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**BLUMENTHAL PRESENTS EXTRAORDINARY LINEUP OF SHOWS
DURING 2010-2011 DUKE ENERGY BROADWAY LIGHTS SERIES**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Led by the two most recent Tony® Award winners for Broadway’s Best Musical, the 2010/11 Duke Energy Broadway Lights Series presented by the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center features a fantastic lineup of Broadway’s most popular and critically acclaimed shows.

The highlight of the 2010/11 series is the first national tour of the 2009 Tony Award winner for Best Musical, BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL. In addition, IN THE HEIGHTS, winner of four 2008 Tony Awards, including Best Musical, and the 2008 Grammy® Award for Best Musical Show Album; and the critically acclaimed NEXT TO NORMAL, the 2009 Tony Award winner for Best Score, will play the Queen City in the coming year.

Many of the other shows in the upcoming season are inspired by some of Hollywood’s biggest blockbusters. SHREK THE MUSICAL, Broadway’s big, bright, beautiful musical featuring everyone’s favorite ogre, takes center stage in a production sure to delight legions of Shrek fans of all ages. The new Mel Brooks musical YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN and 9 TO 5: THE MUSICAL also offer hilarious musical versions of Hollywood hits, while the sweet and funny Irving Berlin’s WHITE CHRISTMAS will put a special gleam on the 2010 holiday season in the Queen City.

DREAMGIRLS, the Tony, Grammy and Academy® Award–winning story of a 1960’s female singing group coming of age at the birth of the Motown sound, rounds out the season lineup.

Duke Energy returns this season as the sponsor of the Broadway Lights Series – a lineup that includes eight blockbusters that have been nominated for a total of more than 40 Tony Awards, taking home 18 trophies.

NEXT TO NORMAL (along with two “Broadway Extras” – AVENUE Q & MOMIX) will appear in the intimate Knight Theater, marking the first time the city’s newest theater has played host to nationally touring Broadway shows.

2010/11 DUKE ENERGY BROADWAY LIGHTS SERIES (BLS)

9 TO 5: THE MUSICAL (Oct. 5 - 10, 2010 – Ovens Auditorium)

DREAMGIRLS (Nov. 9 - 14, 2010 – Belk Theater)

IRVING BERLIN’S WHITE CHRISTMAS (Dec. 7 - 12, 2010 – Ovens Auditorium)

BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL (Jan. 12 – 30, 2011 – Ovens Auditorium)

IN THE HEIGHTS (Feb. 15 – 20, 2011 – Belk Theater)

The New Mel Brooks Musical YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN (March 15 - 20, 2011 – Belk Theater)

SHREK THE MUSICAL (June 14 – 19, 2011 – Belk Theater)

NEXT TO NORMAL (July 12 – 17, 2011 – Knight Theater)

In addition to the Duke Energy Broadway Lights Series, six “Broadway Extras” are part of the schedule, giving the 2010/2011 season 14 Broadway titles, the most ever presented by the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in one season.

BROADWAY EXTRAS

MARY POPPINS (Aug. 25 – Sept. 12, 2010 – Belk Theater)

MOMIX (Feb. 22 – 27, 2011 – Knight Theater)

AVENUE Q (April 5 – 10, 2011 – Knight Theater)

BLUE MAN GROUP (April 19 – 24, 2011 – Belk Theater)

CATS (May 24 – 29, 2011 – Belk Theater)

MAMMA MIA! (JULY 26 – 31, 2011 – Belk Theater)

“This is an extraordinary lineup of Broadway hits that is sure to keep theater-goers on the edge of their seats all season long,” said Center President Tom Gabbard. “We’ve always strived to offer variety in our Broadway lineup, and we’re thrilled to be able to present more titles than ever before and to continue to bring the top national touring shows to Charlotte.

Tickets for the Duke Energy Broadway Lights Series shows currently are available only as part of a season subscription. Both seven and eight-show subscriptions are available, with prices ranging from \$168.50 to \$598.35. A seven-show subscription includes 9 to 5: THE MUSICAL, DREAMGIRLS, WHITE CHRISTMAS, BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL, IN THE HEIGHTS, YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN and SHREK THE MUSICAL. An eight-show subscription also includes NEXT TO NORMAL.

