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PRESS RELEASE

Woodminster Summer Musicals Announces 53rd Season for Summer 2019

March 7, 2019, Oakland, CA – Producers Associates announces the 53rd season of the Woodminster Summer Musicals in Joaquin Miller Park. 2019's shows are *Disney's Newsies*, *Billy Elliot*, and *Into the Woods*.

Disney's Newsies will be performed first in our season from July 5-7 and 11-14. *Newsies* is inspired by the real-life "Newsboy Strike of 1899," when newsboy Kid Blink led a band of orphan and runaway newsies on a two-week-long action against Pulitzer, Hearst and other powerful newspaper publishers. High-energy with non-stop thrills, the stage version introduces eight brand-new songs by the original team of Menken and Feldman while keeping many of the beloved songs from the film, including "Carrying the Banner," "Seize the Day," "King of New York" and "Santa Fe." A two-time Tony Award®-winning show, *Newsies* has audiences and critics alike calling it "a musical worth singing about!" (The New York Times). Filled with one heart-pounding number after another, it's a high-energy explosion of song and dance you don't want to miss. All performances at 8pm.

Based on the international smash-hit film and featuring a score by music legend Elton John, *Billy Elliot*, running August 2-4 and 8-11, follows the inspirational story set in a northern English mining town against the background of the 1984 miners' strike of a young boy's struggle against the odds to make his dream come true. Follow Billy's journey as he stumbles out of the boxing ring and into a ballet class, where he discovers a passion for dance that inspires his family and community, and changes his life forever. With a powerful storyline, large youth cast, rousing songs, and sensational choreography *Billy Elliot* is the perfect opportunity to let young talent shine! All performances at 8pm.

The Tony Award-winning book and score of *Into the Woods*, performances Aug 30-Sept 1 and 5-8, are both enchanting and touching. James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim take everyone's favorite Grimm-like Fairytale characters and bring them together for a timeless, yet relevant, piece... and a rare modern classic. The story follows a Baker and his wife, who wish to have a child; Cinderella, who wishes to attend the King's Festival; and Jack, who wishes his cow would give milk. When the Baker and his wife learn that they cannot have a child because of a Witch's curse, the two set off on a journey to break the curse. Everyone's wish is granted, but the consequences of their actions return to haunt them later with disastrous results. Thursday and Sunday performances at 7pm, Friday and Saturday performances at 8pm.

Says Managing Director, Harriet Schlader "Musical theater is about bringing people together and we love continuing to bring Broadway shows to Oakland at prices the whole family can afford. We have a wonderful season this year with Disney's *Newsies* and it's 'Fancies' who will enjoy the David vs. Goliath outcome along with the athletic and showstopping dances. *Billy Elliot* will showcase our younger Bay Area talent and tell a timeless story about pursuing passions against all odds and acceptance. And our audiences have been wanting us to produce *Into the Woods* for several seasons and we can't wait for them to experience that show actually in some woods! It will be a great season for all!"

Auditions for all three shows are April 6 & 7 at Woodminster Amphitheater in Joaquin Miller Park in Oakland. Singing auditions are both afternoons (choose one to attend). Dance audition breakdown: dancers 10-14 yrs old will audition April 6 at 10am and adult dancers will audition at 11am. April 7, AEA male dancers will audition at 10am and AEA female dancers will audition at 11:30am. Open Call dance auditions will be held on April 7 at 11am. ALL dance auditions will be held at the Joaquin Miller Community Center. Bring tap shoes and jazz or ballet shoes. *Newsies* and *Billy Elliot* will require strong dance backgrounds. Please see <http://woodminster.com/auditions-2019.html> for exact times and other details, as well as special instructions for auditioners. We welcome people from all ethnic backgrounds to audition and are committed to non-traditional casting. Two audition workshops will be offered on March 10 & 16 from 2-5pm at the Montclair Presbyterian Church in the Choir Room. A registration fee of \$25 is required to attend. This is a terrific opportunity to learn what music to choose for your voice, how to prepare the music for an accompanist, how to dress and conduct yourself at an audition. Jenny Matteucci and Daniel Lockert will conduct the workshops and our staff will be on hand to contribute their thoughts. Registration form is located on our website. <http://woodminster.com/audition-workshop.html>

Tickets for the 2019 season range from \$33 to \$70, with season tickets providing about a 15% discount, and numerous other discounts available, including:

- The K75 program, about a 75% discount for tickets for children and teens 16 and younger who attend with adults (up to 5 kids per 1 adult). Any performance, purchase tickets any time.
 - *Kids Come Free* continues to provide free tickets for kids up to 16 years old who attend with adults (1 kid per 1 adult). Any performance, available night of performance only.
 - Millennials' Half Price (ages 17-30). Any performance, night of performance only.
 - Oakland Resident Half Price. Opening nights only, purchase tickets any time with code, pick up with ID showing Oakland address.
 - Group Rate (25 or more tickets) About half price Thursdays, Fridays, Sundays.
 - Mini-group Rate (12 or more tickets) About 15% off, any performance.
- (Details of discount programs on www.woodminster.com.)

Woodminster Summer Musicals are performed outdoors, under the stars at Woodminster Amphitheater, an historic city-owned outdoor performance facility in Joaquin Miller Park high in the Oakland Hills. The park's spectacular views and serene woodsy environment made it the perfect setting for the amphitheater, cascades, reflecting pool, and paths that were originally built as a WPA project in 1939-40. With a dedicated board of directors, Producers Associates, Inc. has maintained and improved the facility, which attracts audience from all over the Bay Area and beyond, contributing to the economic health of the neighborhood. The Woodminster Summer Musicals are produced in cooperation with the City of Oakland's Parks and Recreation Department, and the City derives over \$45,000 per year in facility fees plus considerable revenues from parking fees. For many East Bay families, it is a long-standing summer tradition to enjoy a picnic in the park and then see a musical at Woodminster. For more information about the 2019 season or the history of the organization, visit www.woodminster.com.

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