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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Rialto Square Theatre Announces 2008-09 Season

ON SALE FRIDAY 6/27 9AM!

Joliet, IL- The Rialto Square Theatre announces a thrilling 2008-09 season filled with many shows for the entire family to enjoy. The variety of shows the Rialto offers is sure to entertain everyone! Scheduled performances include comedians, Broadway musicals, and concerts by first class musicians and bands.

Tickets go on sale Fri., June 27 at 9am! Tickets may be purchased at the Rialto Box office located at 102 N. Chicago Street, or ordered by calling 815/726-6600 between 9am and 5pm Monday through Friday or between 9am and 12 Noon on Saturdays. On performance days the box office remains open until the completion of intermission. Tickets may also be purchased through all Ticketmaster outlets or online at www.rialtosquare.com.

For a complete show description and ticket prices, please see below: (More shows to be added. Please keep checking www.rialtosquare.com for updates)

2008-09 Season

(* indicates shows already on sale)

***Merle Haggard**

AAA \$75; AA \$55; A \$45; B \$40; C \$35

Saturday, June 28

8:00PM

Grammy Award-winner Merle Haggard has become one of the true giants of country music, as a singer, songwriter, and instrumentalist. With his hard-biting electric guitar, he almost singlehandedly introduced the electric sound to country music. To date, Haggard has written hundreds of songs, including the classics "Sing Me Back Home," "Okie From Muskogee" and "Silver Wings" among others. Merle Haggard is classified as a living legend and is the single most influential singer-songwriter in country music history. Haggard may well be the most well-rounded country talent ever to take the stage in front of a microphone or an audience

***Gavin DeGraw**

AAA \$41; AA, A, B, C \$31

Wednesday, July 2

7:30PM

Gavin DeGraw is a talent, who in just a few short years has become one of today's premier singer-songwriters. He's done it the old-fashioned way, on the merits of his creative abilities,

perseverance and a healthy, homegrown perspective, establishing himself as a magnetic, new voice in music. Now, Gavin DeGraw adds a new chapter to his celebrated narrative with the release of his second studio album, the self-titled, Gavin DeGraw. DeGraw broke through in 2003, with the release of his debut album, Chariot, which awakened music fans across the country to a charismatic, vibrant young artist who connected with audiences in a way other contemporary musicians did not. Selling over a million copies and earning platinum certification, Chariot yielded three hit singles - "I Don't Want To Be," "Follow Through," and the title-track, "Chariot." In 2003, DeGraw would earn a big break when "One Tree Hill," would use his first single, "I Don't Want To Be," as its theme song. Audiences around the country were soon introduced to his affable charms and prodigious songwriting and singing talent.

***The Backyardigans Live! Tale Of The Mighty Knights** *Tuesday, August 19, 7PM*
Wednesday, August 20, 4PM & 7PM

Tickets: AAA \$48.50; AA \$38.50; A \$25.50; B \$18.50; C \$15.50

Sponsored by STAR 96.7

Nickelodeon's backyard friends, The Backyardigans, come to life for preschoolers in their brand-new live show, *The Backyardigans Live! The Tale of the Mighty Knights!* Join Knights Uniqua and Tyrone as they embark on a quest to protect King Pablo's unpredictable egg. Along the way, Grabbing Goblin Austin and Flighty Fairy Tasha join the medieval mayhem as the runaway egg hatches feet and makes an unexpected dash all the way up to Dragon Mountain! The Backyardigans will need the audience's help to face a mighty dragon and return the egg to the king. *The Backyardigans Live!* will have the entire family singing, dancing and laughing along to songs of courage, friendship and the power of imagination.

***Vince Gill** *Thursday, September 18*
Tickets: AAA \$95; AA, A \$65; B \$50; C \$45 *7:30PM*

2008 GRAMMY WINNER – BEST COUNTRY ALBUM

Vince Gill is a country singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist. He made his national debut in 1979 in the country rock band Pure Prairie League before embarking on a solo career in 1983. Between then and the present, Gill has recorded more than twenty studio albums, in addition to charting more than forty singles on the U.S. *Billboard Hot Country Songs* charts. He has sold more than 22 million albums and has 18 CMA Awards, including two Entertainer of the Year awards and five Male Vocalist Awards. Gill has also earned 18 Grammy Awards, the most of any male Country music artist. In 2007, Gill was inducted into the esteemed Country Music Hall of Fame.

