



**For Immediate Release**

January 27, 2010

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**NETworks presents**

**DISNEY'S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST**

**The smash hit Broadway musical plays Flint's The Whiting  
February 27 - 28**

**FLINT - Disney's Beauty and the Beast**, the award-winning worldwide smash hit Broadway musical, is coming to Flint as part of The Whiting's 2009-10 Season. Produced by NETworks Presentations, this elaborate theatrical production will come to life on stage at The Whiting for three performances on February 27 at 3pm and 8pm and February 28 at 2pm. Ticket prices range from \$23 - \$67 and are available online at **TheWhiting.com**, by calling **(810) 237-7333** and in person at The Ticket Center located within The Whiting. The Whiting is located at 1241 E. Kearsley St., just off I-475 between the University of Michigan Flint and Mott Community College on the beautiful Flint Cultural Center campus.

For information on the production, visit **[www.BeautyAndTheBeastOnTour.com](http://www.BeautyAndTheBeastOnTour.com)**.

**Disney's Beauty and the Beast** features the animated film's Academy Award®-winning score with music by Alan Menken and lyrics by the late Howard Ashman, with additional songs with music by Alan Menken and lyrics by Tim Rice. The book is written by Linda Woolverton.

The original creators of the Broadway production are together again for this new touring production! The play is directed by Rob Roth and choreographed by Matt West, with



Costume Design by Ann Hould-Ward (Tony Award® winner for her work on *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*), Lighting Design by Natasha Katz, Scenic Design by Stanley A. Meyer, Sound Design by John Petrafesa Jr. and Music Supervision by Michael Kosarin.

Director Rob Roth: "It has been wonderful to bring the entire original design team back together to work on this new production of *Beauty and the Beast*. As a director, it is rare to have the opportunity to revisit your work fifteen years later. Hopefully I've grown and developed as an artist, along with my collaborators, and we can bring 15 years of experience to this new production. We have remained very close as a team over the years of producing the show around the world, and it has been so much fun getting together to

*More...*

re-explore and re-invent the show for this new NETworks tour. The theme of 'Beauty' is about seeing past the exterior into the heart of someone, and this is reflected in the design for the show, which is about transparency and layers, seeing past one thing and into another."

**Disney's Beauty and the Beast** is the classic story of Belle, a young woman in a provincial town, and the Beast, who is really a young prince trapped in a spell placed by an enchantress. If the Beast can learn to love and be loved, the curse will end and he will be transformed to his former self. But time is running out. If the Beast does not learn his lesson soon, he and his household will be doomed for all eternity.

**Disney's Beauty and the Beast** has become an international sensation that has played to over 35 million people worldwide in 21 countries.

This performance is generously supported by Health Alliance Plan, McLaren Regional Medical Center, Cars 108, HealthPlus, All Weather Seal, Citizens Bank, WKYC, CK 105.5 and abc12.

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**\*\*Reviewer Tickets AVAILABLE. High Resolution Images available upon request.**

**To secure tickets or request images, please contact Wendi Fournier at**

**(810) 237-8689 or [wfournier@thewhiting.com](mailto:wfournier@thewhiting.com)\*\***

### **Biographies**

**Alan Menken's** stage musicals include (in chronological order) *God Bless You Mr. Rosewater*, *Atina: Evil Queen of the Galaxy*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Dream on Royal Street*, *Kicks: The Showgirl Musical*, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Weird Romance*, *King David*, *Der Glockner von Notre Dame*, *The Little Mermaid* and *Sister Act*. His film musicals include *Little*



*Shop of Horrors, The Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, Aladdin, Newsies, Pocahontas, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Hercules, Home on the Range, A Christmas Carol and Enchanted.*

He has won more Academy Awards than any other living individual, including 4 Oscars for Best Score (*The Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, Aladdin* and *Pocahontas*) and 4 Oscars for best song (“Under the Sea,” “Beauty and the Beast,” “A Whole New World” and “Colors of the Wind”). In addition, he has been nominated 18 times, including Best Song nominations for “Mean Green Mother From Outer Space,” “Kiss the Girl,” “Belle,” “Be Our Guest,” “Friend Like Me,” “Go the Distance,” “Happy Working Song,” “So Close” and “That’s How You Know,” plus a Best Score nomination for *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. He has won 10 Grammy Awards (including Song of the Year for “A Whole New World”), 7 Golden Globes, London’s Evening Standard Award, the Olivier Award and the Outer Critics Circle Award.

