



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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24 November 2013

**Monterey Peninsula College Storybook Theatre presents
HUCK FINN'S STORY**

**Adapted by Aurand Harris - Based on Mark Twain's novel
November 7 – 24**

Director Susanne Burns, like most Americans, knew very well the story of Huckleberry Finn and his adventures with his friend Tom Sawyer and their friend Jim. What she didn't know was how she was going to fit that sweeping story with its numerous and diverse characters – not to mention the Mississippi River – into MPC Theatre's "cozy" newly renovated Studio Theatre. Once she had assembled her young, talented and eager cast, it became clear.

"I've always thought that 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn' was really about Huck's various relationships and how they fit into the landscape of Twain's south. With the diverse cast I'm lucky to be working with, it came to me quickly: *THEY* would make up not only Twain's people, but the environment around those people!"

And with that decision, "Huck Finn's Story" sets sail down the Mighty Mississippi for a limited three weekend run beginning with a preview performance on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. and ending with a matinee performance on Sunday November 24th.

The production begins with the suggestion of the rural south with a minimal set (designed by Danielle Maupin) that in some cases literally launches the characters into the various chapters of Huck's life. With the exception of the characters of Huck (Alex Thibeau) and the runaway slave Jim (Greg Sims) all of the actors in the cast play multiple roles. The fact that some of those roles may be that of a bullfrog, reed or part of the current of the Mississippi itself makes it all the more challenging and fun for cast and audience alike. Shifts in locale are handled with a combination of the dialogue itself (that same cast narrates Twain's prose as interpreted by play author Aurand Harris) and evocative lighting provided by

designer Joanna Hobbs. Even a thunder storm and the far away baying of hounds are created by the cast both on and off stage.

“It’s been really amazing to see how much they’ve gotten into it!” Burns said. “Sometimes it feels like they enjoy playing the animal and nature ‘characters’ as much or more than the people they play!” Adding to all of it is the addition of music (vocal coaching by Lyn Whiting). “The songs really help reveal some of the character’s state of mind and also help evoke the feel of that long ago time.” The songs range from soft hymns that reflect Jim’s deep love of God and family to the wanderlust that Huck feels in wanting to go “out west”. Seeing the cast, some of whom are very young and just discovering the wonderful work of Samuel Langhorn Clemmens (aka “Mark Twain”) themselves for the first time has been part of the joy of directing this piece for Burns. “I’ve read Twain and, like most people, had an idea of how his characters looked and sounded. But once you hear this group of people you just say – ‘Yep! That’s the way it should be!’”

The creative team includes **Susanne Burns** (*Director*), **D. Thomas Beck** (Technical Director), **Dani Maupin** (Scenic Designer), **Joanna Hobbs** (*Lighting & Sound Design*), and **Gloria C. Mattos Hughes** (*Costume Designer*).

Tickets on sale at the MPC Box Office (646-4213) and online at <https://www.TicketGuys.com/mpc>

Preview performance on Thursday November 7th at 7:00 PM. Regular performances are Friday & Saturday at 7:00 PM (November 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23) and Saturday & Sunday at 3:00 PM (November 9, 10, 16, 17, 23 24)

at the Studio Theatre at MPC (980 Fremont Street, Monterey). MPC Box Office is located at 980 Fremont Street, downtown Monterey. Tickets are \$15 Adults; \$12 Young Adults (16-21) & Military, and \$9 Children 15 & under. Tickets may be purchased from the MPC Box Office (831-646-4213) Wednesdays through Friday from 3:00 – 7:00 PM, or online at www.TicketGuys.com

Storybook Theatre productions are made possible in part by grants from, *The Monterey Peninsula Volunteer Services*, *The Yellow Brick Road Benefit Shop*, *The S.T.A.R. Foundation*, *The Jim Tunney Youth Foundation*, and our Fairy God Parents.

Thr., Nov 7 – 7:00 p.m. – Preview

Fri., Nov 8 - 7:00 p.m. - Opening

Sat., Nov 9 – 3:00 p.m.

Sat., Nov 9 - 7:00 p.m.

Sun., Nov 10 – 3:00 p.m.

Fri., Nov 15 - 7:00 p.m.

Sat., Nov 16 – 3:00 p.m.

Sat., Nov 16- 7:00 p.m.
Sun., Nov 17 – 3:00 p.m.

Fri., Nov 22 - 7:00 p.m.
Sat., Nov 23 - 3:00 p.m.
Sat., Nov 23 - 7:00 p.m.
Sun., Nov 24 – 3:00 p.m. - Closing