Peace Center's new season brings back Broadway favorites

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The Peace Center announced Friday that it will bring back some audience favorites such as "The Phantom of the Opera" and also introduce theatergoers to newer blockbusters like the Tony Award-winning drama "War Horse" as a part of its 2013-14 Certus Broadway Series.

The season is heavy on recent Broadway revivals, such as Cole Porter's "Anything Goes," Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Evita," "The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess," and "The Wizard of Oz," based on the classic 1939 film.

But all of the returning shows feature new and highly acclaimed production designs that have not been seen in South Carolina.

"Exceptional is the single best word I can use to describe this season's Broadway Series," said Peace Center President Megan Riegel.

All of the shows qualify as South Carolina premieres, Riegel said.

The Peace Center also an-

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The musical "Flashdance" is among the offerings of the 2013-14 Broadway Series at the Peace Center. PROVIDED

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nounced that the "Porgy and Bess" cast will include Greenville-native Phillip Boykin as Crown, a role that Boykin played on Broadway last year and for which he earned a Tony Award nomination.

Boykin received his early training as an actor and singer at the Phillis Wheatley Repertory Theatre, the Greenville County Schools' Fine Arts Center and the summer program of the Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities.

The season opens in October with "War Horse" (Oct. 17-20), to be followed by "Anything Goes" (Nov. 12-17), "The Wizard of Oz" (Dec. 31-Jan. 5), "The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess" (Jan. 28-Feb. 2), "Flashdance — The Musical" (April 22-27, 2014), "The Phantom of the Opera" (May 14-25, 2014) and "Evita" (June 24-29, 2014).

Seven shows are among the highest number the Peace Center has scheduled in the roughly 15-year history of the Broadway Series, Riegel said.

"Our community has proven to have an insatiable appetite for Broadway and we wanted to deliver in a dynamic way," Riegel said.

Most of the productions will run Tuesday-Sunday, with eight performances, although "War Horse" has a slightly shorter schedule and "Phantom" will run two weeks.

"War Horse," which won five 2011 Tony Awards, is about a young man's horse, Joey, who is sent away to fight for the English in World War I. At the heart of the play — the first non-musical ever to be featured on the Peace Center's Broadway Series — are life-sized puppets, created by South Africa's Handspring Puppet Company, that bring to life breathing, galloping horses.

"I am thrilled about



"Anything Goes" will run Nov. 12-17 at the Peace Center as part of the 2013-14 Broadway Series. PROVIDED

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MEGAN RIEGEL, Peace Center president

bringing 'War Horse' here," Riegel said. "Just the puppetry alone makes it worth seeing. The story is so emotional and powerful, one of the most powerful pieces of theater I've ever seen."

The tap-happy "Anything Goes" features the catchy songs of Cole Porter. The show won three 2011 Tony Awards, including for Best Musical Revival and Choreography. The show includes classic standards such as "I Get a Kick Out of You," "You're the Top" and, of course, the title song.

The stage version of "The Wizard of Oz" features all of the movie's familiar songs plus some new tunes by Tim Rice and Lloyd Webber. It is scheduled during the holiday season to appeal to families, Riegel said.

The new Broadway staging of George and Ira Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" won the 2012 Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical. Set in Charleston's fabled Catfish Row, the musical features standards such as "Summertime" and "I Got Plenty of Nothing."

"Flashdance — The Musical," based on the popular 1983 film, centers on Alex Owens, a female Pittsburgh steel mill welder by day and a bar dancer by night who hopes to become a professional performer. The stage show features the big hit songs from the movie, including "Maniac," "I Love Rock & Roll" and the Academy Award-winning title song "Flashdance — What a Feeling."

A new staging of the international Broadway blockbuster "The Phantom of the Opera" comes to Greenville after a sell-out tour of the United Kingdom.

The new production of Lloyd Webber's "Evita," seen recently on Broadway, features the big hits "Don't Cry for Me Argentina," "Another Suitcase in Another Hall" and "High Flying, Adored."

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YOU CAN GO

The Peace Center is offering subscriptions to the 2013-14 Broadway Series. Single tickets will go on sale later. Call 864-467-3000 for more information.

GET A PREVIEW

See excerpts of the Broadway shows coming to the Peace Center next year at greenvilleonline.com under "Entertainment."