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AN ACT OF GOD, 42nd STREET, And More Set For Bucks County Playhouse 2018 Season Opening Tonight



By BWW News Desk

A classic tap-happy musical and a new production of a legendary Broadway comedy are highlights of Bucks County Playhouse's 2018 Season. Executive Producer Robyn Goodman, Producing Director Alexander Fraser and Producers Stephen Kocis and Josh Fiedler announced details of the season, which will kick off at the historic Playhouse in New Hope, Pennsylvania on May 19.

Featuring four productions in the historic playhouse, the new season includes David Javerbaum's "An Act of God," the show business musical "42nd Street," the Tony-winning "Million Dollar Quartet" and Paul Rudnick's comedy "I Hate Hamlet."

"Heading into our fifth season running the Bucks County Playhouse, we have finally hit our stride," says Executive Producer Robyn Goodman. "Our goal has always been to bring audiences the kind of musicals and plays that generate excitement and loyalty. We are all so proud to be bringing high quality theatre to this thriving community."

"As the audiences at the Playhouse have grown - so have our productions," says Fiedler. "Following up on the success of last season's 'Guys and Dolls,' we can't wait to see what magic director Hunter Foster and choreographer Jeremy Dumont will create with '42nd Street,' a classic show biz musical that represents our biggest cast and largest physical production to date."

"We are also very excited to add two extraordinary artists to the talented team of directors we have worked with at Bucks County," says Kocis. "Tracy Bridgen, who spent 16 years invigorating Pittsburgh's City Theater Company, will direct the hit comedy 'An Act of God,' and Marc Bruni, whose production of 'Beautiful' continues to thrive on Broadway, will take a fresh look at Paul Rudnick's hilarious comedy, 'I Hate Hamlet'."

Bucks County Playhouse's 2018 season follows a run of box-office-breaking productions that included the world premiere of "Clue: On Stage" and a highly successful return of "Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story." Hunter Foster's production of "Guys and Dolls" was a hit with critics and audiences - and became the Playhouse's highest grossing and most attended show in its history. World premieres of "Rock and Roll Man: The Alan Freed Story" and "Ebenezer Scrooge's Big Playhouse Christmas Show" continued to delight audiences and exceed box office expectations.

"Last year was a breakthrough year for the Playhouse," says Producing Director Alexander Fraser. "Our growth has been nothing short of extraordinary. Ticket sales grew by more than 33 percent last year, and three productions broke box office records. Groups are coming from as far as western Pennsylvania and Virginia - and their numbers have nearly tripled in three years. Our new season builds on this momentum and reflects our audiences' desire to see more well-loved revivals of musicals and comedies created by some of the best artists working in American theater today."

The producers also announced the return of two shows off subscription: The Playhouse's production of "Richard O'Brien's The Rocky Horror Show" in October and "Ebenezer Scrooge's Big Playhouse Christmas Show," the popular holiday comedy that made its world premiere last December to acclaim by both audiences and critics.

All play titles, artists, and dates are subject to change. Details on casting will be announced shortly.

Season tickets are now available and start at \$128 for all four shows. Single tickets to the 2018 season shows will go on sale on Monday, April 2. For tickets and information, visit www.BucksCountyPlayhouse.org or call 215-862-2121.

An Act of God
May 19 - June 16
by David Javerbaum
Directed by Tracy Brigden

God is back. And God has a lot to say. Flanked by ever-faithful archangels, the Supreme Being gifts humanity with an entirely new set of Ten Commandments in a sinfully funny whirlwind of comedy heaven. Written by 13-time Emmy Award® winner David Javerbaum ("The Daily Show"), An Act of God is an exceptionally witty comedy that delivers a new meaning to the phrase "divine intervention."

42nd Street
June 29 - August 4
Music by Harry Warren • Lyrics by Al Dubin
Book by Michael Stewart & Mark Bramble
Directed by Hunter Foster
Choreographed by Jeremy Dumont

Celebrate the magic of Broadway with one of show business's most beloved fables! Peggy Sawyer, a talented young performer straight off the bus from Allentown, PA, arrives in New York armed with her tap shoes and big dreams. Can she dance her way from chorus girl to star? 42nd Street's tap-happy score features "We're In The Money," "Lullaby of Broadway," "Shuffle Off To Buffalo," "I Only Have Eyes For You" and more.

Million Dollar Quartet

August 10 - September 15

Book by Colin Escott & Floyd Mutrux

Directed by Hunter Foster

On December 4, 1956, an unlikely quartet of Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins accidentally converged on Sun Records in Memphis - and made magic in the process! Million Dollar Quartet takes you behind the music with a monumental night that explodes off the stage with a talented cast playing 21 legendary hits including "Blue Suede Shoes," "Walk the Line," "Great Balls of Fire," "Folsom Prison Blues," "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," and "Hound Dog."

I Hate Hamlet

November 8 - December 1

By Paul Rudnick

Directed by Marc Bruni

Hot Hollywood actor Andrew Rally, star of a recently cancelled TV series, arrives in New York to play "Hamlet" in Central Park and moves into the outrageously Gothic Greenwich Village apartment once owned by John Barrymore. While Andy loves the city, the theater and stardom ... he hates "Hamlet." He is ready to flee to L.A. when the ghost of Barrymore unexpectedly appears. The laughs are non-stop as Barrymore takes his would-be successor under his wing - tutoring him in Shakespearean acting, life and love.

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. Those records were broken again in 2017 with a return engagement of "Buddy" as well as a new production of "Guys and Dolls" directed by Hunter Foster. The nonprofit

Playhouse also offers innovative education programs at Lambertville Hall, its learning center just across the river.