Other notable achievements include Billboard’s number one single (“A Whole New World”) and number one album (*Pocahontas*), an honorary doctorate in fine arts from New York University and induction into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. Alan’s upcoming stage and film projects include a new stage musical of *Leap of Faith* (opening on Broadway in the fall of ’10), a stage adaptation of *Newsies* and a new Disney animated musical, *Rapunzel* (slated for release holiday season of ’10).

**Howard Ashman** conceived, wrote and directed *Little Shop of Horrors*, based on Roger Corman’s 1960-era horror flick and with music by Alan Menken. *Little Shop* played for five years off-Broadway at the Orpheum Theater. The show continues to be produced to great acclaim in the US as well as internationally. In 2003, *Little Shop* was revived on Broadway and in 2007 it was revived on the West End. It is currently one of the most produced shows in American High Schools.

In 1986, Ashman wrote and directed the Broadway musical, *Smile*, music by Marvin Hamlisch. Little appreciated at the time, *Smile* is now considered a lost gem of musical theater and is performed by high school students around the US.

Turning his talents toward film, Ashman was pivotal in the renaissance of Disney animated musicals and in the development of Disney’s *The Little Mermaid* (Producer and Lyrics), *Beauty and the Beast* (Executive Producer and Lyrics) and *Aladdin* (Lyrics), all with music by Alan Menken. Ashman’s contributions to the revival of classic Disney animated musicals were perhaps best expressed by the dedication to the film *Beauty and the Beast*: “To our friend Howard, who gave a mermaid her voice and a beast his soul. He will be forever missed.”

Ashman’s numerous awards include two Oscars, two Golden Globes, four Grammys, a Drama Desk and a London Evening Standard. He died in 1991 at age 40 from complications arising from AIDS. *Ashman Sings Ashman*, a CD of his work, with never-before-heard demos, including those from *Smile*, is available from PS Classics. Ashman’s papers are in the permanent collection of the Library of Congress.

**Tim Rice** (Sir Tim to you) has been writing lyrics for musical theatre and related enterprises for over forty years, something he only intended to do for a few months while waiting to become a pop star. The waiting has been extended, mainly because of the world’s failure to accept him as a rock god, but also because of the distracting success of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Evita* with Andrew Lloyd Webber, *Aladdin*, *King David* and *Beauty and the Beast* with Alan Menken, *Chess* with Bjorn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson, and *The Lion King* and *Aida* with Elton John. He is well known in England, his home country, for his love of cricket and as a tolerable radio and television personality. He has won numerous awards along the way, including Oscars, Tonys and life-saving badges, but often for the wrong thing and often for simply turning up. He is currently working with Alan Menken on songs for a new film version of *Beauty and the Beast*, on a musical play about Machiavelli, and is plugging the recently released DVD and album of *Chess in Concert* starring Josh Groban, Idina Menzel and



Adam Pascal. More gripping info can be found on [www.timrice.co.uk](http://www.timrice.co.uk) but please don't feel obliged to go there.

**Linda Woolverton's** writing credits include the screenplay for the animated feature film *Beauty and the Beast* (Golden Globe winner and Academy Award Best Picture nominee); the screenplay (shared) for *Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey*; screenplay (shared) for the animated feature film *The Lion King*; the book for the Broadway musical *Beauty and the Beast* (Tony Award nomination for Best Book of a Musical, winner 1998 Olivier Award Best New Musical); and book (shared) for Elton John and Tim Rice's Broadway musical *Aida*. Also she has written two young-adult novels, *Star-Wind* and *Running Before the Wind*. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Theatre Arts from California State University Long Beach and a Master's degree in Theatre from California State University Fullerton. Linda is currently involved in writing and producing film projects for Miramax and Revolution studios. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband Lee Flicker and daughter Keaton.

