



**News Release
Virginia Repertory Theatre**

For Immediate Release

Date: June 15, 2015

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**Virginia Rep Opens
Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific*
Friday, June 26, 2015**

Starring Stacey Cabaj and Branch Fields

Honoring all WWII Veterans with Complimentary Tickets

Richmond, VA – Virginia Repertory Theatre announces the opening of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific* at the Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre, 114 West Broad Street on Friday, June 26, 2015 with a Preview on Thursday, June 25. The show runs through August 9, 2015. Adapted from the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Tales of the South Pacific* by James A. Michener and considered one of the greatest American musicals, *South Pacific* tells a universal story of forbidden love, racial tension, and optimism as young men and women face hard decisions in a time of war. The original Broadway production won ten Tony awards.

Director Chase Kniffen has assembled an outstanding cast, design team, and musical ensemble. Kniffen's directing credits include last summer's hit musical, *The Color Purple* for Virginia Rep and *Caroline, or Change* for Cadence Theatre Company in partnership with Virginia Rep. He won the 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2014 RTCC Award for Best Director of a Musical for his work on *The Sound of Music*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Spring Awakening*, and *The Color Purple*.

Virginia Rep is delighted to welcome back Stacey Cabaj in the lead role of Nellie Forbush. Cabaj was last seen at Virginia Rep as Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady* and Maria in *The Sound of Music*. Other credits include productions at Shakespeare Theatre Company, Throughline Theatre, Charlottetown Festival, Firehouse Theatre, Edmonton Fringe Festival, and Fringe Theatre Adventures. Stacey currently serves as the Associate Head of the M.F.A. Acting Program and Assistant Professor of Voice at Louisiana State University.

Branch Fields will make his Virginia Rep debut as Emile de Becque. Fields is a critically acclaimed operatic bass who has performed throughout North America and Europe, with such companies as Santa Fe Opera, New York City Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Edmonton Opera, and Michigan Opera Theatre. He has appeared in concert with the Munich Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Santa Fe Symphony, Colorado Springs Philharmonic, and the American Symphony Orchestra. Broadway credits include Emile de Becque (understudy) *South Pacific* at Lincoln Center Theater. Other recent credits include: Frank Maurrant, *Street Scene*; Alfred Doolittle, *My Fair Lady* at Opera North; Emile de Becque at Drayton Entertainment, Ontario; Sarastro, *Die Zaubrerflöte* at Anchorage Opera; Father Trulove, *The Rakes Progress* at Utah Opera.

Amy Jo Phillips is also making her debut at Virginia Rep in the role of Bloody Mary. Broadway credits include *Show Boat* and *Tom Sawyer*. National Tours include *South Pacific*, *Tap Dance Kid*, *The Me Nobody Knows*, and *Porgy & Bess*. Off-Broadway credits include *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Pretty Faces*.

Matt Zimmerman returns to Virginia Rep as Lt. Cable. He last appeared as Perchik in *Fiddle on the Roof*. New York credits include *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (cast recording) and *I Am Harvey Milk* at Lincoln Center. James Stover will play the role of Luther Billis. Stover's recent credits include *Tea and Sympathy* (Off-Broadway Revival), *My Soul is a Witness* (National Tour), *The Eclectic Society* (world premiere, Walnut Street Theatre), *Youth Ink* (McCarter Theatre), *A Year with Frog and Toad* (Virginia Musical Theatre) and two seasons at the Utah Shakespeare Festival.

Sandy Dacus will serve as musical director for this production. Virginia Rep credits include *Guys and Dolls* (RTCC Award for Music Direction 2008), *The Sound of Music*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* (RTCC Award for Music Direction 2011), *Spring Awakening* and most recently, *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*. Sandy teaches music at Kersey Creek Elementary School and is the worship leader at All Souls Episcopal Church.

Choreographer, Brad Willcuts, will provide the musical staging. Willcuts is currently working on Broadway as Assistant Fight and Movement Director for the new musical

Amazing Grace at the Nederlander Theatre. Recent choreographic credits include: Assistant Movement Director for *Mother Courage and Her Children* at Arena Stage, Associate Choreographer, Assistant Director, and Dance Captain for *Mame* at Virginia Rep, and Associate Choreographer *9 to 5* at Riverside Theatre.

Set Designer, Brian Prather, is an accomplished designer with many regional theatre credits including Alley Theatre, Goodspeed Musicals, Barrington Stage Company, Broad Stage, Mercury Theatre, Delaware Theatre Company, Shakespeare on the Sound, TheaterWorks Hartford, and Florida Studio Theatre. Prather designed the set for *Fiddler on the Roof* for Virginia Rep in 2013.