Current Subscribers will receive renewal packages in the mail over the next few weeks and will have until mid-May to renew. They also may contact Subscriber Services to renew now by phone at 704.335.1010, renew in person at the Belk Theater box office or when they attend JERSEY BOYS March 31- April 18 at the Belk Theater.

Orders for new subscriptions also are being accepted now. To order or get more information, call 704.335.1010. New orders also will be accepted at the Belk Theater during JERSEY BOYS. Renewals, as well as sales for new subscribers, will be available online in April.

Along with guaranteed seats for the series shows, season subscribers receive many other special benefits, including access to the best seats at the best price since subscribers are seated before single ticket buyers, and receive a discount to many of the season shows. Subscribers also may purchase additional single tickets to the Duke Energy Broadway Lights Series shows or the Broadway Extras now, long before tickets go on sale to the public. Subscriber discounts are applied to these additional single tickets, too. Throughout the year, subscribers also will be offered priority purchase opportunities for all Center sponsored events.

One of the most popular subscriber benefits is the subscriber swap option, which allows subscribers to trade their season tickets for one series show for anything else on the Center schedule. Another popular option that returns this year is the extended payment plan, allowing subscribers to spread the cost of their subscriptions over four monthly payments. For complete information on all the subscriber benefits, visit BlumenthalCenter.org/Broadway.

“We’re committed to offering our subscribers the best content, the best value and the chance to make their own choices about the shows that they want to see,” Gabbard said. “The benefits of being a season subscriber are better than ever for those very reasons – great choices, great shows and great prices. “

2010/11 DUKE ENERGY BROADWAY LIGHTS SERIES

9 to 5: THE MUSICAL (Oct. 5 - 10, 2010 – Ovens Auditorium)

9 to 5: THE MUSICAL is a hilarious story of friendship and revenge in the Rolodex era. This new musical comedy, direct from Broadway, is based on the hit movie and features Dolly Parton's original hit title song along with her new Tony Award®-and Grammy-nominated score. The book is by Patricia Resnick (co-writer of the original Screenplay).

9 to 5: THE MUSICAL tells the story of three unlikely friends who conspire to take control of their company and learn there's nothing they can't do -- even in a man's world. Outrageous, thought-provoking and even a little romantic, 9 to 5: THE MUSICAL is about teaming up and taking care of business... it's about getting credit and getting even... and it's coming to Charlotte!

DREAMGIRLS (Nov. 9-14, 2010 – Belk Theater)

Catch the Dream! Direct from Harlem's world famous Apollo Theater in New York City, comes a sensational new stage production of DREAMGIRLS. Full of onstage joy and backstage drama, DREAMGIRLS tells the story of an up-and-coming, 1960s singing girl group, and the triumphs and tribulations that come with fame and fortune. With music by Academy® Award nominee Henry Krieger and book and lyrics by Tony and Grammy-Award winner Tom Eyer, DREAMGIRLS features the unforgettable hits: "And I Am Telling You I'm Not Going," "One Night Only" and "Listen." Broadway director and choreographer Robert Longbottom, along with some of Broadway's top designers, re-envision this Tony and Academy Award winning hit so it sparkles like never before!

IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS (Dec. 7-12, 2010 – Ovens Auditorium)

Get ready to discover a delightful new show that's as fresh and rare as newly fallen snow! The classic holiday tradition WHITE CHRISTMAS comes to the stage at last, as a brand new Irving Berlin musical. Brimming with such Berlin hits as "Blue Skies," "How Deep is the Ocean?" and, of course, the unforgettable title song. IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS tells the story of two showbiz buddies putting on a show in a magical Vermont Inn and finding their perfect mates in the bargain. Full of dancing, laughter and some of the greatest songs ever written, IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS promises to be a merry and bright theatrical experience for the whole family.

BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL (Jan. 12-30, 2011 – Ovens Auditorium)

BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL is a joyous celebration of one young boy's journey to make his dreams come true. Ben Brantley of *The New York Times* calls BILLY ELLIOT "The most inspiring show I've seen in years." Set in a small town, the story follows Billy as he stumbles out of the boxing ring and into a ballet class, discovering a surprising passion that inspires his family and his whole community. A big musical with an even bigger heart, BILLY ELLIOT will enchant the dreamer in all of us.

