

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 15, 2009

Contact: Rachel Flynn, 651.292.4323 x106
pr@historytheatre.com

**“Hell...its only rock & roll.
It's the music everybody wants to hear, man!”
– Buddy, 1956, *Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story***

History Theatre partners with McNally Smith College of Music to produce *Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story* a show that is part biography, part rock ‘n’ roll concert which follows the bespectacled musician on this meteoric rise from a rebellious country singer to a rock ‘n’ roll icon and pioneer in the 1950s, ending with the unforgettable concert with Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper in Clear Lake, Iowa – the day the music died.

Buddy Holly (a.k.a. Charles Hardin Holley) was not only extremely talented, but relentless in his pursuit of his music. In a time when rock ‘n’ roll was demonized by many Buddy stood his ground and hung on to his principles. In doing so, he rose to the top of the charts in less than two years! Buddy Holly’s brief life has become the stuff of legend. With ***Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story***, writers Alan Janes and Rob Bettinson have created a celebration of that legend which catches the unique mixture of innocence, determination, humor, and charm that epitomized the emergence of rock ‘n’ roll into the American mainstream during the 1950s.

History Theatre is thrilled to open its 32nd season with a first-ever artistic collaboration with McNally Smith College of Music and the St. Paul Conservatory of Performing Artists (SPCPA). This rock ‘n’ roll musical provides the perfect opportunity for artists and students from all three organizations to explore the origins of the music and dance that we know and love today while celebrating the contributions of a remarkably talented artist who started to change the way America listened to music when he was only 20 years old. By pooling the strengths of these three dynamic St. Paul arts organizations History Theatre will tell a story about an iconic American figure, McNally Smith students will channel their study of contemporary music and the recording industry into a unique performance experience, and students in the dance and musical theater programs at SPCPA will bring the energy and youth of Buddy’s fans onto the stage while getting to work alongside professional artists in both the theatre and music industries.

Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story was originally produced at the Plymouth Theatre Royal, directed by Rob Bettinson who co-wrote the show with Alan Janes. The show has enjoyed enormous success in London (where it ran for 18 years on the West End) and around the world. The production on History Theatre’s stage is a first-ever artistic collaboration between History Theatre and McNally Smith College of Music featuring artists and performers, professionals and students from both organizations. ***Buddy*** is directed by Ron Peluso with music direction from Gary Rue, choreographed by Jan Puffer, with scenic design by Justin Hooper and Ron Peluso, costume design by Lynn Farrington, lighting design by Chris Johnson, sound and video design by Mike Pledl, and properties design by Crystal Schneider. Starring Nicholas Freeman as Buddy Holly; Josh Bourdon and Zach Spicer as The Crickets; Charles Fraser and Brittany Parker as Norman and Vi Petty; Nora Montanez as Maria Elena Holly; and featuring James Fairchild as The Big Bopper and Allen Malicsi as Ritchie Valens. The cast also includes Alyssa Divigili, Lynnea Monique Doublette, Munyaradzi Tirivepi, Brandon Petron, Ben Barna, Shana Berg, John Ensrud, David Hopkins-Hile, Shelby Alden, Shane Larson, Dominic Running, Ryan Spencer, and Camile Trocke-Fowler.

Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story

Opens: Saturday, October 3, 2009 (previews 10/1/09 and 10/2/09)

Through: Sunday, November 1, 2009

Thursdays @ 10 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Fridays & Saturdays @ 7:30 p.m. (& 2:00 p.m. on 10/24)

Sundays @ 2:00 p.m.

At the History Theatre, 30 East Tenth Street, St. Paul, MN

For directions and parking information visit: www.historytheatre.com/box_office.asp

TICKETS: Adults: **\$28-\$32.00**; Seniors: **\$25-\$30.00**; Students: **\$15.00**; Children: **\$10.00**. Group rates are available.

To purchase tickets, call the History Theatre Box Office at 651.292.4323 or go to www.historytheatre.com.

Special Events:

- Saturday, October 3 @ 6:00 pm: **Buddy Opening Night Fifties Bash**
Prior to the opening performance of ***Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story*** guests are invited to mix and mingle in the McNally Smith café with music provided by Mick Sterling and his band, hors d'oeuvres, wine, and beer. A program hosted by Don Shelby will include interviews with special guests including Peggy Sue (the song's namesake, via teleconference) and two of the original Crickets, Sonny Curtis and Jerry Allison. Tickets to the Bash include tickets to the performance of ***Buddy*** and range from \$75 - \$100 for Individuals, or \$250 per couple at the Producer level.
 - **Afterthoughts Discussion Series**
Sundays, 10/4, 10/11, 10/18, 10/25, and 11/1
Patrons are invited to join a discussion series which will immediately follow Sunday performances. *Afterthoughts* will feature the history makers and artists whose influence helped craft the stories that are seen on the History Theatre stage. Check www.HistoryTheatre.com for details about special guests and topics.
-

Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story is proudly sponsored by Travelers, and supported by the Saint Paul Cultural STAR Program.

