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MEDIA ALERT FOR THEATRE EDITORS AND REVIEWERS
AND CALENDAR LISTINGS

**LA MIRADA THEATRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS &
MC COY RIGBY ENTERTAINMENT**

Present their First Production of the 2009/2010 Season!

CATHY RIGBY & MICHAEL LEARNED

Starring in...

STEEL MAGNOLIAS

Written by Robert Harling

Directed by Brian Kite

*Limited Engagement begins October 2 at
La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts!*

(Press Opening Saturday, October 3)

August 31, 2009...La Mirada, Calif...La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts and McCoy Rigby Entertainment in association with The Welk Resorts Theatre are proud to present the first production of La Mirada Theatre's 2009-2010 season of shows, Cathy Rigby and Michael Learned starring in the funny and moving, **STEEL MAGNOLIAS**, written by Robert Harling and directed by La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts Producing Artistic Director Brian Kite. **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** will begin performances on Friday, October 2 (with a press opening on Saturday, October 3) and will run through Sunday, October 18 at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts, 14900 La Mirada Boulevard in La Mirada.

"If you can't find anything good to say about anybody, come sit by me." These words of wisdom sum up Robert Harling's 1987 off-Broadway sensation and subsequent smash film *Steel Magnolias*. Set in a beauty parlor in Chinquapin, Louisiana, *Steel Magnolias* illustrates how the lives of six distinctly different women interweave via the small town gossip that shadows the unending cycle of birth, marriage and death. "I'm not crazy, I've just been in a bad mood for forty years!" Filled with hilarious Southern repartee and humorously revealing verbal collisions, the play draws on the town's underlying strength—and love—which gives the play, and its characters, the special quality to make them truly touching, funny and marvelously amiable company in good times and in bad.

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ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

ROBERT HARLING (Playwright) was born in 1951 in Louisiana. Harling is an American writer and film director best known for *Steel Magnolias*. Harling was an aspiring actor when the death of his younger sister inspired him to write the play that remains his most famous work. He went on to adapt the screenplay for the film version of the play that was produced in 1989 starring Sally Field and Julia Roberts. He played a small role in the film as a minister. Harling has concentrated on working as a screenwriter in subsequent years. He is the author of the screenplays to the films *Soapdish* (1991), *The First Wives Club* (1996), *Laws of Attraction* (2004), and is currently working on the screenplay for the film version of *Dallas*. He also wrote and directed the sequel to *Terms of Endearment* titled *The Evening Star* (1996).

BRIAN KITE (Director) has directed across the United States and abroad. His La Mirada Theatre credits include the critically acclaimed productions of *Driving Miss Daisy* starring Michael Learned and David Auburn's *Proof*. He recently helmed a production of *Cabaret* in Bermuda under the patronage of the Queen's Governor and directed a production of Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* at The Actors Co-op in Hollywood. Before that he directed two Los Angeles revivals, *J.B.* by Archibald MacLeish, *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, and the West Coast premiere of Václav Havel's *The Beggar's Opera*. He directed the Philadelphia production of Glenn Wein's *Grandma Sylvia's Funeral* and worked with Tony Award-winning director Daniel Sullivan on The Geffen Playhouse's production of *Hedda Gabler* starring Annette Bening. He directed over 20 productions at French Woods Festival in New York where he was the Director of Theater Programs for over 7 years. Brian is currently a member of the directing faculty at U.C.L.A.'s School of Theater, Film and Television, serves on the Board of Governors of the Los Angeles Stage Alliance, is the Producing Artistic Director of La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts and is the Artistic Director of the award-winning Buffalo Nights Theatre Company.

ABOUT THE CAST

CATHY RIGBY (M'Lynn) earned a Tony nomination when she starred in the 35th Anniversary production of *Peter Pan* on Broadway in 1991. She has, to date, logged more frequent flyer miles than any other actress in this role. She made her musical debut in 1981 as Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*. Subsequently, her multiple talents have been lauded on Broadway at the Richard Rodgers Theatre as the Cat-In-The-Hat in *Seussical the Musical* and in the national tours of *Seussical the Musical*, *Annie Get Your Gun* and productions of *Meet Me In St. Louis*, *South Pacific*, *Paint Your Wagon*, *They're Playing Our Song* and *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*. Some of Rigby's dramatic television movie credits include the "Perfect Body," "Hard To Read," "The Great Wallendas" and "Triathlon." A two-time Olympic gymnast, Cathy Rigby is the first American woman to win a medal in the World Gymnastics competition and holds 12 international medals, eight of them gold.

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After participating in world-renowned gymnastics, Cathy worked with ABC as a gymnastic commentator for 18 years. ABC-TV's venerable "Wide World of Sports" named her one of America's Most Influential Women in Sports. In 1994, Cathy and her husband, Tom McCoy, assumed the responsibilities as Executive Producers of the McCoy Rigby Series at the La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts in La Mirada, California, allowing them to produce first-class theatrical productions and mount national tours. Cathy and husband Tom own and operate McCoy Rigby Dance Academy in Yorba Linda, CA, with the goal of bringing the joy of dance and performing to over 500 students. Cathy and Tom celebrated 25 years of marriage on September 11th. They have four children and two grandchildren. Cathy is currently participating with multiple charities including the Special Olympics, the Long Beach Aquarium by the Sea, and the Peter Pan Children's Fund.

