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Mississippi Festival to Launch New Delta Arts Program

The Mississippi Festival Foundation is pleased to announce a new program, which will bring professional theatre, dance and music performances to schools and communities throughout the Mississippi Delta in association with the Rock River Foundation of Charleston. The program will begin April 14-18, 2008 with a series of performances by the Birmingham Children's Theatre and the Junebug Theater of New Orleans in a four county area including Coahoma, Quitman, Tallahatchie and Panola Counties.

"This program is an exciting new venture which will enable us to reach people in areas of the state who have had little or no opportunity to experience live professional performances," stated Mississippi Festival President, Robert Canon. "The performing arts are essential to understanding our world and the human condition and we believe this program will substantially increase educational and cultural resources in this region."

The Birmingham Children's Theatre will present performances of its new production of Mark Twain's classic, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* for over 8,000 elementary school students and teachers in Clarksdale, Lambert, Webb, Charleston, Batesville and Sardis. Founded in 1947, The Birmingham Children's Theatre is one of the nation's leading professional theaters for children.

The Junebug Theatre of New Orleans will present its internationally acclaimed production starring John O'Neal in *Don't Start Me To Talking or I'll Tell You Everything I Know*, which is based upon the mythic storyteller, Junebug Jaboo Jones and his experiences in growing up in Pike County, Mississippi. Performances will take place in Clarksdale on Wednesday April 16 at 7:00p.m. in the Georgia Lewis Theatre at Coahoma Community College and in Charleston on Friday April 18 at 7:30 p.m in the Morgan Freeman Auditorium at East Tallahatchie High School.

The performances are made possible by partnerships with the Rock River Foundation, Charleston Arts and Revitalization Effort (CARE), Coahoma Community College, the SonEdna Foundation, and additional financial support from the Cellular South Foundation and Trustmark.

