



Centre Stage South Carolina and **IMI** present
by arrangement with Alan Janes for Theatre Partners

Buddy

:the buddy holly story


Written by
**Alan Janes
& Rob Bettinson**


Originally directed by
Rob Bettinson

Starring
Will Ragland
as Buddy Holly

Directed by
Betsy Bisson & Gene Kreelic

Musical Direction by
Joe Wehunt

 **233.6733**
centrestage.org **July 19 - August 18**



This musical bio tracks the rise of 50's singing sensation Buddy Holly from his early career in Lubbock, Texas to his final performance at The Surf Ballroom on February 2, 1959.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Tim Brosnan, Marketing Director
803.256.8625
tim.brosnan@centrestage.org

PRESS KIT

Centre Stage South Carolina



What's in this Press Kit ...

- Press release
- Production details (dates, times, prices, etc.)
- Cast and production personnel lists
- Brief synopsis of the play
- Key biographies
- Buddy bits and Buddy bytes



John Atkins (left) and Will Ragland as Buddy Holly in the 2005 Centre Stage production of *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*. Both performers will be featured in the 2007 revival.



IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 18, 2007

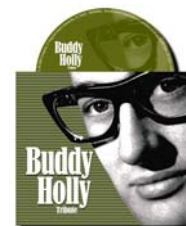
***Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* opens at Centre Stage July 19**

If there were a Rock 'n Roll Mount Rushmore, Buddy Holly would be on it. The music Buddy Holly created continues to entertain us 50 years later. In his short 18-month career, he amassed 145 hits. His influence can be felt in every rock artist's work from The Beatles to The Rolling Stones to Bob Dylan...and on and on.

On July 28, 2005, Centre Stage opened its first production of *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*. Within days, the show began selling out, becoming the biggest blockbuster hit in the theater's history up to that time.

This year, by overwhelming popular demand, Buddy will return to Centre Stage July 19 – August 18, again featuring **Will Ragland**, one of the Upstate's most recognizable and respected entertainers, as Buddy Holly. This musical bio follows Buddy and the Crickets from their first on-air revolutionary performance to 'the day the music died' on February 3, 1959. The tall lanky kid from Lubbock, Texas brought us *That'll Be the Day*, *Peggy Sue*, *Oh Boy*, *Rave On*, *It's So Easy* and *Not Fade Away*.

Buddy will be directed by **Betsy Bisson**, a professional actress and mainstage director at Flat Rock Playhouse, the State Theater of North Carolina. Her co-director is **Gene Krcelic**, a principal of OMG Studio (theomgstudios.com) where Edwin McCain recorded his most recent album. OMG is releasing a tribute CD featuring Will Ragland and the music of Buddy Holly, produced by Grammy Award-winner **Noel Golden**. The CD will be available for sale at Horizon Records and in the theater lobby during the run of the show.



Music Director **Joe Wehunt** (joewehuntentertainment.com) is a composer/sound designer at Skyline Post (a film postproduction facility) and freelance writer, arranger and guitarist. Joe has worked with Bob Hope, George Burns and The Fifth Dimension, and has served as music director for many are shows.

Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story, exclusively sponsored by IMI, will open July 19, 2007 and run for 23 performances (every Wednesday through Sunday) through August 18, 2007. We anticipate a sellout attendance of approximately 6,000 from across the region, so patrons are urged to make reservations early.

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Centre Stage South Carolina



Play title: *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*

Run dates: July 19 – August 18, 2007 (23 performances; matinees on July 22, 29 and August 5, 12 at 3 p.m.) *All weeks Wednesdays through Sundays.*

Location: Centre Stage South Carolina
501 River Street (inside the Smith Barney building, one block behind the Westin Poinsett)
Greenville, SC 29601

Tickets/box office: Tickets are on sale now. Prices are \$25 and \$20 for adults, \$20 and \$15 for students. Prices vary depending on seat location. Box office hours are 2-6 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and 2 hours before curtain.

Contact: Tim Brosnan, Marketing Director
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Web site: CentreStage.org

Cast

Role	Actor
Buddy Holly	Will Ragland
Joe Mauldin	Joshua Wilson
Jerry Allison	Kip Brock
4 th Cricket	John Atkins
Hipockets Duncan	Brian Coker
Norman Petty	Louie Sagedy
Big Bopper	Joe Wehunt
Ritchie Valens	Jose Molina
Apollo Male #1	"Pie" Houston
Apollo Male #2	Luther Sherman
Decca Producer	Ronald Dennis
KDAV Engineer	Jonathan Witthuhn
Bass Guitar	John Brookshire
Vi Petty	Paula Doolittle
Maria Elena	Maria Katsadourous
Apollo Female	Anreale Pickens
Shirley	Bentley DeGarmo
Mrs. Santiago	JeanE Bartlett

