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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

All Blues
World Premiere

September 22 – October 9 2011

Written by Robert Earl Price

Directed by Dale Daigle

In Co-production with Washington College, Chestertown, MD

ATLANTA, GA - 7 Stages is pleased to partner with Washington College in Chestertown, MD to present the World Premiere of Robert Earl Price's *All Blues*.

This new work is based on the story of a white newspaper reporter from Pittsburgh who traveled through the South in 1948 disguised as black man.

All Blues, named for the 1959 Miles Davis classic – from *Kind of Blue*, one of the most influential record albums of the 20th century – is being co-produced by 7 Stages and the Washington College Department of Drama.

Del Hamilton, co-founder and artistic director of 7 Stages, will play the role of Ray Sprigle, a Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reporter who traveled through the South for 30 days in 1948 as a light-skinned black man named James R. Crawford. Sprigle's guide was John Wesley Dobbs, an important political leader in Atlanta's black community and an NAACP activist. Dobbs will be played by Chestertown actor and musician Bob Ortiz and then by actor Michael Molina when the show premieres in Atlanta.

Sprigle had already won the Pulitzer Prize for breaking the story that Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black had been a member of the Ku Klux Klan, and he was famous both for his hard-hitting stories and for his penchant for going undercover to get them.

All Blues is a compelling meditation on the moral complexities of Sprigle's venture across the country's racial and geographic divide – which the reporter learned in his travels to call, not the Mason Dixon, but the Smith and Wesson line. Sprigle's journey took place more than a decade before the publication of *Black Like Me*, John Howard Griffin's bestselling account of his own travels through the South as a white man passing himself off as black.

The lyrics and music of *All Blues* form a subtext to the play, which weaves light, movement, and a cast of characters that include the light and dark sides of Sprigle's own soul into a moody meditation on race.

“The project will be built on the juxtaposition of one of the seminal pieces of music from the 20th century and a forgotten story,” said WC drama department chair Dale Daigle, who will direct the performance. “These two pieces provide a foundation for us to explore the ubiquitous and unavoidable feeling of being the ‘other’ and the complicated responses that we all have when confronted with the unknown in the form of another human being. By exploring these encounters –

what Robert Earl Price calls a 'slight' and personifies in an eponymous character – we hope to take our audience on a journey that will be discomforting yet, hopefully, revelatory.”

The Washington College cast of *All Blues* includes acclaimed Kent County jazz singer Karen Somerville; Polly Sommerfeld, lecturer in the Washington College Department of Drama; and Washington College students Mike Zurawski '12, Marta Wesenberg '12, John Lesser '12, Phaedra Scott '14, Harris Allgeier '14 and Zach Weidner '14. This cast will perform for a week in Atlanta.

All Blues is Robert Earl Price's fifth premiere at 7 Stages during his 20 years there as playwright in residence. The award-winning playwright and screenwriter is also artist in residence in the drama department at Washington College, where he teaches creative writing and drama.

“By joining forces to take on Robert's excellent ideas about race and racism, we not only expose Washington College students to new theatre art, and new ways of making theatre, but we also are teaching core values about the nation and how each of us fits into society,” said Del Hamilton of 7 Stages. “This is one of the major questions on the minds of young people these days: how to have a purposeful life.”

The play will be performed at 7 Stages in Atlanta with the Chestertown cast Sept. 22-25. 7 Stages will produce *All Blues* with its own cast Sept. 29 to Oct. 2. The Atlanta cast includes Del Hamilton, Dorothy Bell, Johnell Easter, Michael Molina and Patrick McColery. The set for the shows, designed by Faye Allen, will be used for both productions. More information about the Atlanta performances can be found at www.7stages.org.

Show times:

September 22 – October 9, 2011

Thursday- Saturday at 8:00pm

Sunday 5:00 pm

Tickets are \$30(All Inclusive of taxes and fees) and can be purchased online at 7stages.org or by calling 404.523.7647

Group, student, and senior citizen rates are also available.

SPECIAL EVENTS CORRESPONDING TO *All Blues*

Opening Night Event – Saturday September 24 at 8 PM Tickets are \$50 the evening will include a performance by the Urban Harp Ensemble.

Friday Night Jazz – Friday, September 16, 2011

Spoken Word Night Apache Café – Sunday September 18, 2011

Panel Discussion Racial Healing – Friday, September 23, 2011 following the performance

Opening Night - Saturday, September 24, 2011 at 8 PM tickets are \$50 the evening will include a performance by the Urban Harp Ensemble

Blind Willies Jazz Night – Monday, September 26, 2011

Music Series Jazz Performance – Friday, September 30 2011

**Master Workshop Saturday October 1, 2011 1 PM – 4 PM – Performance Style
with Social Content**

About 7 Stages

The name is derived from the ancient book of **I Ching, The Book of Changes** (#24, Turning Point). 7 Stages Theatre has been bringing local and international emerging artwork of social, political, and spiritual importance to Atlanta audiences for over 32 years. Artists in performance, musical, visual and the spoken arts have found the organization a haven in the support and development of new works and methods of collaboration.

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for additional information on All Blues or 7 Stages, or to schedule an interview, please contact
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