



Blue Monkey's Going Back to "School"



From left, Derek Herman (Ryan Evans), Annie Leonard (Sharpay Evans), Vanessa Wilkins (Gabiella Montez) and Lance Geller (Troy Bolton) are "All in This Together" in Blue Monkey's production of *Disney High School Musical On Stage!*
Photo by Jerry Roussele.

WHAT: Disney High School Musical On Stage
WHEN: August 1–31, 2008 (Fri & Sat @ 7 pm; Sun @ 2 pm)
WHERE: Hinson Annex, 1315 SE 20th Ave, Portland
TICKETS: \$20 adults ~ \$16 students/seniors

Buy online at bluemonkeytheater.org or call 503.593.2466

Blue Monkey Theater Company brings back one of its most popular productions for a summer remount of *Disney High School Musical On Stage!* with much of the original cast returning, including Lance Geller, who won a Portland Critics Circle "Drammy" Award for Outstanding Young Performer in his role as Troy Bolton.

When Troy and "brainiac" science club genius Gabriella Montez decide to try out for the leads in the school musical, social anarchy breaks loose at East High School, as cliques crumble and students start to march to their own drummers. Sibling theater stars Ryan and Sharpay Evans are determined to land those lead roles for themselves, however, and to return the school to its proper pecking order. When push comes to shove, only their love of music can keep Troy and Gabriella together in this pop musical hit based on the record breaking Disney film that made stars out of Zac Efron, Vanessa Hudgens and Ashley Tisdale.

"As a theater company dedicated to young people, High School Musical is ideal not just because of its positive message and contemporary pop songs, but because it's just so much fun every single time," says Blue Monkey Artistic Director John Monteverde. "The kids have a blast both on stage and in the audience, and the energy and camaraderie of the cast is infectious. I defy anyone to leave the theater not humming a tune or trying a dance step, and what more can you want from a summer musical than that?"

Blue Monkey has also relocated the show from the cozy but cramped West End Theater downtown to the spacious 400-seat Art Deco Hinson Annex in the Hawthorne District. This little known gem of a theater space will allow the show to really spread its wings, as the sunny pop music and youthful exuberance of High School Musical fill the space to the rafters. "We are thrilled to be bringing our show across town to the Hawthorne area!" Monteverde says.

In addition to Geller, who received the 2007 Young Performer Award for his performance in the show, Vanessa Wilkins returns as Troy's love interest Gabrielle Montez. Their rivals for the leads in the upcoming school musical are over-the-top twin thespians Ryan and Sharpay Evans, played by returning young comedian Derek Herman and talented newcomer Annie Leonard. Jason Means also returns as Troy's basketball-obsessed best friend, with newcomer Annie Bany as the confident leader of the school science team.

Impressive local adult talent backs up the youthful ensemble, including the hilarious Sarah Dresser reprising her role as drama teacher Ms. Darbus and Paul Angelo joining the cast as Coach Bolton, Troy's hard-driving father.

In addition to Monteverde, locally acclaimed choreographer Amy Palomino returns to restage her musical numbers (with a few new surprises!) that run the gamut of contemporary styles, from hip hop to salsa to jazz. Local musician James Liptak returns as music director to keep the complex pop harmonies sounding sweet.