Gordon Lightfoot *Sunday, September 28*
Tickets: AAA \$65; AA, A \$55; B, C \$45 *7:00PM*

Gordon Lightfoot is a singer and songwriter who achieved international success in folk, country, and popular music. As a singer-songwriter, he came to prominence in his native Canada in the 1960's, and broke through the international music charts in the 1970's with songs such as "If You Could Read My Mind," "Sundown" and "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald." His songs have been recorded by some of the world's most successful recording artists, including Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash and Bob Dylan. A modern day troubadour, Gordon Lightfoot's time-defying style and legendary hits have made him one of Canada's most anticipated live performers. His concerts continually fill to capacity with legions of fans eager to experience Lightfoot's melodic, soulful voice and unmistakable sound.

BB King *Friday, October 3*
Tickets: AAA \$110; AA \$85; A \$65; B \$55, C \$45 *8:00PM*

The undisputed king of the blues, B.B. "Blues Boy" King will go down in history as one of the most important electric guitarists and blues singers ever. King's vocals are smooth and rich as they emote wailing cries and good-hearted humor, while every sound he plays on the guitar is instantly recognizable by his distinct vibrato, vocal guitar style and authorship of hundreds of the most

classic blues riffs. Drawing on the single-note playing of T-Bone Walker, King's style has influenced several of the greatest rock, blues and jazz artists of the latter half of the twentieth century, including Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix and Stevie Ray Vaughan, among others. Most incredibly is the fact that, with one note, B.B. King can tell a story that touches the deepest roots of your soul.

Indigo Girls

Sunday, October 5

Tickets: AAA, AA, A \$39; B, C \$34

6:00PM

Grammy Award winners, the Indigo girls are a folk rock duo consisting of Amy Ray and Emily Saliers. While they came into prominence as part of the late 80's folksy singer / songwriter revival, the Indigo Girls had staying power where other artists from the same era quickly faded. Their two-women-with-guitars formula may not seem very revolutionary on paper, but the combination of two distinct personalities and songwriting styles provided tension and an interesting balance. Devoted environmental and social justice activists and lifelong music-industry mavericks, the Girls have spent their entire career pushing boundaries on a variety of fronts. Hear all your favorite hits including songs from their newest release *Despite Our Differences*.

Colin Mochrie & Brad Sherwood

Friday, October 10

Tickets: AAA \$53; AA, A \$43; B \$33; C \$23

8:00PM

An Evening with Colin Mochrie & Brad Sherwood is a fully improvised evening of comedy and mayhem. If you are looking for a night out that'll keep you constantly laughing and in need of a diaper, then this is the show for you. The show is all about audience participation. Everything in the show is based on audience suggestions and many audience members are brought up on stage to be a part of the craziness. The entire evening is completely improvised, and best of all, the show is never the same twice.

Late Nite Catechism Dinner Theatre

Saturday, October 18

Tickets: AA, A \$64; B, C \$61

Dinner 6:00PM; Show Only 8PM

Show Only: AA, A \$38; B, C \$35

Late Nite Catechism makes a triumphant return to the Rialto for its eleventh season. This annual sold-out performance begins with dinner in the Rotunda and Esplanade of the Rialto and then on to the theatre for the interactive one-nun show. Catholic or not, it's time to enroll yourself in this interactive adult catechism class that's been spreading dogma for the past 15 years and is still going strong! Learn (and squirm) a little and laugh a lot as Sister imposes her own views on everything from the Catholic church to appropriate behavior! Don't be late, sit up straight, and buy your tickets today.

Chicago

Thursday, October 23

Tickets: Subscription Packages Available – Platinum \$250 - \$215; Classic \$207 - \$177

Come on babe – experience it live and in person! The one, the only, **CHICAGO**. It's Broadway's most popular musical – a razzle dazzle tale of sin and celebrity. And now, you can see it LIVE. The recipient of six Tony Awards®, two Olivier Awards, a Grammy and thousands of standing ovations, **CHICAGO** is the sensation that just keeps getting bigger and bigger.

