

Summer Lyric Theatre's 2016 season embraces change

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New artistic director Michael McKelvey helms Summer Lyric Theatre's 2016 season at Tulane University. "Musical theater is a living, breathing organism," says McKelvey. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Known for orchestra-driven productions, colossal casts and intricate costumes, [Summer Lyric Theatre](#) will stoke audience members' sense of adventure and self-discovery during the 2016 season at Tulane University.

With new artistic director Michael McKelvey at the helm of the revered musical theater organization, patrons are invited to witness a young man's kaleidoscopic journey, watch a small-town girl try to make her mark in the big city, and raft down the mighty Mississippi.

"I tried to find shows with a sense of exploration," McKelvey says, as he discusses the season's lineup featuring *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *Big River*.

A Summer Lyric debut, *Millie* will dance the Charleston across the stage for the first time.

With theatergoers in mind, McKelvey also plans to implement cost-conscious changes during his first season on board.

"We're striving to reconnect Summer Lyric with Tulane University. We want to regenerate interest for students, faculty and staff by offering discounts. If you're part of the Tulane family, we want you to come enjoy the entertainment that's been here for half a century," says McKelvey.

Tulane community members are eligible for an approximate 15 percent discount for orchestra and balcony seating.

"We're also trying to generate younger audience members by setting up a [tiered ticket system](#)," says McKelvey.

"That way families can come to the theater together. We're the only theater to use a full pit orchestra, which doesn't even happen on Broadway. We want to make it more affordable to see this special event," says McKelvey.

If you can't wait for the new season, Summer Lyric Theatre will host the [GiveNOLA Day Cabaret](#), a fundraiser benefiting the theater organization's endowment on Tuesday, May 3, at 6 p.m. in Dixon Hall on the uptown campus.

The event will feature refreshments and a star-studded cast of local performers, including Ricky Graham, Leslie Castay and Sean Patterson.

While the event's admission is free, [GiveNOLA](#) donations are encouraged.

"The atmosphere of Dixon Hall makes for something special."

Michael McKelvey, artistic director of Summer Lyric Theatre at Tulane University