

TAPROOT THEATRE



C O M P A N Y

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BIG RIVER:

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

An exuberant musical adaptation of Mark Twain's masterpiece, opening July 11

SEATTLE – June 12, 2008 – This summer, get swept away by the exuberance and joy of the Tony Award-winning musical *Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, playing at Taproot Theatre Company this July and August. People of all ages will love this classic story of two friends, a raft and their quest for freedom on the mighty Mississippi, with music and lyrics by Roger Miller, book by William Hauptman, and adapted from the novel by Mark Twain. A journey into America's spirit is at its heart.

Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, directed by Karen Lund, with musical direction by Edd Key, runs from July 11 through August 9 with low-price previews on July 9 & 10, plus a Pay-What-You-Can performance on July 16. A gallery showing of eight signed Norman Rockwell "Huckleberry Finn" lithographs will be on display at Taproot Theatre during the run of the show, and will be available for purchase through an online auction.

Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is sponsored in part by media sponsors KUOW and ParentMap, and opening night sponsor Puget Sound Energy. Seasonal support is generously provided by 4Culture; ArtsFund; The Boeing Company; The Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences; Ellis, Li & McKinstry PLLC; Hagen, Kurth, Perman & Co., CPA's; Microsoft; PONCHO; The Seattle Foundation; Viking Bank; and Washington State Arts Commission.

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About the production

In this production, as in Twain's novel, patrons will see things from Huck's perspective –“the truth, as I see it,” he says in the musical's opening—as he takes them along on a journey with his friend Jim, a runaway slave, to a place where they can find freedom and a new life.

Big River will transport audiences to the Mississippi River Valley during the late 1840s, nearly two decades before slavery was abolished in the United States, and during a time when the United States of America was only about 70 years old. From the story to the design and the music, patrons coming to *Big River* will feel a strong sense of 19th-century America in this production. “You take the incredibly great characters by Mark Twain and you combine them with the quintessentially American songs of Roger Miller, and you get something that just smacks of Americana,” said director Karen Lund.

Originally produced in the mid-1980s, *Big River* won seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical, Best Original Score and Best Book. After being presented at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the LaJolla Playhouse in LaJolla California, in 1984, it opened on Broadway in April of the next year at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre.

Big River features a talented cast of Robbie Fowler as Huck and Geoffery Simmons as Jim, plus Edd Key, Margaret Bicknell, Jenny Cross, Solomon Davis, Amy Berryman, Julie Smith, Faith Russell, Yasmin Ravard-Andresen, Mike Oliver, Ryan Childers, David Anthony Lewis, Bethany Russell and Jonathan Moore. The band includes Becky Bloomstine, Debbie Evans, Ayrian Moore, Caleb Moore and Gordon Tibbits. The production team includes sound and scenic designer Mark Lund, costume designer Sarah Burch Gordon and lighting designer Andy Duff. Joshua Strickler serves as stage manager and Ian Klein as dramaturg.

About Taproot Theatre

Taproot Theatre Company is a professional, non-profit theatre company with a multi-faceted production program. Founded in 1976, Taproot Theatre serves the Pacific Northwest with Mainstage Productions, Touring Productions and Acting Studio. Taproot exists to create theatre that explores the beauty and questions of life while bringing hope to our search for meaning. Taproot Theatre Company is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), Theatre Puget Sound (TPS), and the Greenwood-Phinney Chamber of Commerce.

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Included: *Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* fact sheet

***Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* FACT SHEET**

WHAT:

BIG RIVER
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
Music and Lyrics by ROGER MILLER
Book by WILLIAM HAUPTMAN
Adapted from the novel by Mark Twain
Directed by Karen Lund

SHOW DESCRIPTION: This summer, get swept away by the exuberance and joy of the Tony Award-winning musical *Big River*. People of all ages will love this classic story of two boys, a raft and their quest for freedom on the mighty Mississippi. A journey into America's spirit is at its heart.

WHEN: Friday, July 11, through Saturday, August 9, with low-price previews July 9 & 10. Pay-What-You-Can Performance July 16. Opening Night with Reception on Friday, July 11. No show on July 23.

WHERE: Taproot Theatre, 204 N. 85th Street in Seattle.

TICKETS: Weekday evenings and Saturday matinees, \$26-28; Friday and Saturday evenings, \$30-33; Friday and Saturday previews, \$20-22; Student/Senior discount of \$2 off per ticket; ages 25 and under, \$15.

For tickets contact Taproot Theatre's box office at (206) 781-9707 or box@taproottheatre.org, or call Ticketmaster at (206) 292-ARTS. Group rates are available. For groups, call (206) 781-9708.

Tickets for the Pay What You Can (PWYC) performance on July 16 go on sale at 5:00 p.m. day of show at the box office.

SCHEDULE: Wednesday and Thursday 7:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday 8:00 p.m., Saturday matinee 2:00 p.m.

CALENDAR:

Wed.	July 9	7:30 p.m.	Preview
Thurs.	July 10	7:30 p.m.	Preview
Fri.	July 11	8:00 p.m.	Opening Night with Reception
Sat.	July 12	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	July 12	8:00 p.m.	
Wed.	July 16	7:30 p.m.	PWYC Performance, Post-Play Discussion
Thurs.	July 17	7:30 p.m.	
Fri.	July 18	8:00 p.m.	
Sat.	July 19	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	July 19	8:00 p.m.	
Wed.	July 23	-----	No show this night
Thurs.	July 24	7:30 p.m.	
Fri.	July 25	8:00 p.m.	
Sat.	July 26	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	July 26	8:00 p.m.	
Wed.	July 30	7:30 p.m.	Post-Play Discussion
Thurs.	July 31	7:30 p.m.	
Fri.	August 1	8:00 p.m.	
Sat.	August 2	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	August 2	8:00 p.m.	
Wed.	August 6	7:30 p.m.	Post-Play Discussion

Thurs.	August 7	7:30 p.m.	
Fri.	August 8	8:00 p.m.	
Sat.	August 9	2:00 p.m.	
Sat.	August 9	8:00 p.m.	Closing Night