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'42ND STREET' GOES TO MOBILE

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The Department of Theatre and Dance staged a performance of "42 Street" in Mobile on April 9.

From the April 2015 Desktop News | The Department of Theatre and Dance staged a performance of the award-winning musical "42nd Street" to a nearly sold-out house at the Mobile Civic Center on April 9. Performances are also being held in Tuscaloosa at the Marian Gallaway Theatre April 14-19.

Some 60 UA students and faculty traveled to Mobile to present the full-scale musical. This is the third time the department has taken a large-scale

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production to a major Alabama city and the second time to do so in Mobile. The musical "Showboat" was presented by UA at the Mobile Civic Center in 2013, and "Big River" was performed in Montgomery in 2011.

The production was supported by UA administrators, the Office for Academic Affairs and UA's College of Arts and Sciences. Mobile sponsors included Regions Bank and *Mobile Bay Magazine*.

Based on the novel by Bradford Ropes, "42nd Street" premiered on Broadway in 1980 and won a Tony Award that year for Best Musical. The musical was written by Michael Stewart and Mark Bramble and features music by Harry Warren and lyrics by Al Dubin. Musical hits include "We're in the Money," "Lullaby of Broadway," "Forty-Second Street" and more.

Set in 1933, "42nd Street" is a celebration of Broadway and the people involved in shows. It follows an aspiring chorus girl, Peggy Sawyer, who moves to New York from a small town in hopes of performing on Broadway.

Tara Lynn Steele, a senior majoring in musical theatre and dance at UA, stars in "42nd Street" as Peggy. Steele said she enjoyed performing the show at the Civic Center because it's a larger performance venue with an eager crowd.

"Taking the show on tour is a huge endeavor, but it's worth every challenge," she said. "I was excited to be able to perform with this company as my last performance in college."

Stacy Alley, an assistant professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance and the director and choreographer of "42nd Street," said the biggest challenge was adjusting the show to fit a different and bigger space.

"It is exciting and fun, but also stressful," Alley said. "Our cast and crew are extremely talented and have put a tremendous amount of time and energy into this show. This show is old-school musical theatre at its best."

Bill Teague, professor and chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance, said that performing in Mobile was an excellent opportunity and a win-win situation for everyone involved.

"Our performers have to really increase both their vocal and physical energy levels to perform in these larger venues, and our design and technical students have the opportunity to work side-by-side with the union stage crew," Teague said. "All participate in the touring experience. Everyone entering the profession will encounter all of these situations, both early on and throughout their careers."

The cast and crew have returned to Tuscaloosa and will present "42nd Street" April 14-19 at the Marian Gallaway Theatre on the UA campus. Tickets

are \$20 for adults; \$17 for faculty, staff, and seniors; and \$14 for students. All Tuesday through Saturday performances will begin at 7:30 p.m. The performance on Sunday, April 19 will begin at 2 p.m. For more information, visit www.theatre.ua.edu/season/2014-2015.

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