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June 24, 2017

## Cast Complete for John Dewey-Led BUDDY: THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY at Bucks County Playhouse



By BWW News Desk

Full casting details for the smash summer musical Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story have been announced prior to runs at both Bucks County Playhouse and the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts.

Details of the performers, who will appear in both presentations, were released by Bucks County Playhouse's Executive Producer Robyn Goodman, Producing Director Alex Fraser, and Producers Stephen Kocis and Josh Fiedler.

Directed by Tony nominee Hunter Foster with choreography by Lorin Latarro, Buddy will first run at the Bucks County Playhouse from May 27 through June 17 and will then transfer to the Kimmel Center's Perelman Theater on June 24 for previews, with the official opening June 28. The show will run at the Kimmel Center through July 9.

Virtually the entire cast from the 2016 record-breaking run at Bucks County Playhouse is scheduled to return for the 2017 production. Leading the cast of Broadway, off-Broadway, and regional talent is John Dewey (Hello Dolly!), reprising his role as Buddy Holly. Also returning to the production (in alphabetical order): Zach Cossman (Band Geeks: The Musical, Regional Premiere) as Jerry Allison; Andrew Frace (Jersey Boys, First National Tour) as Hipockets Duncan; James David Larson (Into the Woods, Roundabout Theater Company) as Joe B. Mauldin; Kent M. Lewis (Mamma Mia, Las Vegas) as Norman Petty; Brandi Massey (The Color Purple, Broadway) as Apollo Performer; Elizabeth Nestlerode (The Meanest Birthday Girl, Off-Broadway) as Vi Petty; Karack Osborn (She Stoops to Conquer, Stratford Festival) as 'The Big Bopper'; Gilbert Sanchez (Showgirls the Musical, Off-Broadway) as Ritchie Valens; Max Sangerman (The Lightning Thief, First National Tour) as Tommy Allsup. They will be joined by Natalie Ortega, as the sole newcomer to the cast. She appears as Buddy's wife, Maria Elena.

The production is helmed by director Hunter Foster (Company, Bucks County Playhouse), and choreographer Lorin Latarro (Waitress, Broadway), both of whom are also Bucks County Playhouse Artistic Associates. Paul Masse serves as musical director, Adam Koch is scenic designer with lighting design by Gina Scherr, costume design by Nicole V. Moody, and sound design by Matthew Given.

"The audience response to our production in 2016 was so overwhelming that we decided to break precedent and bring the production back this year," says Kocis. "Our collaboration with The Kimmel Center, also a first for us, should give confidence to audience members that our commitment to high quality productions and top-notch casts is unparalleled. Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story features some of the greatest songs of a generation played by one of the most talented casts."

"This is an exciting project for the Kimmel Center as we continue to expand our role as producers in Philadelphia," says Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. "This five-star cast and record-breaking production will be a brilliant addition to summer on the Kimmel Center Campus and we are thrilled to be partnering with our friends at Bucks County Playhouse."

From his meteoric rise to fame in 1957 through his tragic death less than two years later, Buddy Holly influenced modern music like no other performer of his generation. Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story features more than 20 of Holly's greatest hits, including "That'll Be The Day," "Peggy Sue," "Oh Boy," and many more. The show features a book by Alan Janes and music and lyrics by Buddy Holly. It opened in London's West End, where it ran for over 10 years, and premiered on Broadway in 1990.

Buddy marks the beginning of a cultural exchange between the two established organizations - one that will bring the best of Broadway to Broad Street and then beyond. Leadership from both organizations are in talks about incubator programs that can benefit from associated artists and programs that can reach new audiences through shared presentations.

IF YOU GO:

BUDDY: THE Buddy Holly STORY

Bucks County Playhouse

New Hope, PA

May 27-June 17, 2017

Kimmel Center's Perelman Theater

Philadelphia, PA

June 24 - July 9, 2017

Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased through the following means:

Tickets for the Bucks County Playhouse presentation may be purchased by calling 215-862-2121 or online at [www.bcptheater.org](http://www.bcptheater.org) or at the Bucks County Playhouse Box Office. Group sales are available for groups of 10 or more.

Tickets for the Kimmel Center presentation may be purchased by calling 215-893-1999, online at [kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org), or at the Kimmel Center Box Office. Group sales are available for groups of 10 or more and can be purchased by calling (215) 790-5883. More information at [kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org).

Bucks County Playhouse, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, is the oldest and largest professional Equity performing arts center in Bucks County. Under the direction of four Broadway producers including Tony Award-winning producers, Alexander Fraser and Robyn Goodman with Stephen Kocis and Joshua Fiedler, the Playhouse provides first class professional theatrical entertainment as well as community events, partnerships and arts education programming for visitors and residents of New Hope, Doylestown, Lambertville and the Delaware Valley.

Located between Philadelphia and New York, Bucks County Playhouse opened in 1939 in a converted 1790 gristmill after a group of community activists, led by Broadway orchestrator Don Walker, rallied to save the building. The Playhouse quickly became one of the country's most famous regional theaters, featuring a roster of American theatrical royalty including Helen Hayes, Kitty Carlisle, George S. Kaufman, Grace Kelly, Robert Redford, Bert Lahr, Walter Matthau, Angela Lansbury, Bernadette Peters, Alan Alda, Tyne Daly, Liza Minnelli and Audra McDonald and remained in continuous operation until December 2010. In 2012, the Playhouse re-opened thanks to the efforts of the Bridge Street Foundation, the nonprofit family foundation of Kevin and Sherri Daugherty. Since its renovation, significant productions include Terrence McNally's *Mothers and Sons* starring Tyne Daly, which moved to Broadway and was nominated for two Tony Awards, and *Misery* by William Goldman based on the Stephen King novel which also went on to a Broadway run in the 2015-16 season. Two of the Playhouse's productions -- *Company* starring Justin Guarini, and William Finn's *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* -- were named by Wall Street Journal to its "Best of Theatre" list for 2015.

The Playhouse's productions of *Steel Magnolias* and *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* broke box office records in 2016.

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, The Kimmel Center's mission is to operate a world-class performing arts center that engages and serves a broad audience through diverse programming, arts education, and community outreach. The Kimmel Center campus is comprised of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (Verizon Hall, Perelman Theater, SEI Innovation Studio, and the Merck Arts Education Center), the Academy of Music (owned by the Philadelphia Orchestra Association), and the

Merriam Theater. The Kimmel Center is also home to eight Resident Companies: The Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, The Pennsylvania Ballet, The Philly Pops, PHILADANCO, The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Curtis Institute of Music. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is the season sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2016-2017 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit [kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org).