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Kwofe Coleman, Communications Director
(314) 595-5712

Dylan Stanley, Public Relations Manager
(314) 595-5763

Everybody Rejoice!

Muny announces full cast, design and production teams for centennial season *The Wiz*

ST. LOUIS (May 30, 2018) – The Muny announced today its full cast, design and production team for the theatre’s centennial season production of *The Wiz*, June 19 - 25. *The Wiz* is proudly sponsored by Wells Fargo Advisors.

“What a wonderful group of artists to give this beloved show an exciting new life” said Muny Artistic Director and Executive Producer, Mike Isaacson. “I’m so happy to have this show as a part of The Muny 100.”

Joining the previously announced Nathan Lee Graham (*The Wiz*), Jared Grimes (*Scarecrow*) and James T. Lane (*Tinman*), are Danyel Fulton (*Dorothy*), Darius de Haas (*Lion*), E. Faye Butler (*Addaperle/Evillene*), Demetria McKinney (*Glinda*) and Nessa (*Toto*). A sensational ensemble completes this cast, including Akilah Ayanna, Rhaamell Burke-Missouri, Kevin Curtis, Chloe Davis, Timothy L. Edwards, Chavon Hampton, Cameron Anika Hill, Karma Jenkins, Amber Pickens, Malaiyka Amiyana Reid, Allysa Shorte, Donald Shorter, Voltaire Wade-Greene, Sir Brock Warren, Nathaniel J. Washington and Brion Marquis Watson. The company will also be joined by the Muny Kid and Teen youth ensembles.

As previously announced, *The Wiz* is directed by Denis Jones and choreographed by Camille A. Brown with music direction by Darryl Archibald.

The design team leading this production includes scenic design by Edward E. Haynes Jr., costume design by Leon Dobkowski, lighting design by Rob Denton, sound design by John Shivers and David Patridge, video design by Greg Emetaz, wig design by Leah J. Loukas, with animals trained by William Berloni Theatrical Animals, Inc. and production stage manager Nancy Uffner.

NATHAN LEE GRAHAM (*The Wiz*) can currently be seen as Bernard in the FOX comedy hit *LA to Vegas*. Film credits include: *Zoolander*, *Zoolander 2*, *Sweet Home Alabama* and *Hitch*. On the small screen, he has been seen in *The Comeback*, and had guest starring roles on *Scrubs*, *Absolutely Fabulous* and *Law & Order SVU*. His stage appearances include the original Broadway casts of *The Wild Party* and *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*. Mr. Graham recently received a 2017 Lucille Lortel nomination for Outstanding Featured Actor in a Musical for *The View Upstairs*. In 2016, he received the IRNE award for Best Supporting Actor in a Play for *The Colored Museum*. Graham also received a Drama League nomination for the role of Rey-Rey in the off-Broadway production of Tarell Alvin McCraney's *Wig Out!* In 2005, he earned the Best Classical Album Grammy Award for *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* as a soloist. Nathan Lee Graham is a graduate of Webster University Conservatory in St. Louis, MO.

JARED GRIMES (*Scarecrow*) Broadway credits include: *After Midnight* (Tap Mathematician), *Holler If Ya Hear Me* (Associate Choreography). Off-Broadway credits include: *Radio City New York Spring Spectacular* (Marshall), *Cotton Club Parade*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (Himself), Cirque du Soleil's *Banana Shpeel* (Choreography). Regional credits include: *Jelly's Last Jam* (Choreography, Signature Theatre, Helen Hayes Award for Best Choreography of a Musical), *42nd Street* (Choreography, Drury Lane Theatre), *Babes In Arms* (Ivor, Goodspeed), *Stormy Weather* (Avon Long, Prince Music Theater) and *Twist* (Roosevelt King, Pasadena Playhouse/Alliance). Film/TV credits include: *Breaking Brooklyn* (Choreography), *The Marc Pease Experience*, *First Born*, *Boardwalk Empire* (Grover), *Fringe*, *30 Seconds to Fame*, *Star Search*, *Showtime at The Apollo* and *Dance Fever*. Concert credits include: Mariah Carey, Common, Busta Rhymes, Salt-N-Pepa, En Vogue, Wynton Marsalis. In 2014, Grimes received the Astaire Award for Outstanding Performer in a Broadway Show.