**Rob Roth (Director)** was nominated for a Tony Award for his direction of the original Broadway production of *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*. The show has won many awards throughout the world, including the Olivier Award for Best Musical in London. Rob directed the world premiere of *Elaborate Lives – The Legend of Aida* collaborating with Sirs Elton John and Tim Rice. Rob directed the Broadway production of *Lestat*, based on works of Anne Rice, with music and lyrics by Elton John and Bernie Taupin. Rob also directs rock and roll tours, collaborating with Steve Miller, Alice Cooper, Cyndi Lauper and others. A book featuring Rob's extensive collection of rock graphics, *The Art of Classic Rock*, will be published this year by Carlton UK Books. Rob lives in New York City with his black lab Dash Rip Rock.

**Matt West (Choreographer)** For *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, Matt received the L.A. Drama-Logue Award. Matt also received London's Olivier, New York's Drama Desk and Outer Critics' Circle award nominations for *Beauty*. Other Broadway: *Lestat*. Off-Broadway: *Mimi LeDuck* Starring Eartha Kitt. Matt choreographed the premiere of Elton John and Tim Rice's *Elaborate Lives* at the Alliance Theatre. Also: *Little Shop of Horros*, Buenos Aires; *The Wanderer*, Tokyo's Parko Theatre; *The Little Mermaid* and *Peter Pan* for Disney Home Video and *The Nutcracker* for the Disney Channel. Film: Bobby in *A Chorus Line*. Matt is currently working on *World of Color* for Disney's California Adventure and *Fantasmic* for Tokyo Disneyland. Matt dedicates this Production to his Parents.

**Ann Hould-Ward (Costume Design)** Broadway: *A Catered Affair* (Drama Desk nomination); *Company*; *Dance of the Vampires*; *Beauty and the Beast* (Tony Award; American Theatre Wing's Design Award; Ovation Award; Oliver nomination, Best Costume Design); *Into the Woods* (Tony, Drama Desk nominations; Outer Critics Circle nomination, L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award); *Falsettos*; *Sunday in the Park with George* (Tony, Drama Desk Nominations); *Harrigan 'N' Heart*; *Dream*; *St. Joan*; *Three Men on a Horse*; *Timon of Athens*; *In the Summer House*; *Little Me*; *The Moliere Comedies*; *House Arrest*, *Hamlet*, *Road Show* (Public Theatre). Off-Broadway: *Surviving Grace*, *Lobster Alice*, *Cymbeline*. Film: *Strike!*, Miramax. Other credits: Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, *The Most Happy Fella* (New York City Opera), Graciela Daniele (Ballet Hispanico), Lar Lubovitch (the White Oak Project), American Ballet Theatre (*Othello*, *Artemis* and *Meadow*).

**Natasha Katz (Lighting Design)** Broadway credits include: *The Little Mermaid*, *The Coast of Utopia/Salvage* (Tony Award 2007), *A Chorus Line* (Adapted from original design) *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Spelling Bee*, *Tarzan*, *Aida* (Tony Award 2000), *Sweet Smell of Success*, *Twelfth Night*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Capeman*, *Gypsy*, *Barrymore*, and *Pack of Lies*. Other designs: *Sister Act* on the West End, *Buried Child* for The National Theatre in London, *Cyrano* for the The Metropolitan Opera, *Tryst* for the Royal Ballet in London, *Carnival of the Animals* for New York City Ballet, *Swan Lake* at the Edinburgh Festival, *Don Quixote* for American Ballet Theatre, concert acts for Shirley MacLaine, Ann-Margret and Tommy Tune. Ms. Katz has designed many Off-Broadway (current: *Altar Boyz*) and American regional productions.