Irving Berlin's I Love A Piano

Sunday, October 26

Tickets: AAA \$53; AA, A \$43; B \$33; C \$23

3:00PM

I LOVE A PIANO is an enchanting new musical journey spanning seven decades of American history as seen through the perceptive and hopeful eyes of Irving Berlin – a man whom Jerome Kern described by saying "Irving Berlin has no place in American music...He is American Music!" Using 64 of Berlin's enduring and popular favorites, I LOVE A PIANO captures the spirit of America from the Ragtime rhythms of the early 20th century through the swinging sophistication of the 1920's and 30's. From the sentimental songs that inspired a nation during two World Wars to the innocent optimism of the 1950's. Timeless classics, such as "White Christmas," "God Bless America," "Puttin' On The Ritz," and "There's No Business Like Show Business," do more than define the music of a generation, they define the music of our country.

"The strutting, cajoling, embracing songs are newly revealed to an audience that has somehow escaped the wizardry of Berlin's achievements over much of the 20th century...rousing and toe tapping!"

Variety

Paul Rodriguez

Sunday, November 2

Tickets: AAA \$53; AA, A \$38; B \$33; C \$28

6:00PM

Paul Rodriguez' career has spanned more than two decades and includes starring roles and featured appearances in over 30 films and countless television series and specials. As a well-rounded stand-up comedian, having honed his craft over the past twenty-five years, it is estimated that Paul has performed live to well over one million concert goers from coast to coast building a solid fan base. Within Hispanic communities, Rodriguez is considered to be the Richard Pryor, Lenny Bruce, and George Carlin when it comes to original comedy. Hands down, he has become the Original Latin King of Comedy.

Drew Hastings

Friday, November 7

Tickets: AAA \$39.75; AA, A \$29.75

8:00PM

Sponsored by WRXQ

He's intelligent, edgy, politically incorrect and he's funny. Very funny. Drew Hastings is a raconteur with a lot of stories to tell. Classic standup mixed with stories, anecdotes, and material from his life. He's one of the only comics to get a standing ovation on the Tonight Show with Jay Leno. He's done five TV pilots, for all the networks, including NBC, Fox, CBS, & HBO. Drew has written and performed three One Man shows in the last six years, including, "The Business of Living", "Commencement Speech", and "Life & Other Short Stories". Drew is a regular guest on *The Bob & Tom Show*, regaling listeners with his stories, questioning his life and everyone else's, and giving his comedic opinions on just about any topic that comes up.

For Mature Audiences

Terry Fator

Friday, November 14

Tickets: AAA \$99.50 Includes Meet & Greet; AA \$49.50; A \$39.50; B \$34.50; C \$24.50

8:00PM

It took ventriloquist, singer, comedian and celebrity impressionist Terry Fator 32 years to become an overnight sensation when he won the hearts of America and was selected to the 2007 "America's Got Talent" \$1 million dollar prize winner on NBC-TV. He recently performed on THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW and guest Simon Cowell exclaimed that Fator was one of the best entertainers in the world. The multi-talented Fator believes that he is an illusionist with his cast of seven original puppet characters. Terry Fator is perhaps the first entertainer to combine the art of ventriloquism with celebrity impressions including Tony Bennett, Elvis, Maroon Five, Garth Brooks, Nat King and Natalie Cole, Roy Orbison, Marvin Gaye, Gnarls Barkley, James Blunt, Brooks & Dunn, members of The Rat Pack, Louis Armstrong and even Kermit The Frog.

Vicki Lawrence & Mama – A Two Woman Show

Saturday, November 15

Tickets: AAA \$60; AA, A \$50; B \$40; C \$30

8:00PM

Emmy Award winning comedienne Vicki Lawrence is one of the most beloved television personalities of her generation. In the seventh season of *The Carol Burnett Show* and hundreds of hilarious sketches later, Vicki created her most endearing character to date, Thelma Harper, or "Mama" as she is better known to her fans. Ms. Lawrence will take the stage first as herself. "My

new show will not be a retrospective," she explains. "We are designing a show that is a mixture of stand-up comedy, music and my observations about real life."

For Mature Audiences

Sing-A-Long Messiah

Saturday, November 29

Tickets: General Admission \$15

8:00PM

The Northwest Indiana Symphony Chorus, along with members of the Orchestra, perform their annual Sing-Along version of Handel's Messiah, so dust off your copy (or borrow one from a friend) and start practicing. Not up to singing? There's definitely a place for those who just want to listen and be immersed in the glorious sound. What an exhilarating way to begin the Holiday season!