JAMES T. LANE (*Tinman*) is thrilled to return to The Muny after portraying Sebastian in *The Little Mermaid* last summer. West End credits include: *The Scottsboro Boys* (Ozie/Ruby, Young Vic), *A Chorus Line* (Richie). Broadway: *King*

Kong the Musical (coming fall of 2018), *The Scottsboro Boys*, *Chicago* and *A Chorus Line*. National tours: *Jersey Boys* (Barry Belson), *Cinderella*, *Fame The Musical* (Tyrone Jackson). Regional: *Grand Hotel* (Jimmy Two, Encores!), *Kiss Me, Kate* (Paul, Old Globe); *Once On This Island* (Papa Ge, Olney Theatre), *The Wiz* (Scarecrow, Dallas Theater Center). Concerts: The New York Pops at Carnegie Hall, Ottawa Symphony, Naples Symphony, Cleveland Symphony and Baltimore Symphony. @JamesTLane

DANYEL FULTON (*Dorothy*) Munny debut! Off Broadway: *Jasper In Deadland*, (Ammut, Prospect Theater Company). National tour: *Hair* (Dionne, second national tour). Regional: *Ragtime* (Sarah, 5th Avenue Theatre and Asolo Rep), *Darling Grenadine* (Goodspeed Opera House), *The Trip To Bountiful* (Thelma, Capital Repertory Theatre), *Beehive* (Tina/Aretha, Flat Rock Playhouse), *A Night With Janis Joplin* (Blues Singer, Capital Repertory Theatre and Barter Theatre). NY: *Broadwaycon 2016*, *Hair* (Dionne, Patchogue Theatre), *The Wiz* (Dorothy) and *Ain't Misbehavin'*, (Charlayne, Harlem Repertory Theatre); *A Time To Love*, (Aisha, National Black Theatre). Danyel received Audelco nominations for Outstanding Female Performance in a Musical for her performances as Dorothy, Charlayne, and Aisha and BroadwayWorld's Critic's Choice for Sarah at 5th Avenue Theatre.

DARIUS DE HAAS (*Lion*) Broadway: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Rent*, *Carousel*, *Marie Christine*, *The Gershwin's Fascinating Rhythm* and *Shuffle Along*. Other credits include *Children of Eden* (Paper Mill Playhouse), an Obie Award-winning performance in *Running Man* (Music-Theatre Group), *Once On This Island* (first national tour), *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin* (Playwrights Horizons), *Jesus Christ Superstar Gospel* (Alliance Theatre) and *As You Like It* (Delacorte/Public Theater). Recent TV: *Dietland*. Concerts/Recordings: Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center's *American Songbook*, Disney Concert Hall, Kennedy Center and numerous symphonies. His recordings include *Quiet Please* (Bridge Records), *Day Dream: Variations on Strayhorn* (PS Classics), and many original cast recordings. Darius is honored to serve on the International Board of Directors for Covenant House serving homeless youth throughout the U.S. and South America. He is also excited to be returning to St. Louis in October 2018 performing his concert, *A Bernstein Thing*, celebrating The Leonard Bernstein centennial, for The Cabaret Project of St. Louis (at the Ferring Jazz Bistro). Please visit www.dariusdehaas.com

