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Alabama Shakes Has World Preem of Jazz-Age Harlem Musical in 2001-2002

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Rose-Colored Glasses, the first of the ASF new works from the troupe's Southern Writers' Project, is a world premiere using hit songs such as "Take the A Train," "Satin Doll," "I Got It Bad and That Ain't Good" and "Sophisticated Lady" to tell the story of two Jazz-Age couples in Harlem and Paris in the early 20th century. It was inspired by an idea for a show discussed 30 years ago by Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn and Luther Henderson. The new book and lyrics (using existing music) are by Carlyle Brown, with music and lyrics also by Ellington, Strayhorn and Henderson. Performances play March 5-April 14, 2002. Kent Gash directs. Artistic director Kent Thompson told Playbill On-Line the work is still "in progress" and being developed. Its score is a hybrid of hits and some new lyrics added.

The second Southern Writers' Project world premiere is *Shiloh Rules*, a touching, humorous play about Civil War re-enactors who spar with an African-American female park ranger, May 14-July 27, 2002. The play by Doris Baizley had a small "sneak preview" staging by New Century Theatre at Smith College this summer prior to the separate staging by ASF. *Shiloh Rules* was originally developed in workshop at the Intiman Theater and as part of the New Work Festival at the Mark Taper Forum. The work involves four female Civil War re-enactors who "arrive early for the Battle of Shiloh only to run into a U.S. Park Ranger whose job it is to uphold park regulations," according to the announcement. A director has yet to be announced.

Artistic director Kent Thompson told Playbill On-Line: "You get a clear sense why re-enacting is so interesting to these people. It's a sub-culture. There's a whole ethos of re-enactors that you stay in character and only do things that are historically accurate. The park ranger is stunned that anyone would want to re-enact the Civil War. It's about what people get out of this, and that their motives are not about 'the South will rise again' or that the North will win, but greater things — [about people] telling stories and performing."

Alfred Uhry's *Driving Miss Daisy* plays Nov. 13-Dec. 30, *A Christmas Carol* plays Nov. 16-Dec. 23, Shakespeare's *The Tempest* runs Jan. 8-Feb. 23, 2002, The Graduate Company's Children's Theatre staging of *Cinderella* plays Jan. 25-Feb. 23, 2002, Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (adapted by Frank McGuinness) runs March 12-April 14, 2002, Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* (directed by Thompson) plays May 21-July 27, 2002, Somerset Maugham's *Sheppey*, about a barber who wins the Irish Sweepstakes, also directed by Thompson, plays June 4-July 28, 2002, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* plays June 11-July 28, 2002. Shows are in the Carolyn Blount Theatre, which houses ASF's two venues — the 225-seat Octagon and the 750-seat Festival.

For season information, call (800) 841-4273 or (334) 271-5353 or visit www.asf.net,

— By [Kenneth Jones](#)

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