Production personnel

Name	Position
Betsy Bisson	Director
Gene Krcelic	Director
Joe Wehunt	Music Director
Guy Perticone	Technical Director
Scenic Design	Paul Feraldi
Costume Coordinator	Connie Clark
Production SM	Michele Labar
Rehearsal SM	Carrie Parker
Production Asst.	Donna Norman



Key biographies



Will Ragland (Buddy Holly) is delighted to be returning to Centre Stage to reprise a role for which he received the "Best Actor in a Local Production" award in *The Beat's* 2005 Best of the Beat. Will is a Greenville native and a veteran of over 30 productions in North and South Carolina. He was last seen at Centre Stage as many strange characters in *The Mystery of Irma Vep*. Other favorite roles in area theatres include Archibald Craven in *The Secret Garden*, Hook in *Peter Pan*, Fagin in *Oliver!*, Scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*, and Captain von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* at the South Carolina Children's Theatre and Cinderella's Prince and the Wolf in *Into the Woods* and Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls* at the Greenville Little Theatre, where he will be playing Dracula this coming fall. Will is a graduate of Davidson College, earning a BA in Studio Art in 2000, and will be teaching art and drama at Woodmont High School in Piedmont. Will would like to dedicate his performance to the enduring legacy of Buddy Holly's life and music. Rave on!

Betsy Bisson (Director) is a full-time staff member at Flat Rock Playhouse, the State Theatre of North Carolina, where she works as an AEA actress and mainstage director as well as the Director of their growing YouTheatre program. Last fall, she directed *Mama Mamie's Departure* for Centre Stage and this spring she happily directed *The Secret Garden* and *The Velveteen Rabbit* for South Carolina Children's Theatre. In addition to directing and performing, she has worked as an AEA stage-manager, stitcher, production manager and has served as a designer of costumes, lights, scenery, properties and make-up as well as a technician in all the above capacities. She was named to Who's Who Among American Teachers in 1998 and 2000 and recognized by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts in 2000. Her directorial credits (over 100 productions) range from children's theatre to musicals, from farces to dramas, from original works to classics.

Gene Krcelic (Director) Gene is making his directorial debut at Centre Stage South Carolina with director Betsy Bisson. Recently he starred as sadistic killer Harry Roat in the thriller *Wait Until Dark* and the Creature in *Frankenstein* at Easley Foothills Playhouse. He is a Principal Partner at OMG-Sports Entertainment Music & Recording Studios. Gene graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with a BA in Dramatic Arts and a BA in Journalism.

Our current gallery artists

NOTE: Centre Stage partners with the Metropolitan Arts Council (MAC) to present the works of Upstate visual artists in our public areas during the run of each production. The artist whose work we are featuring during *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* are Dabney Mahanes and Julie Hughes Shabkie. The title of the exhibition is "Rockin' Color" and the opening reception is July 13, 2007 from 6:30 until 9 p.m. The exhibition will run from July 13 through September 17, 2007. The exhibition is free and open to the public 2-6 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays.



Buddy bits

- Buddy's big break came when, 50 years ago, he and performing partner, Bob Montgomery, opened for Bill Haley and the Comets at a local rock concert. As a result of that performance, he was offered a solo contract with Decca Records, but success eluded him until he formed his own band with Joe Mauldin and Jerry Allison, called The Crickets.
- Originally called 'rockabilly', his influence on other recording artists was a result of his innovative style and songwriting abilities. His own music was influenced by gospel, country, r & b, blues and pop, plus the rhythm and strum patterns of Spanish music.
- **The Beatles:** Lennon, Harrison & McCartney were originally in a band called "The Quarry Men". In 1958, they recorded two demos. One was a cover version of *That'll Be The Day*. After a brief split, they regrouped in 1960 as The Fabulous Silver Beatles, which was later shortened to The Beatles. The name was a tribute to Buddy Holly's band, The Crickets, combined with *beat* music, a common British term for Rock 'n Roll at the time.
- **The Rolling Stones:** First American hit was Buddy Holly's *Not Fade Away*.

Buddy bytes

"My earliest heroes were Buddy Holly, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis Presley. I didn't discover the black guys till later. Where I was situated in England, the white music was the first stuff I got, with Buddy Holly and Elvis Presley. Then I started scratching the surface and I saw that behind that there was this whole kingdom of music."

Eric Clapton

"And I just want to say that when I was sixteen or seventeen years old, I went to see Buddy Holly play at Duluth National Guard Armory and I was three feet away from him...and he looked at me. And I just have some sort of feeling that he was – I don't know how or why – but I know he was with us all the time we were making this record in some kind of way."

Bob Dylan (1998 Grammy Awards speech)

"I only needed specs for reading, but as a result of wearing them all the time to try to look like Buddy Holly, I became genuinely nearsighted."

Elton John

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