

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Katie Perkowski

334.271.5326

kperkowski@asf.net

July 11, 2016

### **Disney's Beauty & the Beast EXTENDED to August 7<sup>th</sup> – FINAL EXTENSION 2016-17 Season Single Tickets go on sale TODAY! Producing Artistic Director Geoffrey Sherman's Final Season with ASF.**

**Montgomery, AL** – Sold out performances have resulted in an extension of *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* at the **Alabama Shakespeare Festival**. Originally scheduled for July 6<sup>th</sup> through July 17<sup>th</sup>, the Broadway blockbuster musical has been extended through August 7<sup>th</sup>. This will be the final extension.

After wowing audiences with this summer spectacular, ASF catapults into the 2016-17 season which will begin September 10; a full month earlier than last season. As audiences have grown both for public performances and for ASF's popular Schoolfest matinees, the 2016-17 season features ten productions (Two more productions than the 2015-16 season.)

ASF opens the season with the family favorite *Charlotte's Web* on the Octagon Stage, which will charm young and old alike with its timeless story of one terrific pig. For patrons who like a thrill, Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*, the most popular murder mystery of the theatrical stage, begins in mid-September. A special limited engagement of *Gravedigger's Tale* from the Folger Theatre Shakespeare Library, an interactive retelling of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, will be onstage in October coinciding with the Shakespeare's Folio exhibit at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts. A new musical based on the Newberry Award-winning and NYT bestselling novel, *Because of Winn Dixie* comes to ASF on its way to Broadway in January, quickly followed by Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and a new adaptation of *Sherlock Holmes* in March. ASF mounts a world-premiere production of a Southern Writers' Project play *Dauphin Island* by playwright Jeffry Chastang on the Octagon Stage at the end of March, and beginning in April another world premiere of a Kenneth Cavander adaption, this time of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which will be directed by Geoffrey Sherman (the final Shakespeare of his ASF career.) Finally in the summer of 2017, that beloved nanny is back with a blockbuster production of *Disney's Mary Poppins*.

Single ticket sales are available this week on asf.net or by calling the Box Office at 334-271-5353. Patrons interested in seeing more than one show this season can become a subscribing member at ASF and save up to 30% on tickets while enjoying special member benefits.

**CHARLOTTE'S WEB (Sept. 10 – Oct. 20)** A "timeless tale about love, loss, friendship and courage," *Charlotte's Web* shares the story of Wilbur, a lonely little pig whose life is transformed by the efforts of Charlotte, a kind and generous spider, who teaches him about the power of faith and the true meaning of friendship.

**THE MOUSETRAP (Sept. 22 – Oct. 9)** Throw together a group of eccentric strangers trapped in a boarding house during a snowstorm, and murder and mayhem are sure to ensue! So goes the premise of *The Mousetrap*, the world's longest running (62 years onstage in the West End) stage play by the greatest mystery writer of the 20th century, Agatha Christie. The audience will share the nerve-rattling suspense of the guests of Monkswell Manor as they try to determine who the killer is before he or she strikes again – but be prepared to keep the secret once you discover who is responsible for *The Mousetrap*!

**GRAVEDIGGER'S TALE (Oct 11-15)** Special Limited Engagement! An interactive retelling of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* from the point of view of the Gravedigger, *Gravedigger's Tale* comes to ASF from the Folger Theater to celebrate the national tour of Shakespeare's Folio from the Shakespeare Folger Library, on display at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in October of 2016.

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL (Nov. 20 – Dec. 24)** The River Region's Favorite Holiday Tradition! A Heartwarming Holiday-Must-See that will get you into the swing of the holiday season with Scrooge's search for redemption and a

spectacular, magical evening of ghosts, spirits, festivity and goodwill. “God Bless Us, Every One!”

**BECAUSE OF WINN DIXIE (Jan. 27– Feb.12)** See it before it hits Broadway! *Because of Winn-Dixie*, the new musical by Tony-winning *Spring Awakening* songwriter Duncan Sheik and Tony-nominated *Legally Blonde* lyricist Nell Benjamin, based on the children's novel of the same title, is all about a dog who brings new life and hope into a family.

**TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA (Feb 11—May 13)** Proteus is in love with Julia until he gets an eyeful of his best friend’s girl, Silvia. As friends turn into rivals things quickly go comic as they clash with bandits, a bad-mannered dog, an angry father and a girl who won’t be dumped. This condensed version of Shakespeare’s first play is sure to be a big hit with all ages!

**SHERLOCK HOLMES (Mar. 9 – May 13)** A new adaptation of the Sherlock Holmes story by Geoffrey Sherman, this gripping tale of the world’s most famous detective features amazing twists and turns, accompanied by a healthy dose of comedy.

**DAUPHIN ISLAND (Mar. 23-April 9)** A world-premiere production by Jeffry Chastang, developed by the Southern Writers’ Project in which suspicion and fascination dovetail when (en route from Detroit to a new job on Dauphin Island) Selwyn Tate interrupts the self-imposed isolation of Kendra in the Alabama woods - dramatizing the risks involved when two displaced souls intertwine.

**THE TEMPEST (April 20 – May 14)** Producing Artistic Director Geoffrey Sherman’s final Shakespeare production at ASF, *The Tempest* is one of Shakespeare’s last plays, crafted with themes of magic, illusion, and music. Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan, has been banished to a remote island. Wanting to restore his daughter to her rightful place, he conjures up a storm, an enormous tempest, to lure his usurping brother Antonio and the King Alonso of Naples to the island. Prospero’s machinations reveal Antonio's lowly nature and bring about the redemption of the King and the marriage of Miranda to the king’s son. A new adaptation by Kenneth Cavander.

**DISNEY’S MARY POPPINS (July 5 – 16)** The “practically perfect in every way” nanny returns to the ASF Festival Stage! Young Jane and Michael have sent many a nanny packing before Mary Poppins arrives on their doorstep. Using a combination of magic and common sense, she teaches the family how to value each other again. *Mary Poppins* showcases some of the most memorable songs ever sung on the silver screen or stage including *Jolly Holiday*, *A Spoonful of Sugar* and *Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!*

###

*The Alabama Shakespeare Festival is among the largest Shakespeare Theatres in the world. Designated as the State Theatre of Alabama, ASF has been located in Montgomery since 1985 when it moved from Anniston as a result of Mr. and Mrs. Wynton Blount’s gift of a performing arts complex in the 250-acre Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park.*