**Stanley A. Meyer** (*Scenic Designer/ Production Designer*) is the recipient of an American Theatre Wing Design Award nomination, New York Outer Critics Circle Award nomination, 2002 National Broadway Theatre Award nomination, Los Angeles Ovation Award Nomination, Los Angeles Drama Logue Award for his scenic design work on the acclaimed international success, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*. He is also proud to be honored as the first recipient of The League of American Theatres and Producers 2001, National Broadway Theatre Award for his design of the North America Tour of *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*. Other designs include *Little Shop of Horrors*, Alejandro Romay Theatrical Productions (Buenos Aires); the world premieres of Joe Bard's *Zoz! The Bard of Dublin Liberties* and Elton John & Tim Rice's *Elaborate Lives: The legend of Aida* (Alliance Theatre); Regional productions: *In Trousers; March of the Falsestos; Titanic; A Day in Hollywood, A Night in the Ukraine; Marry me a Little; The Marriage of Bette and Boo* and *Cloud 9* (Nat Horne Theatre); *The Everafters* and Festival of One Act Plays (Manhattan Punchline Theatre); *The Secret Garden* (Theatre Works, USA); *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (LA Drama Logue Award), *King Lear, The Comedy of Errors* (LA Drama Logue Award), *A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (LA Drama Logue Award), Southern California Grove Shakespeare festival.

**John Petrafesa, Jr** (*Sound Designer*) was the production sound engineer and/or associate sound designer for numerous productions of *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* including, Broadway, Los Angeles, Toronto, US National Tours II & III and the UK National Tour. Other theatrical design and engineering credits include: *The Music Man* (Broadway), *Guys and Dolls* (National Tour) and *Les Misérables* (Broadway and National Tour). John is a director with Syntonic Design Group in New York, Orlando and Las Vegas, where he focuses on sound system design for theatre, live music and special events.

**Michael Kosarin** (*Music Supervisor/Incidental Music Arrangements*) has worked steadily on Broadway for over 25 years, and has been composer Alan Menken's music director for over 15. Original music director/incidental music arranger, Broadway production of *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*. Original Broadway: *Nine, Grand Hotel, Secret Garden, King David, Mayor, A Chorus Line, Triumph of Love, Little Shop of Horrors, Can-Can* (Encores!), *Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Berlin), *Sister Act* (London). Film: *Enchanted, Pocohontas, Hercules, Home On The Range*, many others. TV: 2005 Emmy Award Outstanding Music Direction for work on musical film *A Christmas Carol, Once Upon A Mattress, The Music Man* (Emmy nomination). Recording/concert work: Long-time collaborations with Carly Simon (gold album/HBO special "My Romance"), Barbara Cook (concert engagements, produced/arranged album "Tribute"). Composer: TV's "Wonder Pets," "Johnny and the Sprites," "Third and Bird."

**NETworks Presentations, LLC** (Producer) Founded in 1995 by Kenneth Gentry, Seth Wenig and Scott Jackson, NETworks has produced and managed over 70 national and international touring productions. Previous productions include *Oliver!*, *Little Women* starring Maureen McGovern, *Jekyll & Hyde, Kiss of the Spiderwoman, Cinderella* starring Eartha Kitt and Deborah Gibson, *Fosse* starring Ben Vereen and Ruthie Henshall, *The Light in the Piazza, My Fair Lady* co-produced with Cameron Mackintosh, *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma, Matthew Bourne's Swan Lake, Sweeney Todd, The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, among many others. Joining returning hits *Annie, The Drowsy Chaperone, Hairspray* and *The Wizard of Oz* this season are *Disney's Beauty and the Beast, Young Frankenstein*, and the Lincoln Center's production of *Rodgers and Hammerstein's South Pacific*. Future titles include Joyful Noise's production of *Handel's Messiah Rocks, Spring Awakening* and *Les Misérables*.