime* by E.L. Doctorow, which was identified as one of the hundred [best novels](#) of the 20th century by the [Modern Library](#) Editorial Board.

[Ragtime](#) will be directed by Artistic Director **Chris Coleman** and will feature local favorite **Susannah Mars** (Mother) who was last seen in Broadway Rose's *Evita*, and **Leif Norby** (Tateh/Baron Askenazy) last seen at PCS in the 2008/2009 Season opener *Guys and Dolls*. Also returning from the cast of *Guys and Dolls* are **Robert Mammana** (Father), **Todd A. Horman** (Henry Ford/Ensemble), and **Kent Zimmerman** (Dance Captain/Ensemble). Newcomers to Portland Center Stage include **Gavin Gregory** as Coalhouse Walker, the charming ragtime musician who steals the heart of Sarah, played by **Rachael Ferrara**. Rounding out the 21 person acting ensemble are **Anna Bishop** (Little Girl), **Tiffany Haas** (Evelyn Nesbit/Ensemble), **Alicia Irving** (Emma Goldman/Ensemble), **Marty Austin Lamar** (Black Attorney/Ensemble), **Christine Lyons** (Baron's Asst./Ensemble), **Dan Maceyak** (Harry Houdini/Ensemble), **Jesse Means** (Booker T. Washington/Ensemble), **Lacretta Nicole** (Sarah's Friend/Ensemble), **Danny Rothman** (Younger Brother), **Steven Stein Grainger** (Grandfather/Ensemble), **Lawrence Street** (Ensemble), **Alex Thede** (Little Boy), **Tom Treadwell** (JP Morgan/Ensemble) and **Sara Catherine Wheatley** (Ensemble).

Music Director **Rick Lewis** will shape the sound of the production and conduct the orchestra featuring **Kurt Crowley** on Piano, **Dan Schulte** on Bass, **Ben Wasson** on Percussion, **John Nastos** and **Mary Sue Tobin** on Reeds, **Clark Rust** on Trumpet, **John Moak** on Trombone, **Mary Rowell** on Violin and **Elizabeth Byrd** on Cello. Choreographer **Joel Ferrell** will keep all of the production's 42 dancing feet in lock step to the rhythms of ragtime.

Recreating the sights, sounds and sartorial wonder of turn-of-the-twentieth-century NY will be scenic designer **G.W. Mercier**, costume designer **Jeff Cone**, sound designer **Casi Pacilio** and lighting designer **Peter Maradudin**.

Additional support for this production has been provided by **Ten01**, Ellyn Bye and Helen & Jerry Stern. Media support has been provided by **Kink.fm**.

Portland Center Stage's 2009/10 season is funded in part by the **Regional Arts & Culture Council** and Work for Art; the **Oregon Arts Commission**; the **National Endowment for the Arts** and the Recovery Act; **The Schubert Foundation**; the **Paul G.Allen Family Foundation**; Joanne Lilley; and Tim & Mary Boyle.

[PORTLAND CENTER STAGE](#) inspires our community by bringing stories to life in unexpected ways. Established in 1988 as an off shoot of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, PCS became an independent theater in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since May 2000. The company presents a blend of classic, contemporary and original productions in a conscious effort to appeal to the eclectic palate of theatergoers in Portland. PCS also offers a variety of education and outreach programs for curious minds from six to 106, including discussions, classes, workshops and partnerships with organizations throughout the Portland metro area.

**THE GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY** houses a 599-seat Main Stage and the 200-seat black box Ellyn Bye Studio. It was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification. The Gerding Theater at the Armory opened to the public on Oct. 1, 2006. The capital campaign to fund the renovation of this hub for community artistic activity continues.

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