



**Ira David Wood III Pullen Park Theatre**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Pageant Returns In All Its Glorious Beauty***

*Who will be Miss Glamouresse?*

**Raleigh, NC, April 8, 2014** – After 13 years, Theatre In The Park is bringing its most requested show, the musical comedy, ***Pageant*** by Bill Russell and Frank Kelly, with music by Albert Evans, back to the Raleigh stage.

These beauty queens have it all - looks, talent, poise, and that little something extra that makes them stand out. Who will it be? Contestants are desperately vying for the crown in Evening Gown, Talent, and Swimwear competitions. But only one will be named this year's Miss Glamouresse. Excitement and suspense abound as judges selected from the audience determine the winner each night! And one more thing, all of our contestants are played by men.

***Pageant*** was previously produced at Theatre In The Park, under the direction of Eric Woodall, in 2001; opening just days after 9/11. "I recall everyone wondering what will happen. Should we go on? How will the community respond?" says Executive Director Ira David Wood III. All questions were answered as ***Pageant*** quickly sold out with demand so great performances were added. "People wanted and needed to laugh. We were providing that. And every year, I get asked if we will do ***Pageant*** again. The show meant something to so many people. I'm so happy that this is the year we chose to revive it," says Wood.

***Pageant*** follows six regional contestants competing for the title of Miss Glamouresse. Returning to compete are Thomas Porter and Brett Wilson, who played Miss Deep South and Miss Bible Belt respectively. "It has been a lot of fun stepping back in the heels," says Porter. "There is a great sense of competition since we do not know who the judges will pick each night. I think that helps elevate these 'stereotypical' characters to real people. Also after watching the current Miss America pageant, you realize that the spoof we are doing is not that far off from reality - especially the talent competitions."

Also competing for the crown are, Jesse R. Gephart (Miss Texas), Chris Maxwell (Miss West Coast), Justin Tyler Ryals (Miss Great Plains), and Jon Skinner (Miss Industrial Northeast). Mike Raab will play the emcee, Frankie Cavalier, and Matt Gore will be the reigning queen, Tawny Jo Johnson. Production staff includes music direction by Scott McKenzie and choreography by Jade Carlisle. Costumes designed by Shawn Stewart-Larson.

***Pageant*** opens April 25. Theatregoers are urged to make reservations well in advance of its opening night. A portion of the ticket sales for the May 1 performance will go to benefit the LGBT Center of Raleigh.

***Pageant*** will be performed April 25-26; May 1-3; 9-10 at 7:30pm and April 27; May 4; 11 at 3:00pm. Tickets are \$28 – Adult; \$22 – Seniors 60+/Students; \$20 – Groups of 10 or more and are available now through Theatre In The Park's box office 919-831-6058 or online at [theatreinthepark.com](http://theatreinthepark.com).

**About Theatre In The Park**

Theatre In The Park, located in the northern end of Raleigh's scenic Pullen Park adjacent to North Carolina State University, has been entertaining audiences since 1947. Theatre In The Park is one of North Carolina's largest non-profit performing arts organizations and is acclaimed for its numerous outstanding theatrical achievements. Each season Theatre In The Park presents an exceptional series of productions including the very best in comedy, original musicals, Shakespeare, and contemporary drama.

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