Based on the international smash-hit film, BILLY ELLIOT is brought to life by a phenomenal cast of 45 and the Tony Award-winning creative team -- director Stephen Daldry, choreographer Peter Darling and writer Lee Hall -- along with music legend Elton John, who has written what the *New York Post* calls "His best score yet."

Some Adult Language. See web site www.billyelliottthemusical.com

IN THE HEIGHTS (Feb. 15-20, 2011 – Belk Theater)

IN THE HEIGHTS tells the universal story of a vibrant community in New York's Washington Heights neighborhood – a place where the coffee from the corner bodega is light and sweet, the windows are always open and the breeze carries the rhythm of three generations of music. It's a community on the

brink of change, full of hopes, dreams and pressures, where the biggest struggles can be deciding which traditions you take with you, and which ones you leave behind.

IN THE HEIGHTS opened on Broadway to wide critical acclaim March 9, 2008. The Washington Post said IN THE HEIGHTS is “Pure Broadway. An evening of Old-style, innocent pleasure,” and Ben Brantley of The New York Times enthused IN THE HEIGHTS is “An exuberant animated shrine to the importance of family ties and being faithful to where you come from.” IN THE HEIGHTS continues to play on Broadway at the Richard Rodgers Theatre.

The New Mel Brooks Musical YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN (March 15-20, 2011 – Belk Theater)

IT’S ALIVE! From the creators of the record-breaking Broadway sensation THE PRODUCERS comes this monster new musical comedy.

A wickedly inspired re-imagining of the Frankenstein legend based on Mel Brooks’ classic comedy masterpiece, the story follows bright young Dr. Frankenstein (that’s Fronkensteen) as he attempts to complete his grandfather’s masterwork and bring a corpse to life. Together with his oddly shaped and endearing helper Igor (that’ s Eye-gor), his curvaceous lab assistant Inga, and in spite of his incredibly self-involved madcap fiancée Elizabeth, Frankenstein succeeds in creating a monster – but not without scary and often hilarious complications.

SHREK THE MUSICAL (June 14-19, 2011 – Belk Theater)

SHREK THE MUSICAL, based on the Oscar®-winning DreamWorks film that started it all, brings the hilarious story of everyone’s favorite ogre to life on the stage.

In a faraway kingdom turned upside down, things get ugly when an unseemly ogre – not a handsome prince – shows up to rescue a feisty princess. Throw in a donkey who won’t shut up, a villain with a SHORT temper, a cookie with an attitude and over a dozen other fairy tale misfits, and you’ve got the kind of mess that calls for a real hero. Luckily, there’s one on hand... and his name is Shrek.

Featuring a terrific score of 19 all-new songs, big laughs, great dancing and breathtaking scenery, *WWOR-TV* proclaims “SHREK THE MUSICAL, “Far, Far and away the funniest new musical on Broadway!”

SHREK THE MUSICAL is part romance, part twisted fairy tale and all irreverent fun for everyone!

NEXT TO NORMAL (July 12-17, 2011 – Knight Theater)

From the director of *Rent* comes NEXT TO NORMAL, an emotional powerhouse of a musical with a thrilling contemporary score about a family trying to take care of themselves and each other. Winner of three 2009 Tony Awards including Best Score, NEXT TO NORMAL is the most talked about new show on Broadway having recently been chosen as “one of the year’s ten best” by major critics around the country.

The New York Times calls NEXT TO NORMAL “a brave, breathtaking musical. A work of muscular grace and power.” It is much more than a feel-good musical; it is a feel-*everything* musical.” *Rolling Stone* raves, “It is the best musical of the season – by a mile. It’ll pin you to your seat.”

2010/11 BROADWAY EXTRAS

MARY POPPINS (Aug. 25 – Sept. 12, 2010 – Belk Theater) – BROADWAY EXTRA

Charlotte audiences will be the first in the Carolinas to experience the arrival of the world’s most famous nanny! Combining the best of the original stories by P. L. Travers and the beloved Walt Disney film, the Tony® Award-winning MARY POPPINS is everything you’d hope for in a Broadway musical – and more.

Produced by Disney and Cameron Mackintosh, the show includes such wonderful songs as "Chim Chim Cher-ee," "A Spoonful of Sugar," "Let's Go Fly a Kite" and, of course, "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious." *The NY Daily News* hails MARY POPPINS as "a roof-raising, toe-tapping, high-flying extravaganza!" Let your imagination take flight at this perfectly magical musical!

