

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HIGH SIERRA THEATRES ANNOUNCES SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S SHOW BOAT

THE CLASSICAL AMERICAN MUSIC THEATRE EXCLUSIVE

Santa Fe, NM (March 24, 2015) – HIGH SIERRA THEATRES today announced that they will be premiering San Francisco Opera's Show Boat on June 6 at 4:00 PM and June 10 at 7:00 PM

Instead of just showing Hollywood Blockbusters, the Desert Sky Cinema and The Movie Picture Showhouse present alternative programs such as Operas, Broadway Shows and Art Exhibits.

Presentation

A true classic of American musical theater, this tale of life on the Mississippi from the 1880s to the 1920s is both a poignant love story and a powerful reminder of the bitter legacy of racism. Director Francesca Zambello's grand-scale production is "a triumph—a stylish, fast-paced and colorful show that had the capacity audience on its feet, cheering loud and long" (Chicago Classical Review). The magnificent Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein II score, which includes such classic songs as "Ol' Man River," "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man," "Make Believe" and "You Are Love," will sound glorious "under the authoritative baton of music-theater maestro John DeMain" (Chicago Tribune). "No one should miss it" (Chicago Sun-Times).

According to General Director David Gockley, "Show Boat will be done in grand opera fashion in the way the creators conceived. The Opera House is—I believe—the appropriate venue for these great classic musicals that require full-voiced, 'legit' singing."

"One memorable song follows another, each an enduring thread in the fabric of American popular culture." –Chicago Tribune

Musical in 2 acts
Sung in English

San Francisco Opera
Recorded June 2014

Running Time: 2h 24 min
Act 1: 1h 24 min | Act 2: 1h

CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor	John DeMain
Director	Francesca Zambella
Sets	Peter Davison
Costumes	Paul Tazewell
Lighting	Mark McCullough
Sound	Tod Nixon

Chorus Director	Ian Robertson
Choreographer	Michele Lynch
Fight Director	Dave Maier
Orchestra	San Francisco Orchestra

ARTISTIC TEAM

Magnolia Hawks	Heidi Stober
Gaylord Ravenal	Michael Todd Simpson
Cap'n Andy Hawks	Bill Irwin
Julie La Verne	Patricia Racette
Queenie	Angela Renée Simpson
Parthy Ann Hawks	Harriet Harris
Ellie Mae Chipley	Kirsten Wyatt
Joe	Morris Robinson
Frank Schultz	John Bolton

With: Sharon McNight, James Asher, Kevin Blackton, Patrick Cummings, Matthew Piatt, Carmen Steele, Tracy Camp, Kathleen Bayler, Sally Mouzon, Mary Finch, Samantha McElhane, Erin Neff, Simone Paulwell, Rachelle Perry, Christopher Jackson, Anthony McGlaun, Phillip Pickens

Synopsis

ACT I

Scene 1. The levee at Natchez on the Mississippi, late 1880s

A show boat, the Cotton Blossom, is in town. When the boat's cook, Queenie, arrives from the market, Pete, the engineer, demands to know who gave her the brooch she's wearing, but she responds evasively. Stevedores and townsfolk assert that workers get no rest because of the show boat. Steve Baker, the boat's leading actor, has placed near the gangplank a picture frame showing his wife, leading lady Julie La Verne. Pete steals the picture and stealthily heads for the towboat. A crowd gathers to hear Captain Andy Hawks's description of the evening's show. Pete is furious that Julie gave his gift to her—the brooch—to Queenie. Seeing Pete pestering Julie, Steve exchanges blows with Pete, who is then fired by Captain Andy. Parthy, Andy's wife, despises show people and warns Julie to have nothing to do with her daughter, Magnolia. Ellie May Chipley, the company's comedienne, fails to persuade Andy to give her dramatic roles if Julie leaves the company.

A dashing gambler, Gaylord Ravenal, appears on the levee. He tells Sheriff Vallon he's there for a short time, but Vallon warns him not to stay more than 24 hours. Suddenly Ravenal sees Magnolia and is instantly captivated. When Vallon announces that the judge would like to see Ravenal, he excuses himself politely. Magnolia asks Joe, a worker on the show boat, whether he knows the young man she was talking to. He doesn't, but he's seen his kind before on the river. She rushes off to find Julie. Joe believes the river will know—it knows everything.

