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## Justin Guarini Steps in for Injured Leading Man in THE NEW WORLD at Bucks County Playhouse



What do you do when the leading man of a world premiere musical suffers an injury less than 48 hours before the first preview? For [Bucks County Playhouse](#), the answer was simple: Call [Justin Guarini](#).

A member of the Playhouse Artists Board of Directors, the non-profit board that supports the Playhouse, Guarini was already a Playhouse MVP. He had previously appeared on the [Bucks County Playhouse](#) stage in the new musical "Cake Off" as well as in the its acclaimed production of "Company." When help was needed to open the world premiere production of the musical comedy, "The New World," Playhouse Producing Director [Alexander Fraser](#) knew exactly who to call.

So with less than two days' notice, Guarini immersed himself in learning the role and slipped seamlessly into the first preview performance. The initial plan was for Guarini to help open the show, but last week he was asked by the producers and creative team to complete the run to allow the original leading man, [Julius Thomas](#) III, time to fully heal. "The New World" will continue at [Bucks County Playhouse](#) through December 2.

"What a tremendous stroke of luck that Justin was available to help us launch The New World," says Fraser. "When we needed someone to step in, Justin did so brilliantly. He handled the process so smoothly and effortlessly that it immediately put the entire cast and creative team at ease."

"This has been one of the most exciting and challenging two weeks in my career," says Guarini. "Learning the book, music, choreography, and blocking for an entire new musical in two days then putting it on its feet in front of an audience was something I didn't believe was possible. I thank the outstanding creative team and cast for welcoming me and helping me make the impossible, possible." "The New World", which received its first reading at the Playhouse's [Oscar Hammerstein Festival](#) in 2014, is produced by [Robyn Goodman](#), [Alexander Fraser](#), [Stephen Kocis](#) and [Josh Fiedler](#). The book is by [Regina DeCicco](#) and [L.F. Turner](#), music by [Gary Adler](#) ("Altar Boyz") and lyrics by [Phoebe Kreutz](#). [Stafford Arima](#) (Broadway's "Allegiance" and newly appointed Artistic Director of Theater Calgary) directs with choreography by [Bucks County Playhouse](#) Artistic Associate [Lorin Latarro](#) ("Waitress").

This musical comedy reimagines the myth of the first meeting of the Pilgrims and Native Americans. The year is 1620. The Native Americans are enjoying a gluten free, low carb, artisanally happy life when they are invaded by the nation's first immigrants - Pilgrims! There goes the neighborhood, but in the tradition of all musical comedies, love wins!

Guarini joins a cast that includes a mix of Broadway veterans and newcomers led by [Ann Harada](#) ("Avenue Q" and "Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella") as Chief Hyannis, [Jillian Gottlieb](#) (Theater Under the Stars "Into the Woods" and "The Golden Bride" Off-Broadway) as Susanna Standish and [Jennifer Perry](#) (Broadway's "Kinky Boots" and "Mamma Mia!") as Joan. The cast also features [Ginna Le Vine](#) ("Picnic" Off-Broadway). Le Vine is the grand-niece of Oscar-winning actress [Grace Kelly](#), who made her professional stage debut in 1949 at [Bucks County Playhouse](#), where she was a member of its famed apprentice program. She is joined by [Clyde Alves](#) (Broadway's "On the Town," "Bullets Over Broadway") as Tago, [Eddie Cooper](#) (Encores "Assassins" and "Little Shop of Horrors") as Miles Standish, [Ann Sanders](#) (Disney's "Frozen" and Broadway's "The King and I") as Mrs. Corn, [Rod Singleton](#) (Ogunquit Playhouse's "Ragtime") as Colonel Corn and [Tyler Maynard](#) (Broadway's "The Little Mermaid" and "Altar Boyz" Off-Broadway) as Carl. [Adena Ershow](#), Yael Rizo wy, [Kiet Tai Cao](#), [Danny Bevins](#), [Brandon Weber](#) and [Annelise Cepero](#) round out the ensemble.

[Bucks County Playhouse](#) Artistic Associate [Anna Louizos](#) (Broadway's "School of Rock" and BCP's "Guys and Dolls") is Scenic Designer. [Jen Caprio](#) is Costume Designer and [J. Jared Janas](#) is Wig, Hair and Makeup Designer. [Kirk Bookman](#) is lighting designer and [Joshua D. Reid](#) is sound designer. Musical Director is [Paul Masse](#). Orchestrations are by [Danny Troob](#) with dance arrangements are by [Sam Davis](#). Casting is by [Tara Rubin](#) Casting.

"The New World" is the third of four world premiere productions presented at [Bucks County Playhouse](#) this year. The summer season launched in May with the debut of "Clue: On Stage," and "Rock and Roll Man: The Alan Freed Story." The year will end with a new comedy by [Gordon Greenberg](#) and [Steve Rosen](#), "Ebenezer Scrooge's Big Playhouse Christmas Show," which resets Dickens' classic tale "A Christmas Carol" in New Hope.

Tickets to "The New World" range from \$40 - \$75. Special rates for groups of 10 or more. For complete details, and to purchase tickets, please visit [buckscountyplyhouse.org](http://buckscountyplyhouse.org), call 215-862-2121, or visit the box office at 70 South Main Street, New Hope, PA.

In 2002, [Justin Guarini](#) had a choice - take the role of his dreams in the Broadway production of "The Lion King" or answer the call to participate in the first season of Fox-TV's "American Idol". Not an easy decision, he went for television and became the first runner-up on this legendary star-making show. Since then his career has exploded in television, recording and acting. He has released two albums and an EP, his first in 2003 and his second in 2005. Between 2007 and 2011 he found success as a television host including on TV Guide Network and serving as the host on live red carpets for The Grammys, The Emmys, and The Oscars. In 2014 and 2015 he both produced and hosted "The Tonys in Times Square" with [Clear Channel Spectacolor](#).

In 2010 he made his Broadway debut, in "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown". He was described by [Patti LuPone](#) as "very, very talented," and "smart as a whip, he adapts instantly and he's unbelievably sweet." Since then he has become a Broadway veteran starring in musicals and plays including "American Idiot", "Romeo and Juliet", "Wicked", Paint Your Wagon, "In Transit", and has played the leading roles in regional performances of "Rent", "Chicago", "Company", "Joseph", "Moonshine", "Ghost Brothers of Darkland County", "Cake Off" and The Unsinkable [Molly Brown](#). [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 Tony Award-winning producers [Alexander Fraser](#) and [Robyn Goodman](#), 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](#) and playwright [Moss Hart](#), 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](#), and Broadway producer [Jed Bernstein](#).

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 recent 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. Thanks to the Bridge Street Foundation and its vision for the New Hope waterfront, the Playhouse is currently in construction as it adds a 4,000-square foot riverfront cafe and bar that will open in 2018.

**Pictured: [Tyler Maynard](#) (Carl the Turkey) and [Justin Guarini](#) (Santuit). Photo by Mark Garvin.**