

PRESS RELEASE

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BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Birmingham, October 3, 2008__Following an extensive search process, the Trustees of The Birmingham Children's Theatre, Inc. have selected George Culver to serve as Executive Director effective November 10, 2008. Mr. Culver currently serves as Executive Director of Talladega's Historic Ritz Theatre, a nationally significant Art Deco landmark theater that has, under Mr. Culver's leadership, become one of Alabama's high-profile performing arts centers.

"The members of the Search Committee were glad to be able to recommend George Culver to the Board as our next Executive Director," said Marvell "Chip" Bivins, President of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee that, also, served as the Search Committee. "He combines broad public and private sector experience with proven skills as an exceptional manager and innovative leader. George understands theater for young audiences as evidenced by his remarkable achievements in working with educators to establish curriculum-based programming for more than 36,000 children in Talladega and east Alabama. He is eminently qualified. It is a pleasure to welcome him to Birmingham Children's Theatre."

The Search Committee worked diligently for several months to identify candidates, not just from the world of theater, but from business, academia, and the non-profit sector. The committee was interested in those who have demonstrated leadership, passion and commitment in their careers. Mr. Culver, recently selected for the 2009 Class of Leadership Alabama, emerged as the top choice.

"I am honored to be joining Birmingham Children's Theatre and working with this historic institution," said Mr. Culver. "It is an indispensable educational and cultural asset, not just to Birmingham, but to the entire State and much of the Southeast. As BCT begins its sixty-second season, its mission to 'educate, entertain, and enrich the lives of children through the magic of live theater' is even more important today than at any time in its illustrious past. I look forward to joining with the Board of Trustees and staff to build and strengthen BCT, and to continue the essential work of this organization that has long been nationally recognized for its excellence."

Birmingham Children's Theatre is one of the oldest and largest children's theaters in the country. As the resident theater company at the BJCC, it occupies and performs in three theater spaces - the 900 seat mainstage theater, the 200 seat Wee Folks theater, and the 150 seat Dominick Studio theater. BCT is a professional company of adult actors, directors, designers and other artists who present eight or nine productions each year, four of which tour throughout Alabama and the Southeast. Founded in 1947, BCT now has an annual

attendance of some 200,000 young people.

In addition to his outstanding accomplishments at Talladega's Historic Ritz Theatre, where he has attracted such world-class artists as Hal Holbrook, Diahann Carroll, Don McLean, and the African Children's Choir, Mr. Culver will bring to his new role as Executive Director of Birmingham Children's Theatre a wealth of experience. Following his graduation from the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Mr. Culver continued his education at the University of Pennsylvania where he received an MBA in Marketing Management from the Wharton School of Management.

Over several decades in New York City, Mr. Culver held management positions with Affiliate Artists Inc, SHOWTIME Cable-TV Network, and in the production of the PBS documentary "OK Heart." He served as Director of Development & Public Affairs at the renowned Actors' Studio under legendary artistic director Lee Strasburg. As executive producer of Tombigbee Productions, he commissioned and produced the critically acclaimed off-Broadway play, "I Don't Want To Be Zelda Anymore" hailed by *The New York Times* as having "set the standard for a monodrama in this or any season."

Mr. Culver was recipient of the Alabama State Council on the Arts' 2006-2007 Arts Administration Fellowship and recently completed serving two terms on the Board of Directors at the League of Historic American Theatres, where he co-chaired three national conferences. He has served on the Southern Arts Federation's Planning Committee for the annual Performing Arts Exchange and as a regular grant review panelist for the Alabama State Arts Council. Most recently, he was a founding member and served on the steering committee for the newly formed Arts Consortium of Alabama (ACA), a statewide service and advocacy organization for producing and presenting cultural organizations as well as Alabama artists.