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## Review Roundup: Bucks County Playhouse's GUYS AND DOLLS

"Guys and Dolls", the classic Broadway musical, brings a veteran Broadway cast to New Hope, PA at the historic Bucks County Playhouse through August 12, 2017. Executive Producer [Robyn Goodman](#), Producing Director [Alexander Fraser](#) and Producers [Stephen Kocis](#) and [Josh Fiedler](#) are proud that this is the largest production since the reopening of Bucks County Playhouse in 2012. The 2017 Bucks County Playhouse Season is sponsored by Bank of America.

Based on a story and characters by [Damon Runyon](#), "Guys and Dolls" has music and lyrics by [Frank Loesser](#) and a book by [Jo Swerling](#) and [Abe Burrows](#). "Guys and Dolls" is directed by Tony nominee [Hunter Foster](#) (BCP's "Clue: On Stage" and "Buddy: The [Buddy Holly](#) Story") and choreographed by Jeremy Dumont. It comes in a year that also features three world premieres - two of them musicals. "Guys and Dolls" will be followed this fall by the world premieres of "Rock and Roll Man: The Alan Freed Story" starring [Alan Campbell](#) and featuring [George Wendt](#), and "The New World" by the producers and co-creator of "Altar Boyz."

The cast is led by [Elena Shaddow](#) ("The Bridges of Madison County," "The Visit") as [Sarah Brown](#), [Clarke Thorell](#) ("Hairspray," "Annie," "The Front Page") as Sky Masterson, [Steve Rosen](#) ("Monty Python's Spamalot," Broadway's "Guys and Dolls") as Nathan Detroit and [Lesli Margherita](#) ("Matilda," "Dames at Sea" and Olivier Award Winner for "Zorro") as Miss Adelaide. Let's see what the critics have to say!

**Philly Mag (David Fox):** As the central couple, [Clarke Thorell](#) is a sexy but understated Sky Masterson; his intimate manner and vocal style suggest a '50s male crooner, which is not at all inappropriate (one of cinema's great oddities is that [Frank Sinatra](#)-born to play Sky-ended up in the Guys and Dolls movie as Nathan!) Thorell makes a slightly odd pair with the [Sarah Brown](#) of [Elena Shaddow](#), whose big soprano and somewhat stock characterization feels more rooted in operetta, but the two find a connection.

**DC Metro Theatre Arts (StEve Cohen):** [Lesli Margherita](#) is spectacular as Adelaide, the nightclub singer who's been engaged to gambler Nathan Detroit for fourteen years. Brassy yet endearing, she impressively belts "A Bushel and a Peck," "Take Back Your Mink," as well as "Adelaide's Lament," in which she describes her psychosomatic illness due to resentment over her fiancé's refusal to set a wedding date. She sings "a person can develop a cold" when "she's getting a kind of name for herself and the name ain't his."

**Philly Mag** (David Fox): If Foster's approach in *Company* was to rethink that show in sometimes revelatory ways, here he's more traditional. There's much to admire in that, too—despite tinges of seriousness (*My Time of Day*, a fascinating, fragmentary piece that defines mournful outsider-ness), *Guys and Dolls* mostly is traditional musical comedy at its best. Foster trusts the old vaudeville business and one-liners (lots of still-funny jokes in Jo Swerling and Abe Burrow's book, and of course in Frank Loesser's lyrics), and he paints gangland New York with bold good humor. It's full of movement and energy, sometimes too much so, and occasionally crude. But Foster also has a real way with actors, and a notable feature here (as in his *Company*) is the almost imperceptible way speech turns into song.

**Broadway Street Review** (Cameron Kelsall): Just like *Holliday*, Margherita proves expert at locating the pathos beneath a funny line, as when she infuses Adelaide's quip of being "tired of getting the fish-eye from the hotel clerk" with a palpable desire to be considered respectable. She pairs perfectly with Steve Rosen's nebbishy Nathan; their tête-à-tête in "Sue Me" is notable not just for its humor but for the sense of longstanding affection and exasperation they convey.

**New Hope Free Press** (John Dwyer/Herb Millman): Elena Shaddow as Missionary Sarah Brown has the needed voice of an angel as well as acting talent that allows the audience to follow her journey as she opens herself up to the possibility of falling in love. Her performance of the song "If I Were a Bell" is an example of both. And now for a sure bet. The question: "Is it likely that you'll ever see a better Miss Adelaide than Lesli Margharita (original Broadway cast "Matilda, The Musical" Mrs. Wormwood)?" The answer is "no." Her Miss Adelaide is a brilliant creation. She is a squeaky-voiced, New-York accented kewpie doll, with a heart as big as a house but easily broken. Her songs "Bushel and a Peck" and "Adelaide's Lament" are as hilarious as the reprise of "Adelaide's Lament" is heart wrenching.