Scene 2. The show boat's kitchen

Magnolia tells Julie she's in love, although she doesn't know the young man's name. Julie worries that he's a "no-account river feller." If he were, answers Magnolia, she'd stop loving him, but Julie knows otherwise and sings a song expressing her feelings. Queenie—surprised that Julie knows the song—adds her own exasperated verse about Joe.

Scene 3. Outside a waterfront saloon

Ravenal declares that if he loses at gambling today, he knows that things will go better for him later.

Scene 4. The show boat's stage

Queenie and the boat's workers sing a song about keeping unhappiness far away. Julie begins singing it herself, but as everyone joins with her, she suddenly cries out, "Stop singing that rotten song!" She manages to rehearse with Andy, Steve, and the company's resident villain, Frank Schultz.

Ellie, arriving late, whispers something in Steve's ear. When he whispers it to Julie, she collapses. Knowing the sheriff is on his way, Steve pulls out a knife, cuts Julie's finger, and sucks blood from it. Vallon arrives, informing Andy that in Mississippi it is unlawful for a Negro woman to marry a white man. In this case, he accuses Julie (whose last name he identifies as "Dozier") and Steve, who defiantly responds that he has Negro blood in him. Vallon advises that Andy cancel that evening's performance and departs. To Magnolia's dismay, Steve and Julie—intending to leave the company—go off to pack.

Andy does plan to cancel the performance, but wonders about tomorrow. He decides to assign Julie's role to Magnolia, who knows all the lines. To play opposite her, Frank suggests a gentleman he just met. He brings in Ravenal, who is immediately hired. Julie says goodbye to Magnolia, who sadly begins rehearsing with the enraptured Ravenal.

Scene 5. In front of the show boat's box office

Ellie sings to the Natchez girls about the sacrifices one makes in being an actress. Queenie goes into a vigorous sales pitch for the show.

Scene 6. Stage of the show boat

A melodrama is performed, with the embrace between "Parson Brown" (Ravenal) and "Miss Lucy" (Magnolia) drawing enthusiastic applause. When Frank, as the villain, grabs Magnolia, a patron shoots his gun in outrage!

Scene 7. The show boat's upper deck

Knowing Parthy will be preoccupied and unable to interfere, Ravenal convinces Magnolia to marry him the next day. The two are ecstatic.

Scene 8. The levee

The public is invited to the wedding. Magnolia and Ravenal are headed for a Natchez church when Parthy rushes in with Vallon and Pete. Everyone is shocked when Parthy accuses Ravenal of having killed a man the year before. Vallon admits that Ravenal got off on self-defense, at which Andy expresses no objection, admitting that when he was nineteen he, too, killed a man. Hearing that Magnolia and Ravenal are going to marry, Parthy faints. Andy declares that the wedding can now proceed.

ACT II

Scene 1. Chicago World's Fair, 1893

Ravenal and Magnolia make merry with Chicagoans, dazzled by the Columbian Exposition. Feeling that luck is with him, Ravenal goes off to gamble.

Scene 2. A suite at the Palmer House, Chicago

Life feels blissful for Magnolia and Ravenal.

Scene 3. The show boat

Andy reads Parthy their daughter's letter describing her life with Ravenal. Parthy disapproves of how much they are spending on luxuries. Andy proposes a trip to Chicago to see the Ravenals and Kim, their daughter.

Scene 4. A room on Ontario Street, Chicago, 1904

At a boarding house, Frank and Ellie ask the landlady about renting a room. Incensed that her current occupants haven't paid their rent in weeks, Mrs. O'Brien is planning to get rid of them. She reveals, too, that the man is a gambler and that everything he and his wife own has been pawned. Frank and Ellie are astonished when Magnolia arrives. She explains that these are temporary quarters, prior to her moving with Ravenal to the lake shore. Sensing that Magnolia needs money, Frank offers to get her a job singing. Mrs. O'Brien hands Magnolia a letter

About HIGH SIERRA THEATRES

Founded in 2012, High Sierra Theatres is an owner/operator/management company that was formed by Thomas Becker and Nick Sanchez. Both partners have extensive experience in the motion picture exhibition industry, having over 65 years combined experience.

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