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PRESS RELEASE

HIGH SCHOOLS FROM ACROSS THE STATE SELECTED TO PERFORM

44th ANNUAL ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE FESTIVAL: TAKE FLIGHT

ANNOUNCES FULL-LENGTH AND SHOWCASE PRODUCTIONS

The 2019 Illinois High School Theatre Festival (IHSTF), the largest and oldest non-competitive high school theatre festival in the nation, is proud to announce the slate of full-length and showcase productions that have been selected to appear at this year's Festival taking place at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (January 10-12, 2019):

FULL-LENGTH PRODUCTIONS

Name of Show

Clue: On Stage
Feathers and Teeth
The Hunchback of Notre Dame
Chicago: The High School Edition
The Theory of Relativity
Faculty Portrait
Peter and the Starcatcher
The Glass Menagerie
The Complete History of America (Abridged)
Brainstorm
The Addams Family
The Night Thoreau Spent In Jail
Anon(ymous)

Name of School

Dundee-Crown High School
Glenbard North High School
Harrisburg High School
Hinsdale South High School
Homewood-Flossmoor High School
Larkin High School
Maine Township West High School
Nazareth Academy
Prairie Ridge High School
Senn Arts High School
South Elgin High School
Victor J. Andrew High School
Warren Township High School

SHOWCASE PRODUCTIONS

Name of Show

Juli(us) Caesar
The Internet is a dist-OH LOOK A KITTEN!
Finis
The Shower Cap Kids:
In the Ashes of a Texas Roadhouse
The Show Must Go On
What I Wanted to Say
We All Rise Above
And then they came for me

Name of School

Downers Grove South High School
Hampshire High School
Keith Country Day School

Lockport High School
Rock Island High School
Saint Bede Academy
Saint Patrick High School
University High School

The Illinois High School Theatre Festival strives to showcase student performances from throughout the state. To achieve this goal, two or three theatre educators (responders) view a submitted production. Following the performance, a discussion is held with the cast and crew where they can ask questions of the responders. The responders may also state their opinions and give suggestions. The 30-minute discussion is an amazing learning experience for all. After the performance, the responders complete a written critique/recommendation form, which is submitted to the Play Selection Committee, who makes the final decision.

About the Illinois High School Theatre Festival

Now in its 44th consecutive year, the Illinois High School Theatre Festival (IHSTF) is the largest and oldest non-competitive high school theatre festival in the world. Over 4,500 students, teachers, university representatives, exhibitors, and volunteers come together to put on theatrical workshops and various high school productions. The IHSTF organizes over 150 workshops, whose topics range from acting, musical theatre, auditions, improvisation, technical theatre, directing, stage management, make-up and costumes, lighting and special effects, to name a few. In addition, more than 20 high school productions, both showcases and full-length, from around the state are selected to perform at the IHSTF each year.

This year's Festival, themed "Take Flight," is led by IHSTF Executive Director Annaliisa Ahlman (Niles North HS) and features the Broadway smash hit *In the Heights* as its All-State production. The All-State cast, crew, and pit orchestra is comprised of the top student performers, technicians, and musicians in the state of Illinois. *In the Heights* will be performed throughout the Festival.

On the first night of the Festival, participants attend the much-anticipated Opening Performance with a guest artist or troupe. This year's opening features Broadway's Seth Rudetsky. Past opening ceremonies have included Visceral Dance, Wilson Heredia, Tyce Green, Chicago's Second City, The Neo-Futurists, and many others.

Another highlight of the IHSTF includes the college/university auditions and technical portfolio presentations for high school juniors and seniors. Students who plan to pursue theatre or musical theatre in college may audition/interview for theatrical programs in and around the state of Illinois. In the past, there have been over 35 colleges/universities in attendance.

Over the main two days of the Festival, attendees will see and participate in different sets of workshops, student showcases, high school productions, and various social activities, plus the All-State Production of *In the Heights*.

The three-day Festival takes place every year in early January and switches locations between the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Illinois State University. UIUC will host the 2019 Festival from Thursday, January 10 to Saturday, January 12.

The IHSTF 2019 Festival is supported in part by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, and corporate donations or in-kind services. Each year contributions are made to the Julie Anrie Nelson Memorial Fund, which provides overall support for the Festival, and the Clif Aldridge Scholarship Fund, which provides financial assistance to All-State Company members. For more information about how to make a contribution please contact Aimee-Lynn Newlan, ITA Executive Director at aimeelynn@illinoistheatre.org or call the Illinois Theatre Association office at 312-265-5922.

About the Illinois Theatre Association

Founded in 1972 and celebrating its 40th consecutive season, the mission of the Illinois Theatre Association is to advocate quality theatre in Illinois through:

- Encouragement and facilitation of closer and better communication amongst all theatrical divisions -- professional theater, university/college theater, secondary school theater, community theater, theatre for young audiences, and creative drama -- in Illinois;
- Provision of public information about the extent and variety of theatre in Illinois;
- Cooperation with state and federal agencies, and with regional and national theatre organizations in promoting recognition and development of theatre programs at all levels;
- Maintenance and improvement of theatre production, teaching, and research at all levels;
- Affirmation of the value of theatre in the lives of individuals.

The Illinois Theatre Association provides support and professional development opportunities for all divisions of theatre. Annual events include the Illinois High School Theatre Festival, ITA's Statewide Non-Equity Professional Auditions, ITA's Theatre In Our Schools Conference (produced in partnership with the American Alliance of Theatre & Education), ITA's Middle School Conference, and ITA's Gala/Awards of Excellence Ceremony. For more information about the Illinois Theatre Association, visit www.illinoistheatre.org.

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