MOMIX (Feb. 22-27, 2011 – Knight Theater) – BROADWAY EXTRA

Known internationally for presenting work of exceptional inventiveness and physical beauty, MOMIX is a company of dancer-illusionists under the direction of Moses Pendleton. For more than 25 years, MOMIX has been celebrated for its ability to conjure up a world of surrealistic images using props, light, shadow, humor and the human body.

The company's production follows the rhythms of the New England seasons, but also the evolution of the world and the passing of a day: Flowers bloom, go to seed and die; vegetable, animal and mineral – all in human form, combine and metamorphose. Fabrics, colors, costumes, projections and props create a landscape populated by the creations of Pendleton's original, whimsical, mythical imagination. An herbal remedy for the winter blues, Botanica is an event not to be missed.

AVENUE Q (May 5-10, 2011 – Knight Theater) – BROADWAY EXTRA

AVENUE Q is the smash-hit Broadway musical about real life in New York City, as told by a cast of people and puppets through a hilariously irreverent, Tony-winning book and score. AVENUE Q tells the story of Princeton, a bright-eyed college grad who moves to NYC with big dreams and a tiny bank account. The only apartment he can afford is way out on Avenue Q, where everyone's looking for the same things he is: a decent job, a stable relationship, and a "purpose." Eventually, Princeton learns to embrace the ups and downs of city life and realizes that "the real world" isn't so bad, after all! *The New York Times* hailed AVENUE Q as "a breakthrough musical of a very different stripe. Savvy, sassy and delicious!" and *Entertainment Weekly* claimed it was "one of the funniest shows you're ever likely to see!"

For mature audiences. Contains strong language and full puppet nudity.

BLUE MAN GROUP (April 19-24, 2011– Belk Theater) – BROADWAY EXTRA

BLUE MAN GROUP is best known for their wildly popular theatrical shows and concerts which combine comedy, music, and technology to produce a totally unique form of entertainment. Although it is impossible to describe, people of all ages agree that BLUE MAN GROUP is an intensely exciting and wildly outrageous show that leaves the entire audience in a blissful, euphoric state. With no spoken language, BLUE MAN GROUP is perfect for people of all ages, languages, and cultures. Now, BLUE MAN GROUP takes to the road on its first U.S. theatrical tour. This unique experience is a form of entertainment like nothing else; guaranteed to be an outing you will never forget!

CATS (May 24-29, 2011– Belk Theater) – BROADWAY EXTRA

There's no better way to introduce your family to the wonders of live theater than with the magic, the mystery, the memory of CATS. What began as a musical about cats after Andrew Lloyd Webber picked up a book of poems in an airport bookshop has become one of the longest running shows in Broadway's history. Winner of seven Tony Awards including Best Musical, CATS features 20 of Andrew Lloyd Webber's timeless melodies, including the mega hit, "Memory."

MAMMA MIA! (July 26-31, 2011 – Belk Theater) – BROADWAY EXTRA

An independent, single mother who owns a small hotel on an idyllic Greek island, Donna is about to let go of Sophie, the spirited daughter she's raised alone. For Sophie's wedding, Donna has invited her two lifelong best girlfriends — practical and no-nonsense Rosie and wealthy, multi-divorcee Tanya — from her one-time backing band, Donna and the Dynamos. But Sophie has secretly invited three guests of her own.

On a quest to find the identity of her father to walk her down the aisle, she brings back three men from Donna's past to the Mediterranean paradise they visited 20 years earlier. Over 24 chaotic,

magical hours, new love will bloom and old romances will be rekindled on this lush island full of possibilities.

Inspired by the storytelling magic of ABBA's songs from "Dancing Queen" and "S.O.S." to "Money, Money, Money" and "Take a Chance on Me," MAMMA MIA! is a celebration of mothers and daughters, old friends and new family found.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The North Carolina Blumenthal Performing Arts Center serves the Carolinas as a leading cultural, entertainment and education provider. For more information, call 704-372-1000 or visit BlumenthalCenter.org. The Center receives operating support from the Arts & Science Council and the North Carolina Arts Council. The Center is also supported through the generous aid of its sponsors, including Duke Energy, sponsor of the Broadway Lights Series and U.S. Airways, Official Airline of Blumenthal Performing Arts Center.



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