E. FAYE BUTLER (*Addaperle/Evillene*) Munny: *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Most recently: the world premiere of *Last Stop on Market Street* (Chicago Children's Theatre). Other select regional credits include: *Follies* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *Chicago* (Drury Lane Oak Brook). She has

performed in over 50 regional theatres across the country and internationally from Cuba to France. National tours: *Mamma Mia!*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Nunsense*, *Nunsense II*, *Dinah Was*, *Don't Bother Me*, *I Can't Cope*. Awards: six Jefferson, two Helen Hayes, four Black Theater Alliance, RAMI, Barrymore, Excellence in The Arts, After Dark, Ovation, Kathryn V. Lamkey, Sarah Siddons, Black Excellence, Guy Adkins, 2016 Rosetta LeNoire, Lunt-Fontanne Fellow, National Museum of Women in the Arts inductee. CD: *A Circle of Firsts*. She performs across the country in concert with her orchestra, EFO. Upcoming: *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, DC) and *Gypsy* (Porchlight Music Theatre Chicago). Proud AEA Member. www.e-fayebutler.com

DEMETRIA MCKINNEY (*Glinda*) is a vocal powerhouse who is widely known for her role as Janine Payne on the hit TBS sitcom Tyler Perry's *House of Payne*. She can currently be seen as a series regular on the breakout hits *Saints & Sinners* and *The Quad*. Recently, McKinney wowed audiences with her portrayal of Whitney Houston in the TV One's original film *Bobbi Kristina*. McKinney was also a cast member on Bravo TV's *The Real Housewives of Atlanta* (seasons 7 and 8). In October 2017, she released her debut album *Officially Yours*, featuring the single "Easy," which was a top 5 hit on Billboard & Urban AC radio charts. Demetria has also opened for R&B mainstays such as BBD, Tank, R. Kelly and Fantasia. Her numerous film and television credits include *Being Mary Jane*, *Chicago Med*, and many more.

NESSA (*Toto*) is a funny, energetic little girl, rescued by Bill Berloni in 2014 from Cairn Terrier Rescue USA. She has been starring as Toto in productions of *The Wiz* and *The Wizard of Oz* all over the country and hopes to follow in the footsteps of the great cairn terriers trained by Bill Berloni before her, entertaining young and old in this classic story.

Link for more information: <https://muny.org/the-wiz/>

About the show:

The Wiz is adapted from "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" by L. Frank Baum, with a book by William F. Brown with additional material by Tina Tippit, music and lyrics by Charlie Smalls. Additional material for The Muny production by Amber Ruffin.

Based on L. Frank Baum's nostalgic classic, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *The Wiz* is considered a feel-good favorite sparkling with heart-pounding soul, unforgettable gospel and infectious rock rhythms. Grammy Award-winner for Best Cast Show Album in 1975, and ranked as one of the highest watched live

television musicals, this reimagined familiar favorite will have you ready to “Ease on Down the Road” to meet *The Wiz* for yourself!

The seven shows in the 2018 Muny season are: **Jerome Robbins’ Broadway** (June 11-17), **The Wiz** (June 19-25), **Singin’ in the Rain** (June 27-July 3), **Jersey Boys** (July 9-16), **Annie** (July 18-25), **Gypsy** (July 27-August 2) and **Meet Me In St. Louis** (August 4-12). For more information, visit muny.org.

Season and single tickets are currently on sale for this historic season. In addition, Muny gift cards for the 100th season are now available online and at The Muny Box Office. For more information, visit muny.org or call (314) 361-1900.

World Wide Technology and The Steward Family Foundation have once again made a leadership gift to continue as the Muny’s 2018 Season Presenting Sponsor. They became the first overall season sponsor in the history of The Muny in 2014 and continue that role through 2018.

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[The Muny’s](http://muny.org) mission is to enrich lives by producing exceptional musical theatre, accessible to all, while continuing its remarkable tradition in Forest Park. As the nation’s largest outdoor musical theatre, we produce seven world-class musicals each year and welcome over 370,000 theatregoers over our nine-week season. Now celebrating 100 seasons in St. Louis, The Muny remains one of the premier institutions in musical theatre.

For more information about The Muny, visit muny.org.