

The Band Plays On

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Closing Summer Lyric's 43rd season on Thursday through Sunday (July 29-Aug. 1) is Meredith Willson's American musical theater classic, *The Music Man*.



Christopher Carey stars as Harold Hill and Betsy Uschkrat stars as Marian Paroo in *The Music Man*, the last offering of Summer Lyric Theatre this season. (Photo by Michael Palumbo)

In the show *The New York Times* called “as American as apple pie and a Fourth of July oration,” fast-talking traveling salesman Harold Hill tries to con the people of River City, Iowa, into buying instruments and uniforms for a boys' band he vows to organize, despite the fact he doesn't know a trombone from a treble clef.

The Tony award-winning, critically acclaimed Broadway classic has memorable tunes, including “Goodnight, My Someone,” “The Wells Fargo Wagon,” “Till There Was You” and “Seventy-six Trombones.”

But don't expect to see 76 trombones on stage, says Diane Lala, who directs and choreographs the production.

"It's a misconception ? there never are 76 trombones," explains Lala. "Harold Hill entices the crowd in town with the *idea* of a boy's band ... he says, 'If you think the notes, you'll play them.' That's his scam." Lala assures that there is something for everybody in this classic American musical comedy. "Even if you've seen it before, when you hear the music, you'll fall back in love with it. It really speaks to people, with hummable tunes, great characters and a great story."

Playing the music man is Tulane alumnus Christopher Carey, a partner in the local law firm of Pugh, Accardo et. al., who starred in *South Pacific* last season. The show also features Betsy Uschkrat in her Summer Lyric debut as Marian "the librarian" Paroo and Aaron Richert, who won a Big Easy Award for his portrayal of "Oliver" in last year's Summer Lyric Theatre production, as Winthrop Paroo.

Show dates and times are Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Ticket are \$26-\$35, available through the [Summer Lyric Theatre website](#) or by calling the box office at 504-865-5269. For more information, contact [Charlie Farve Hayes](#), operations manager, at 504-865-5271.