

WASSERMAN, CRAIG
LEAD *BIG RIVER*



NEWS RELEASE

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Two University of Southern Indiana professors are directing the talents of cast and crew for the introductory season of *Big River* at Lincoln Amphitheatre in Lincoln City, Indiana.

Elliot Wasserman is director. Born and raised in Miami, Florida, he studied theatre at the University of Georgia in Athens and has done graduate work in English at the University of Florida and Emory University. In professional and college theaters, he has directed such musicals as *Guys and Dolls*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Music Man*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, and *The Robber Bridegroom*. He is pleased to add *Big River* to this achievement.

In August 1991, after several years teaching college in the Atlanta area, Wasserman joined the faculty of the University of Southern Indiana Theatre Department, where he directed Gibson's *A Cry of Players* and Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* during the 1991-92 USI Theatre season.

Wasserman gives extensive credit for the success of *Big River* to those around him. "You will frequently hear directors say that 30 to 50 percent of a show's success lies with the cast and that's the way it is with *Big River*. Half of my job was done when I did the casting for this show. It was a wonderful and maddening process. We went to St. Louis, Boston, New York, Chapel Hill, among other places, to get the best cast we could. I believe both shows succeed because of the strength of the cast. It's an honor and a privilege to work with a cast as talented and hard working as this one."

In addition to the on-stage personnel, Wasserman said *Big River* could not have been produced without the crucial behind-the-scenes work of the stage crew. "It is a tremendous help to have a good stage manager and we have a great one in Ron Guarnieri. And you'd have to mention Bud Schaaf (technical director). He is the backbone of this production. The sets would fall apart without him."

(more)

Daniel R. Craig, music director, is in his third year of teaching at USI. Prior to coming to Indiana, he was director of choirs for a year at Casper College, Casper, Wyoming, and also was one of several assistant conductors of the Wyoming State Choir, a statewide community chorale, and guest soloist for the Casper Symphony Orchestra and Civic Chorale.

"This is the best artistic experience I've had in a long time," says Craig of the *Big River* preparation. "The cast is very professional and cooperative, and they're always eager to learn. Even during long and tiring rehearsals, they're willing to ask questions about the music. As a result, we're going to have a very musically strong show."

Craig holds degrees in choral conducting and vocal performance from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, and from Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky. He has performed as a bass soloist in several masterworks and has been a conductor in academic, community, and church ensembles, including participation in the Grand Teton National Music Festival at Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

At USI, Craig is director of the Mid-America Singers, a contemporary and madrigal ensemble, and teaches music history, music theory, and elementary music education. He is a member of the American Choral Director's Association and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians.

Big River will open on July 3 and, in alternating with *Young Abe Lincoln*, will be performed on the following dates:

July 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 29, 31

August 2, 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22

Performances begin at 8 p.m. daily, except Mondays when the amphitheatre is closed. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$9 for senior citizens (+60), and \$6 for children (12 and under). Special discount rates are available for groups of 20 or more. For reservations or further information, please call 800/284-1816, or write:

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