**STAGEStheatre Presents Beth Henley’s Pulitzer Prize-Winning Crimes of the Heart March 2nd-March 31st**

Fullerton, CA—STAGEStheatre is proud to present Beth Henley’s Pulitzer Prize-winning **Crimes of the Heart** directed by Steven Biggs March 2nd - March 31st. The play opens in Hazelhurst, Mississippi, where the three Magrath sisters have gathered to await news of the family patriarch, who is living out his last hours in the local hospital. Lenny, is unmarried at thirty and facing diminishing marital prospects; Meg is back home after a failed singing career; and Babe is out on bail after having shot her husband. Their troubles, grave and yet somehow hilarious, are highlighted by their priggish cousin, Chick, and by the awkward young lawyer who tries to keep Babe out of jail while finding himself helpless to not fall in love with her. In the end, the play is the story of how its young characters escape the past to seize the future. Warm-hearted and irreverent, this 1981 Pulitzer Prize winning play teems with humanity and humor as it examines the plight of three young Mississippi sisters betrayed by their passions.

“I first fell in love with **Crimes of the Heart** through the movie version,” says director Steven Biggs. “The spinning narrative of these three sisters and their forays into new love, old love, and love interrupted, paired with themes of familial responsibility and being an individual in a society that frowns on stepping outside societal norms, spoke to me then and continues to do so now. Who defines “character”? It helps that my family comes from, if not the Deep South, Oklahoma. I hear my Mom's, my aunts', and my grandmother's—excuse me—my Memaw's voices in these women. It's all too familiar.

I'm also intrigued by the recurring trope of “three sisters” throughout myth and literature; The Three Fates, The Three Graces, The Three Weird Women, Lear's Daughters, Wendy Wasserstein's **The** **Sisters Rosensweig**, and, of course, Chekov's Olga, Masha, and Irina. What is it these characters have in common and why do they almost always seem to break down into, in very broad strokes, The Older Practical One, the Middle Wild One, and the Young Innocent? Obviously, our playwright may be purposely harkening back to the characteristics of those sisters but you can even find similarities in the earlier examples as well and that is fascinating to me. We recognize the aspirations here, whether they are successful or not. We laugh because we recognize ourselves in these characters and in the lengths we are ready to go to protect ourselves, our dreams, and our family.”

**Crimes of the Heart** was written by Beth Henley. It premiered in 1979 at the Actors Theatre of Louisville, had a sold-out run Off-Broadway at Manhattan Theatre Club, and transferred to Broadway in November 1981. The play won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1981. A movie version was released in 1986 starring Jessica Lange, Diane Keaton, and Sissy Spacek.

Starring in **Crimes of the Heart** are: Gil Garcia IV, Sam Green, Alexandria Huie, Erica Jackson, Jeremy Krasovic, and Tiffany Toner.

Tickets for **Crimes of the Heart** are $22.00, $20.00 for students and seniors.  Performances are March 2nd- March 31th, Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 2:00 p.m.  Saturday March 31st performs at 5:00 p.m. only. For reservations please visit our website at [www.stagesoc.org](http://www.stagesoc.org/).

About ***STAGEStheatre***: Celebrating its 26th year in business, STAGEStheatre is one of Orange County’s most innovative community theaters.  It produces nearly 15 productions annually, showcasing local playwriting, acting and directing talent.  STAGEStheatre is, and will continue to be, dedicated to the development of the artist.   It is located at 400 E. Commonwealth in Downtown Fullerton (between Lemon and Balcom).