About the Directors:

Ron Peluso (Director / History Theatre Artistic Director)

Now in his 16th season as Artistic Director, Ron has commissioned over 60 playwrights and composers and produced more than 50 original works, including the popular *Sisters of Swing* and *Beyond the Rainbow*. He has also commissioned and directed Jeffrey Hatcher's critically acclaimed *A Piece of the Rope* and *Tyrone & Ralph*, and Craig Wright's adaptation of *Main Street*. He has directed over 150 professional productions with such companies as Florida Stage, Riverside Theatre, Pennsylvania Opera Theater, Mixed Blood Theatre, Old Creamery Theatre and The Minnesota Opera. Ron holds an MFA in Directing from the University of Minnesota.

Gary Rue (Music Director / McNally Smith College of Music Composition Faculty Member)

Gary has composed more than 70 scores for musical theater, among these, *Painting It Red* by Steven Dietz, which enjoyed wide exposure nationally including a very successful 6 week run at Berkeley Repertory Theater's Second Stage. Gary is also composer-in-residence at SteppingStone Theatre of St Paul. One of these commissions, *The Stinky Cheese Man*, recently completed a national tour (including a series of performances in Shanghai, China) with the Dallas Children's Theatre. Mr. Rue had also served since 1986 as conductor and arranger in North America for one of Buddy Holly's contemporaries, '60's

pop star Gene Pitney. While on tour he enjoyed several concerts where Gene and the Crickets shared the bill.

The Creative Team:

Jan Puffer ~ Choreographer
John Kent ~ Assistant Musical Director
Max Athorn ~ Assistant Director
Justin Hooper ~ Co-Scenic Designer and Technical Director
Chris Johnson ~ Lighting Designer
Lynn Farrington ~ Costume Designer
Susan Fick ~ Assistant Costume Designer
Mike Pledl ~ Sound and Video Designer
Crystal Schneider ~ Property Designer and Deck Manager
Janet Hall ~ Stage Manager

The Cast:

Buddy Holly ~ Nicholas Freeman (Shoreview)
Joe, bassist for The Crickets ~ Josh Bourdon (St. Paul)
Jerry, drummer for The Crickets ~ Zach Spicer
Hipockets Duncan, Norman Petty and Ensemble ~ Charles Fraser (St. Paul)
Vi Petty, Mary Lou Sokoloff and Ensemble ~ Brittany Parker (Apple Valley)
Maria Elena and Ensemble ~ Nora Montanez (Minneapolis)
Apollo Performers and Ensemble ~ Alyssa Divigili, Lynnea Monique Doublette, Sanyo Lubogo, Munyaradzi Tirivepi (St. Paul), and Jordan Ukura
Tommy, guitarist for The Crickets ~ Brandon Petron (Shorewood)
J. P. Richardson The Big Bopper and Ensemble ~ James Fairchild (Menasha, WI)
Ritchie Valens and Ensemble ~ Allen Malicsi (Bloomington)
Conductor / Keyboards ~ Nic Delcambre
Ensemble ~ Ben Barna (St. Paul), Shana Berg (St. Paul), John Ensrud (St. Paul), David Hopkins-Hile (St. Paul)
Dancers ~ Shelby Alden, Shane Larson, Dominic Running, Ryan Spencer, and Camile Trocke-Fowler

About History Theatre:

For 32 years, the History Theatre Experience has created:

- Inspiration. The History Theater Experience brings real stories about real people to the stage in an immediate experience that touches our lives.
- 105 world premiere performances, more than any other theater in the Twin Cities. The History Theatre is one of the country's most impressive new play development homes – bringing to full production new work by Jeffrey Hatcher, Melanie Marnich, Craig Wright, Kim Hines, Dorie Baizley, John Olive, Kira Obolensky, and more.
- Brave, entertaining explorations of all the histories that make up our diverse community. From *Farm Boys* to *Snapshots: Life in the City*, from the celebratory *Wellstone!* to the dark, complex *Piece of the Rope* about Minnesota's first public execution, HT has moved Minnesotans to rediscover, relive, and respect every piece of their history. More than 200,000 students have connected with history through performances at HT.

Complete Performance Schedule Attached

Photos are available upon request.

History Theatre

Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story

Performance Schedule 2009

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Thursday, October 1 2009 (preview) | 7:30 pm |
| Friday, October 2, 2009 (preview) | 7:30 pm |
| Saturday, October 3, 2009 (opening) | 7:30 pm |
| Sunday, October 4, 2009 (A) | 2:00 pm |
| Thursday, October 8, 2009 | 10:00 am & 7:30 pm |
| Friday, October 9, 2009 | 7:30 pm |
| Saturday, October 10, 2009 | 7:30 pm |
| Sunday, October 11, 2009 (A) | 2:00 pm |
| Thursday, October 15, 2009 | 7:30 pm |
| Friday, October 16, 2009 | 7:30 pm |
| Saturday, October 17, 2009 | 7:30 pm |
| Sunday, October 18, 2009 (A) | 2:00 pm AD/ASL |
| Thursday, October 22, 2009 | 10:00 am & 7:30 pm |
| Friday, October 23, 2009 | 7:30 pm |
| Saturday, October 24, 2009 | 2:00 pm & 7:30 pm |
| Sunday, October 25, 2009 (A) | 2:00 pm |
| Thursday, October 29, 2009 | 10:00 am & 7:30 pm |
| Friday, October 30, 2009 | 7:30 pm |
| Saturday, October 31, 2009 | 7:30 pm |
| Sunday, November 1, 2009 (A) | 2:00 pm |

(A) = performance will be followed by *Afterthoughts* discussion

AD/ASL = Audio Description & American Sign Language interpreted performance

###