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NEWS RELEASE

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Full Casting announced for NC Theatre's July production of *BUDDY - THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY*

Raleigh, NC- North Carolina Theatre, the region's premiere nonprofit professional regional theatre producing Broadway musical revivals, announces the full cast of its last production of the 2014/2015 season. *Buddy- The Buddy Holly Story* playing July 21-26 at the Raleigh Memorial Auditorium in the Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts.

Buddy-The Buddy Holly Story was written by Alan Janes and tells the true story of Buddy's rise to fame, from the moment in 1957 when "That'll Be the Day" hit the airwaves until his tragic death less than two years later on "The Day the Music Died". The show features over 20 of Holly's greatest hits including "That'll Be the Day", "Peggy Sue", "Everyday", "Oh Boy", "Not Fade Away" and "Rave On" plus Ritchie Valens' "La Bamba" and The Big Bopper's "Chantilly Lace".

Making his North Carolina Theatre debut, James Barry will play the title role of "Buddy Holly". Barry has previously appeared on Broadway in *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* and the First National Tour of *Million Dollar Quartet*, along with numerous regional productions including *Next to Normal* (The Arden), *Man of La Mancha* starring Terrence Mann (CT Rep), and *Pump Boys and Dinettes* (New Theatre).

Zach Cossman, will play "Jerry Allison" in Buddy's band famously known as the "The Crickets", a role he previously played at The Casa Mañana Theatre in Texas. He also appeared in the world premiere of the Off-Broadway Show, *Revolution in the Elbow* and in the *Blue Man Group*. Appearing as second "Crickets" member "Joe Mauldin" is Sam Sherwood who previously appeared in the national tours of *Titanic* and *The Music Man*.

In the role of "Richie Valens" is Xavier Cano from Broadway's *Grease*, along with Belinda Allyn (*Broadway: West Side Story* and upcoming *Allegiance*) as "Maria Elena Holly" and Brent Bateman as "The Big Bopper". Appearing as radio DJ "Hipockets Duncan" is Matt Allen, having previously appeared on the NC Theatre stage as "Scuttle" in 2014's *Disney's The Little Mermaid* (Broadway credits: *Honeymoon in Vegas*, *The Wedding Singer*).

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Buddy will be directed and choreographed by DJ Salisbury who has set shows for theatres nationwide including Paper Mill Playhouse, Dallas Summer Musicals, Sacramento Music Circus, and ArtsCenter of Coastal Carolina. DJ is returning to NCT after performing on our stage 24 years ago. This is his 7th production of *Buddy*. Angela C. Howell will appear in the production and serve as music director.

Rounding out the cast will be Benny Elledge, Dana Zihlman Harshaw, Yolanda W. Rabun, Matthew J. Riordan, Troy Valjean Rucker, Scott Wakefield and Kelsey Walston. Onstage musicians include Jonathan Robert Minnick and Jay Wright.

The production will also feature actors from our flagship training program, the NC Theatre Conservatory including Laura Bright, Caroline Farley, Katharine Richardson and Collin Yates.

About *Buddy-The Buddy Holly Story*

The original West End production of *Buddy - The Buddy Holly Story* ran from 1989-2002, cumulating over 5,000 performances making it one of the longest running musicals in London History, spawning a revival in 2007. A Broadway production followed in 1990 at the Shubert Theatre as well as a national tour. The show has received numerous award nominations including the Laurence Olivier Award and the Outer Circle Award for "Best New Musical."

For tickets to NC Theatre's production of BUDDY- THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY visit NCTheatre.com or call Ticketmaster at 800-745-3000. For groups of 10 or more, call 919-831-6941 x6949. Coming up in our 2015/2016 season: DIRTY DANCING-THE CLASSIC STORY ON STAGE, September 8-13; INTO THE WOODS, October 20-25; RAGTIME January 12-17; GREASE, February 9-14; WIT, April 29- May 8; MARY POPPINS, July 26-31.