

Splittin' the Raft Media Coverage:

Newspapers/Online Magazines

<i>Atlanta Journal Constitution</i>	May 17, 2011	Living Section – “Briefs”
“KSU gets grant for <i>Splittin' the Raft</i> ”		
<i>KSU Website Homepage</i>	April – August 2011	Headline Article
“KSU recives NEA grant for production of <i>Splittin' the Raft</i> ”		
<i>Douglas County Sentinel</i>	Sunday, October 7, 2011	Feature Article
“Twain-based <i>Splittin' the Raft</i> set at the Cultural Arts Center”		
<i>Newton County Citizen</i>	October 2, 2011	Feature Article/Interview
“History Re-Examined: <i>Splittin' the Raft</i> puts new spin on <i>Huck Finn</i> ”		
<i>Rockdale County Citizen</i>	October 2, 2011	Feature Article/Interview
“History Re-Examined: <i>Splittin' the Raft</i> puts new spin on <i>Huck Finn</i> ”		
<i>Northeast Georgian</i>	November 2, 2011	Feature Article
“Regional Premiere of <i>Splittin' the Raft</i> to be performed”		
<i>White County News</i>	November 3 & 10, 2011	Feature Article
“Regional Premiere of <i>Splittin' the Raft</i> to be performed at SNCA”		
<i>Flourish Online</i>	January 24, 2012	Feature Article
“ <i>Splittin' the Raft</i> to perform in Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival”		
<i>Marietta Daily Journal</i>	January 27, 2012	Lifestyle Section – “Newsworthy”
“KSU Theatre Students to Present Special Performance”		

Radio

<i>WMLB 1690/ The Voice of the Arts</i>	January 27& 28, 2012	Larry Larson interviews H. Long.
“Onstage with <i>Splittin' the Raft</i> ”		

Onstage is a weekly program, which spotlights actors, writers and directors from live theatre in Atlanta and around the world.

Television

Cobb TV 23	July 25 – August 1, 2011	5 min. interview w/ Cast & Director
“KSU gets the ‘Arts Education in American Communities Grant”		
Cobb TV 23	February 15 – 29	5 min. interview w/ Director
“ <i>Raft</i> invited to perform at Kennedy Center/ American College Theatre Fest.”		

Twain-based 'Splittin' the Raft' set at CAC

AL TO THE SENTINEL

Cultural Arts Council of Douglasville/Douglas County will present Scott Kaiser's "Splittin' the Raft," a musical retelling of Twain's "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," produced by Kennesaw State University's Department of Theatre, Performance Studies and Dance with support from the National Endowment of the Arts, on Friday, 7 p.m., at the Cultural Arts Center. The performance includes African American spirituals and by Stephen Foster, is an open to the general audience, seating is \$10. Reservations are encouraged.

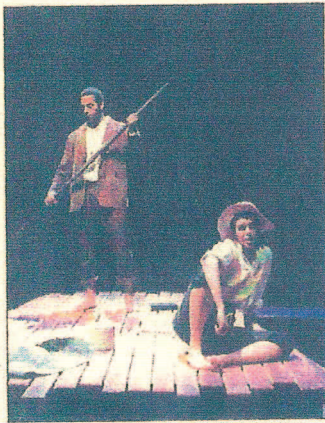
Scott Kaiser's unique interpretation of Mark Twain's classic novel, four actors/singers and musician perform 31 scenes emphasizing themes of personal and transformation – and the narrator is the great orator of the great orator-slave, and abolitionist Douglass. After running in the Black Theater at Kennesaw State University in late September, the production is performed at various community arts organizations and schools including Cultural Arts Center in

Douglasville. The Arts Association in Newton County, The Earl Smith Strand Theatre in Marietta, and many high schools in metropolitan Atlanta and North Georgia.

"This project is exemplary in its community engagement," noted John Gentile, chair of the KSU department. "It brings a canonical work of American literature and a thoughtful consideration of contemporary social issues involving diversity to today's students in the greater Atlanta community."