Von Heidecke's Chicago Festival Ballet – The Nutcracker

Sunday, November 30

Tickets: AA, A \$38; B, C \$30; Children 12 & under \$20.50

2:00PM

The holiday tradition continues as The Nutcracker returns to the Rialto Square Theatre. This holiday favorite fairytale is perfect for the entire family. The magical production features lavish costumes, a growing Christmas tree, a battle between mice and soldiers, a journey through the land of whirling snowflakes and a joyous visit to the Kingdom of the Sugar Plum Fairy. Keep the holiday spirit alive and enjoy this breathtaking performance.

Movin' Out

Friday, December 5

Tickets: Subscription Packages Available – Platinum \$250 - \$215; Classic \$207 - \$177

5-time Grammy winner Billy Joel and legendary director/choreographer Twyla Tharp have joined forces to create the spectacular new musical Time Magazine declares "The #1 show of the year!" The New York Times calls **MOVIN' OUT** "a shimmering portrait of an American generation. These tornado driven dancers and rock musicians propel the audience into delirious ovations." **MOVIN' OUT** brings 24 Billy Joel classics to electrifying new life as it tells the story of five life-long friends over two turbulent decades. It all adds up to one unforgettable Broadway musical.

Oak Ridge Boys Christmas Show

Thursday, December 11

Tickets: AAA \$59.50; AA \$49.50; A \$43.50; B \$37.50; C \$32.50

7:00PM

The Oak Ridge Boys have one of the most distinctive and recognizable sounds in the music industry. The fourpart harmonies and upbeat songs of The Oaks have spawned dozens of country hits and earned them Grammy, Dove, Country Music Association and Academy of Country Music awards and garnered a host of industry and fan accolades. To this day, The Oak Ridge Boys are still going strong. They have topped the charts with hits including, "Elvira," "Bobbie Sue," and "American Made." The Oak Ridge Boys Christmas show features classic Oak Ridge Boys hits and holiday favorites. There may even be a visit from a special guest from the North Pole.

It's A Wonderful Life – Live Radio Broadcast

Friday, December 19

Tickets: AA, A, B, C \$10

7:00PM

Sponsored by Star 96.7; 1340 WJOL; 98.3 WCCQ; 100.7 WRXQ

Be taken back in time as NextMedia presents a live radio broadcast and theatre performance of It's A Wonderful Life. Tickets will benefit the Rialto Square Theatre's capital campaign – To Polish the Jewel of Joliet. Take the kids and grandkids to this multi-generational nostalgic performance. Experience first-hand how live radio broadcasts used to be made, while watching one of your favorite Christmas classics come to life on stage. The performance will be broadcast live on 1340 WJOL.

Vienna Boys' Choir

Sunday, February 8

Tickets: AAA \$45; AA, A \$33; B \$25; C \$20

3:00PM

The world's most beloved choir has been thrilling audiences young and old for over 500 years. For five centuries the Vienna Boys' Choir have enchanted millions with their unique charm and exceptionally beautiful singing. The choir's repertoire includes everything from medieval to contemporary and experimental music. In concert, they present superbly entertaining programs that feature short operettas (in costume), sacred works and a broad range of secular and folk music.

Preservation Hall Jazz Band

Thursday, February 19

Tickets: AAA \$45; AA, A \$35; B \$25; C \$20

7:30PM

The Preservation Hall Jazz Band derives its name from Preservation Hall, the venerable music venue located in the heart of New Orleans' French Quarter. The band has traveled worldwide spreading their mission to nurture and perpetuate the art form of New Orleans Jazz. Whether performing at Carnegie Hall or Lincoln Center, for British Royalty or the King of Thailand, this music embodies a joyful, timeless spirit. Under the auspices of current director, Ben Jaffe, the son of founders Allan and Sandra, **Preservation Hall** continues with a deep reverence and consciousness of its greatest attributes in the modern day as a venue, band and record label.

Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

Friday, March 6

Tickets: AAA \$60; AA, A \$48; B \$38; C \$28

8:00PM

Grammy Award winning the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band was founded in California during 1965, and has lasted longer than virtually any other country-based rock group of their era. During their 30-plus year career, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band has released over 30 albums. Younger contemporaries of the Byrds, they played an almost equally important role in the transformation from folk-rock into country-rock, and were an influence on such bands as the Eagles and Alabama. Hear favorites *Mr. Bojangles*; *Bless The Broken Road*; *Long Hard Road* and more!

Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul

Saturday, March 7

Tickets: AAA \$50; AA, A \$40; B \$30; C \$20

8:00PM

Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul, nine time All-Ireland Fiddle Champion, will change the way you think about the violin. She's been called a "sensation" by Billboard Magazine and "the Jimi Hendrix of the violin" by The New York Times. Ivers' recording credits include over 100 contemporary and traditional albums and numerous movie scores. Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul is a mix of African and Latin percussion and bass, Irish instrumentalists, and American soulful vocals.

"Eileen is to Irish music as Michael Flatley is to Irish dance – a pioneer, an innovator, a universalist..."
–Frank McCourt.

An Evening of Groucho starring Frank Ferrante Dinner Theatre Saturday, March 14

Tickets: AA \$64; A \$61

Dinner 6:00PM; Show Only 8PM

Show Only: AA \$38; A \$35

The New York Times summed up the comedy genius as "America's most gifted funny man." Straight from the streets of New York's upper Eastside, Groucho was thrust onstage at age 15. Eventually, brothers Harpo, Chico, Gummo and Zeppo evolved into the world's funniest vaudeville act known as the Marx Brothers. Frank Ferrante (Groucho) is an actor, director, and producer described by The New York Times as "the greatest living interpreter of Groucho Marx's material." Frank originated the off-Broadway title role in *Groucho: A Life in Revue* portraying the comedian from age 15 to 85. For this role, Frank won 1987's Theatre World Award and was nominated for an Outer Critics Circle Award. In 2001, Frank starred in, directed and produced the national PBS television program *Groucho: A Life in Revue*.

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Sunday, March 15

Tickets: Subscription Packages Available – Platinum \$250 - \$215; Classic \$207 - \$177

In the Tony-Award winning new musical comedy **THE 25th ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE**, six young people in the throes of puberty, overseen by grown-ups who barely managed to escape childhood themselves, learn that winning isn't everything and that losing doesn't necessarily make you a loser. **SPELLING BEE** has been hailed by the Wall Street Journal as "perfect in every possible way – that rarity of rarities, a super-smart musical that is also a bona fide crowd pleaser." This tuneful, offbeat and at times heartwarming show offers audience members the opportunity (strictly voluntary) to become part of the action as on-stage spellers. The New York Times calls **SPELLING BEE**, "irresistible, riotously funny and remarkably ingenious – gold stars all around."

Annie

Thursday, April 9

Tickets: Subscription Packages Available – Platinum \$250 - \$215; Classic \$207 - \$177

Leapin' lizards! **Annie** is coming to Joliet! The timeless tale of Little Orphan Annie is back, giving a whole new generation the chance to experience this classic musical about never giving up hope. Boasting one of Broadway's most memorable scores, including "It's the Hard-Knock Life," "Easy Street," "N.Y.C." and the ever-optimistic "Tomorrow," **Annie** is a delightful theatrical experience for the entire family. Don't miss this all-new production that *Variety* calls "a winner!"

Keyboard Pops Concert

Saturday, April 25

Tickets: AA, A, B, C \$38

7:00PM

The theme to the 13th annual Rialto Keyboard Pops Concert will be "A Change of Seasons." The show will feature well known songs and medleys written for the year's seasons and holidays. The fan favorite Joliet American Legion Band will return along with world famous keyboard artists on the Barton Grande Theatre Pipe Organ. The artists this year will be the Trio Con Brio (Donna Parker, Martin Ellis & Jonas Nordwall) with specially prepared group arrangements on the show's theme. Also returning will be Walt Disney concert artist Rob Richards and pianist Alex Zsolt. At 26 years old, Zsolt is a magnificent popular and gospel keyboard artist, who will be preparing a special Patriotic medley as part of the seasonal offerings. The Keyboard Pops Concert originated as the Pipe Organ Extravaganza in 1995 and has continued to be widely popular with residents of Joliet and the surrounding communities.

Hal Holbrook in Mark Twain Tonight

Friday, May 8

Tickets: Subscription Packages Available – Platinum \$250 - \$215; Classic \$207 - \$177

Mark Twain Tonight! continues to enthrall audiences, with Holbrook performing 20-25 shows a year. By Holbrook's estimation, he has now performed the show well over 2,000 times. Just as Mark Twain brought his wit and humor to far-flung places a half-century before, Holbrook-as-Twain has also performed around the world, from Saudi Arabia and Warsaw, to Edinburgh and New Delhi. Holbrook is not simply an impersonator of Mark Twain, he is an authority on the writer about whom Hemingway said, "American literature began."