MICHAEL LEARNED (Quiser) is a four-time Emmy award-winning actress, three for her work as Olivia Walton on the acclaimed TV series, "The Waltons," and one for her role as Mary Benjamin in her own series "Nurse." She is also a three-time Golden Globe nominee. On stage she most recently co-starred with Tom Bosley in the national tour of *On Golden Pond* and also in Lewis Black's *One Slight Hitch* at The Falcon Theatre. Other theatre appearances include *Elizabeth the Queen* at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Edward Albee's *All Over* at The Gramercy Theatre and the McCarter Theatre, on Broadway in Gore Vidal's *The Best Man* and Wendy Wasserstein's *The Sisters Rosenzweig*. West Coast premieres include *Woman in Mind* and *Hapgood* both for American Conservatory Theatre. Ms. Learned's involvement as a leading lady with ACT dates back to 1967. In Los Angeles she has appeared at the Ahmanson in *Mary Stuart* and *Picnic*, at The Mark Taper in *A Month in the Country* and at the Geffen in *Looking for Normal*. She has toured in A.R. Gurney's *Love Letters* and Edward Albee's *Three Tall Women*. Michael premiered in Arthur Miller's *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* at Williamstown Theatre Festival. The eldest of six sisters, Ms. Learned spent her first decade on her family's farm in Connecticut. When she was eleven, Ms. Learned moved to Austria where her father worked for the U.S. State Department. While attending boarding school in England, she discovered the theatre and made it her life's work. She trained at San Francisco's American Conservatory Theatre where she frequently appeared with her first husband, actor Peter Donat. Ms. Learned has appeared in the films "For the Love of Mary," "Life During Wartime," "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story" and "Power," directed by Sidney Lumet. Television appearances include "Law and Order: SVU," "Living Dolls," "Profiler," "A Father for Brittany," "A Walton Easter," "A Walton Wedding," "Murder in New Hampshire," "Roots: The Gift" and "All My Sons," to name a few.

The cast of **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** also includes: Emma Fassler, Christa Jackson, Rosina Reynolds, and Amy Sloan.

STEEL MAGNOLIAS has assembled an award-winning design team. The set design is by John Iacovelli. The lighting design is by Craig Pierce. The costume design is by Julie Keen. The sound design is by Josh Bessom. Prop design by Terry Hanrahan. Wig/Hair/Make-Up design is by Judi Lewin.

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STEEL MAGNOLIAS will begin performances on Friday, October 2 (with a press opening on Saturday, October 3) and runs for three weeks through Sunday, October 18. Performances will be 7:30pm on Tuesdays through Thursdays; 8pm on Fridays; 2pm and 8pm on Saturdays; and 2pm and 7pm on Sundays. There will be no matinee performance on Saturday, October 3 at 2pm and no evening performance on Sunday, October 4 at 7pm.

STEEL MAGNOLIAS will open at The Welk Resorts Theatre in Escondido on January 7 for a three-week run.

Tickets range from \$35 - \$50 and can be purchased at La Mirada Theatre's website, www.lamiradatheatre.com or by calling the La Mirada Theatre Box Office at (562) 944-9801 or (714) 994-6310. Student, Senior, Children and group discounts are available.

LA MIRADA THEATRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, now in its fourth decade, has been hailed by the Los Angeles Times as "one of the best Broadway-style houses in Southern California." This beautiful state-of-the-art theatre has been producing quality productions for its Southern California audiences since 1977. The theatre has produced several national tours and is the recipient of many accolades including Ovation and Emmy Awards and Tony Award nominations. Brian Kite is the theatre's Producing Artistic Director. The theatre is located at 14900 La Mirada Boulevard in La Mirada, California, near the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue. Parking is theatre-adjacent and free. For further information call 562-944-9801 or visit www.lamiradatheatre.com.

McCOY RIGBY ENTERTAINMENT combines the talents of musical theatre star Cathy Rigby with Tom McCoy's extensive production and theatrical experience and has become one of the nation's premier theatrical production companies. Credits include Tony-nominated Broadway shows, long-running national tours, multiple-award-winning Los Angeles stage productions, and hit TV specials. The number of major theatrical awards garnered by McCoy Rigby Entertainment includes 3 Ovation Awards, 25 Drama-Logue Awards, 3 Backstage Garland Awards and 3 Tony Award nominations, 20 Ovation nominations and 8 NAACP award nominations for the touring production of Jesus Christ Superstar. In addition, the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences awarded McCoy Rigby Entertainment an Emmy for Best Scene Design as part of four nominations for the A&E network production of Peter Pan. www.mccoyrigby.com

THE WELK RESORTS THEATRE in Escondido, CA has offered quality, professional entertainment to the greater San Diego area since 1981. The 339-seat house offers variety shows, full Broadway musicals and plays and celebrity weekend acts. Joshua Carr is the Welk's Producer and Theatre Manager.