Lighting designer Joe Doran's work with Virginia Rep includes *The Color Purple* and *A Year with Frog and Toad*. Broadway credits include assistant lighting director for *Doctor Zhivago* and *Magic/Bird*. National Tours include *Anything Goes*, *West Side Story*, *Flashdance the Musical*, and *In the Heights*.

Sue Griffin, head of costume shop for Virginia Rep, will serve as costume designer. Recent credits include *The Color Purple*, *Mame*, and *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* with Virginia Rep.

Honoring WWII Veterans

Virginia Rep is delighted to partner with the Virginia War Memorial Educational Foundation in our efforts to honor and welcome as our guests all WWII Veterans. Reservations are necessary for the complimentary tickets and can be made by calling 804-282-2620. The War Memorial will also contribute to an exhibit in the lobby.

Corporate Sponsors

Virginia Rep is grateful for the support from Dominion (Premier Production Sponsor), Union Bank and Trust (Production Sponsor), Altria (Season Sponsor), E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation (Season Sponsor), Shubert Foundation, Virginia Commission for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, The Richmond Times-Dispatch, Richmond.com, and Community Idea Stations.

Ticket Information

Box Office 804-282-2620

www.va-rep.org

Full Price Tickets: \$48 - \$60

Discounted Group Rates and Rush tickets available.

U-Tix for college and high school students \$15. Available by phone or in person day of show only. Student ID required.

The Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre is equipped with a new state-of-the-art induction loop hearing system that is compatible with all telecoil-equipped hearing aids and cochlear implants. A handheld receiver and headphone system is also available free of charge for anyone who is hearing impaired.

Valet parking is available for \$8 at all performances except the Preview on Thursday, June 25. Free self-parking is available within two blocks of the November theatre on Marshall Street between Adams and First and in the YMCA at Foushee and Grace Streets.

Press Kits Available at <http://va-rep.org/press.html>

Pass code accessible Hi Res photos available to media.

username = press password = HiRes121

Evening performances at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday and select Wednesdays, 8:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.

Matinee performances at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday and 2:00 p.m. on select Wednesdays and Saturdays

Direction & Design

Direction	Chase Kniffen
Musical Direction	Sandy Dacus
Musical Staging	Brad Willcuts
Scenic Design	Brian Prather+
Lighting Design	Joe Doran+
Costume Design	Sue Griffin
Stage Management	Rick Brandt*

Cast List

Nellie Forbush	Stacey Cabaj
Emile de Becque	Branch Fields*
Bloody Mary	Amy Jo Phillips*
Lt. Cable	Matt Zimmerman*
Luther Billis	James Stover*
Henry/Morton West, Seabee	William Anderson
Harbison	Andrew C. Boothby
Ensign Dinah Murphy	Audra Honaker
Lt. Genevieve Marshall, Lead Nurse	Lisa Kotula

Professor	Gordon Lewanowicz
Stewpot	Paul S. Major
Liat, Bloody Mary's daughter	Yui Matsuzaki
Ensign Janet MacGregor	Nicole Oberleitner
Captain George Brackett, USN	Mark Persinger
Jerome, Emile's son	Ryan Poquis
Hgana, Emile's daughter	Nadia Rieger
Lt. Buzz Adams	Alexander Sapp
Bob McCaffrey, Sailor/Billy Whitmore	Justin Sease
Lt. Eustis Carmichael, Shore Patrolman	Matt Shofner
James Hayes, Sailor	Durron Marquis Tyre
Ensign Rita Adams	Catherine Carol Walker
Ensign Bessie Noonan	Tricia Wiles
Yoeman Herbert Quale, Seabee	Jamari Johnson Williams

+Member of USA United Scenic Artists: local 829

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the U.S.A.

Full bios can be found at www.virginiarep.org.

About Virginia Repertory Theatre

Virginia Repertory Theatre, located in Richmond, VA, combines the talents and strengths of two nonprofit companies that shared facilities, resources, and management teams for over a decade. Now the heritages of Barksdale Theatre (founded in 1953) and Theatre IV (founded in 1975) live on in their new form, as Central Virginia's leading professional theater company. Virginia Rep presents national caliber productions of the great dramas, comedies, and musicals as well as classics, contemporary works, and world premieres, always seeking to demonstrate the unique power of theater to engage, enthrall, educate, and inspire. Productions are staged at four distinct venues: the Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre and Theatre Gym at the downtown Virginia Rep Center, Virginia Rep's Children's Theatre of Virginia located at Willow Lawn, and at Hanover Tavern, home to Virginia Rep's Barksdale Season.