"I'm very excited," said the play's director Harrison Long, an associate professor with the KSU theater department. "We have an amazing cast which reflects the range and diversity of our talented student body. It's great to see the quality of our students and how they have grown in recent years."

Originally developed for high school students and their families, the project includes a web site to prepare audience members for the play, with an electronic curriculum guide, historical information, biographies, photographs and other support material. Audience members and workshop participants are encouraged to post comments before and after each performance. In addition, the performers and the director will conduct



Submitted photo

The Cultural Arts Council of Douglasville/Douglas County will stage Scott Kaiser's "Splittin' the Raft," a musical retelling of Mark Twain's "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," produced by Kennesaw State University's Department of Theatre, Performance Studies and Dance with support from the National Endowment of the Arts, at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 4th, at the Cultural Arts Center.

a short discussion following each performance. More information about the play and the project, including

"We had hoped to present this production to students in the Douglas County Schools, but it was decided that the language was controversial," commented Cultural Arts Council Director Laura Lieberman. "The 'N' word is included as part of the vernacular script, which pointedly satirizes the failures of bigotry and racism in keeping with the progressive spirit of Mark Twain's American classic. However, we feel that the message of 'Splittin' the Raft' and the outstanding quality of this production are too important and relevant for our community to miss – so we will offer it at the arts center next Friday."

Harrison Long agrees, discussing the value of his production. "It's important that students understand the social, historical and literary contexts of this material. Both Twain's text and Kaiser's adaptation foreground the social injustice of 19th-century America. We don't want to hide from the atrocities of the past or pretend they didn't happen. Instead, we intend to examine these events critically and, in the process, learn something valuable about the current age."

"More than any production I have directed or performed in, this show is making

ing a positive difference in the lives of those who see it," Harrison concludes. "We have played to primarily African American audiences and to primarily white audiences and still to others that have been more racially diverse. I am affirmed by the insightful, passionate responses received during the discussions we conduct after each show."

The Cultural Arts Council is supported by its members, sponsors, the City of Douglasville, the Douglas County Board of Commissioners, and Georgia Council for the Arts through appropriations from the State General Assembly. The GCA is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes a great nation deserves great art.

The Cultural Arts Center of Douglasville/Douglas County is located at

[Splittin' the Raft] reminds us where we've come from and where we're going. It holds up our history against the noble standards laid down by our forefathers.

Harrison Long –Director

The Rockdale Citizen
October 2, 2011



Sunday
October 2, 2011
Volume 58, No. 231

The Citizen Weekend edition
www.rockdalecitizen.com • www.newland.com

Conyers, Georgia
\$1.50



Kennesaw State University student John Stewart rehearses a scene from "Splittin' the Raft."

History re-examined

'Splittin' the Raft' puts new spin on classic 'Huck Finn'



By Laura Lieberman
Cultural Arts Council
Douglasville/Douglas County

As a veteran actor, director and instructor, Harrison Long has been involved in more than his share of productions that highlight African American history and culture. His latest production, "Splittin' the Raft," is a musical retelling of Mark Twain's "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," produced by Kennesaw State University's Department of Theatre, Performance Studies and Dance with support from the National Endowment of the Arts, at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 4th, at the Cultural Arts Center.

IF YOU GO

- What: "Splittin' the Raft," a musical retelling of Mark Twain's "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," produced by Kennesaw State University's Department of Theatre, Performance Studies and Dance with support from the National Endowment of the Arts, at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 4th, at the Cultural Arts Center.
- Where: Kennesaw State University's Department of Theatre, Performance Studies and Dance with support from the National Endowment of the Arts, at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 4th, at the Cultural Arts Center.
- Cost: Free.

"Raft" Articles in Metropolitan Atlanta Newspapers

... the message of "Splittin' the Raft" and the outstanding quality of this production are too important and relevant for our community to miss ...

