

 **PRESS RELEASE 23.08.10**

**UK Productions**

**Presents**

**Rodgers & Hammerstein’s**

***OKLAHOMA!***

Starring

MARTI WEBB (*As Aunt Eller* ) & MARK EVANS (*As Curly)*

*Introducing*

*Gemma Sutton As Laurey*

West End and international musical theatre star Marti Webb and runner-up in the BBC’s *Your Country Needs You* Mark Evans will headline a brand new tour of Rodgers & Hammerstein’s *Oklahoma!*, one of the most popular and enduring musicals in history, which is currently enchanting audiences across the UK, playing at the Opera House, Manchester from Tuesday 12th to Saturday 16th October.

From the producers of hugely successful touring hits including *South Pacific, 42nd Street, Disney’s Beauty and the Beast* and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers,* this brand new revival of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Oklahoma!* Is staged by the critically acclaimed creative team behind their record-breaking tour of Rodgers & Hammerstein’s *South Pacific*.

*Oklahoma!* Is more than a hit. It was the first real phenomenon in modern musical theatre history. Smashing all Broadway box office records when it opened in 1943, it was the first collaboration between Rodgers and Hammerstein, the legendary team who went on to create *Carousel*, *South Pacific*, *The King and I* and *The Sound of Music*. Set on America’s Western Frontier, against a background of conflict between farmers and cattlemen, *Oklahoma!* Perfectly integrates song, dance and story to tell the tale of farm girl Laurey and the two rivals for her affections, happy go-lucky cowboy Curly and the sinister farmhand Jud.

Marti Webb (Aunt Eller) is one of Britain’s most popular leading ladies, whose extensive West End credits include *Blood Brothers, Tell Me on a Sunday, Song & Dance, Evita, Cats* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*,to name only a few. Mark Evans (Curly) is best known as the runner up in the BBC’s *Your Country Needs You,* Andrew Lloyd Webber’s search for a singer to represent Britain in the Eurovision song contest. Mark also has a string of musical theatre credits to his name, including *Spamalot* and *Wicked* in the West End, the part of internationally adored heart-throb Troy Bolton in the London cast of *High School Musical* and the role of cult movie icon Brad Majors in the tour of *The Rocky Horror Show*.

Famously, *Oklahoma!* opens with 'Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin' and contains a sumptuous and rousing score full of wonderful songs, such as 'The Surrey with the Fringe on Top', 'People Will Say We're in Love', 'Many a New Day', 'I Cain't Say No', and the final rousing chorus of 'Oklahoma’. Produced by Martin Dodd for UK Productions, *Oklahoma!* Music by Richard Rodgers and book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. Directed by Julian Woolford, choreography by Chris Hocking, musical supervision by Gareth Williams. Costumes by Elizabeth Dennis, lighting design by David Howe and sound design by Glen Beckley.

For further information, competition tickets, images and interviews contact Andy Longden on 245 6617, Email andylongden@theambassadors.com.

Oklahoma!

Tue 12-Sat16Oct

Opera House, Manchester

Tues – Sat @7.30pm, Thur & Sat 2.30pm

Tickets: £11.00-£33.50

Booking: 0844 847 2484\*. Groups (10+) 10am-6pm 08443 72 72 72

\*(subject to booking fee/transaction charge)