Laura Lieberman - Director
Douglasville/Douglas Co.
Cultural Arts Council

Douglas County Sentinel
Sunday, October 30, 2011



COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Posting Date: April 27, 2011

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KSU receives NEA grant for production of "Splittin' the Raft"
 Project will foster community engagement

For media inquiries: Cheryl Anderson Brown, Director of Public Relations,
 770-499-3417 or cbrown@kennesaw.edu

KENNESAW, Ga.—The **National Endowment for the Arts** recently awarded the Kennesaw State University Department of Theatre, Performance Studies & Dance with the Arts Education in American Communities grant in support of the upcoming production of the play "Splittin' the Raft." This new theatre production fulfills KSU President Daniel S. Papp's call for "The Engaged University."

After a six-night run in the Black Box Theater at KSU, Sept. 20-25, the production will travel to be performed at various community arts organizations and schools, including The Cultural Arts Council of Douglasville in Douglas County, The Arts Association in Newton County, The Earl Smith Strand Theatre in Marietta and various high schools in North Georgia.



Associate Professor Harrison Long with the cast of "Splittin' the Raft," (from left) Shannon Sparks, John Stewart, Rob Hadaway and Annie Power.

Photo by Tracie Hinnant

"This project is exemplary in its community engagement," says John Gentile, chair of the department. "It brings a canonical work of American literature and a thoughtful consideration of contemporary social issues involving diversity to today's students in the greater Atlanta community."

Written by Scott Kaiser, "Splittin' the Raft" is a dramatic adaptation of the Mark Twain classic "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" as seen through the eyes of the great orator and abolitionist Frederick Douglass. The play, featuring African-American spirituals and songs by Stephen Foster, will be directed by Associate Professor **Harrison Long**. "I'm very excited," Long explains. "We have an amazing cast which reflects the range and diversity of our talented student body. It's amazing to see the quality of our students and how they have grown in recent years." Rehearsals, which will feature five to seven performers playing a total of more than 30 characters, will begin in July.

To prepare students and audience members for the play, a web site will be created with an electronic curriculum guide, historical information, biographies, photographs and journal entries documenting the rehearsal process. Audience members and workshop participants will be encouraged to post comments before and after each performance. In addition, the performers and the director will conduct a 20-minute discussion following each performance.

Long served as primary writer of the grant with assistance from Associate Professor **Dean Adams**. Long says that the pre- and post-production activities are important because they will help the audience grasp the theme behind the production, particularly in light of the recent controversy surrounding the use of derogatory language in the novel. "It's important that the students understand the social, historical and literary contexts of this material. Both Twain's text and Kaiser's adaptation foreground the social injustice of 19th-century America. We don't want to hide from the atrocities of the past or pretend they didn't happen. Instead, we intend to examine these events critically and, in the process, learn something valuable about the current age."

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Kennesaw State University is the third-largest university in Georgia, offering more than 70 graduate and undergraduate degrees, including new doctorates in education, business and

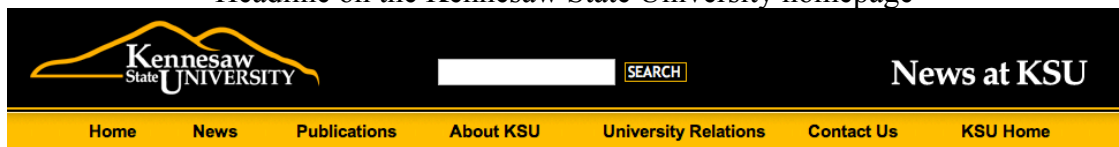
Splittin' the Raft Production Website

(Harrison Long-Director/Project Head)

Features a study guide, historical information, lesson plans, photos, articles and a documentary film about our research and creative process. Two students presented their work at the 2012 KSU *Symposium for Student Research*. Prof. Long's article "This Side of the Mississippi" outlines the challenges of touring the controversial work in schools. Students and educators logged on before and after seeing the award-winning production, which was featured on the KSU homepage.



Headline on the Kennesaw State University homepage



KSU receives NEA grant for production of "Splittin' the Raft"

For media inquiries: Cheryl Anderson Brown, Director of Public Relations, 770-499-3417 or cbrown@kennesaw.edu

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