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## Entertainment

# Musicals this fall: Norm from 'Cheers' as J. Edgar Hoover and lots of old faves



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Suddenly, all anyone wants to talk about is musicals. Everyone, it seems, is putting them on. If ever there was a time for Philly audiences to feast their ears and eyes on Broadway classics, this is it. But in our highlights list, you'll also find two intriguing world premieres, plus a couple of recent gems.

## FALL ARTS GUIDE

**A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum** (Through Oct. 22, Walnut Street Theatre). A comedy tonight! Drinking horse sweat! You got Sondheim, you got Plautus, you got a lot of laughs and songs. (215-547-3550, [walnutstreettheatre.org](http://walnutstreettheatre.org))

**Rock and Roll Man: The Alan Freed Story** (Sept. 12-Oct. 1, Bucks County Playhouse). World premiere bio-musical, with a powerhouse score, about the DJ present at the creation of a new kind of popular music (because he helped create it). With Broadway guy Alan Campbell, and featuring George Wendt (Norm from *Cheers*) as J. Edgar Hoover. (215-862-2121, [bcptheater.org](http://bcptheater.org))

**Shrek: The Musical** (Sept. 14-Oct. 1, Broadway Theatre of Pitman, N.J.). The big green guy who's unpopular with everybody except the entire noncartoon world. (856-384-8381, [thebroadwaytheatre.org](http://thebroadwaytheatre.org))

**Carousel** (Sept. 20-Oct. 22, Media Theatre). Innovative new production of the dark Rodgers and Hammerstein classic set at a merry-go-round in Maine. (610-891-0100, [mediatheatre.org](http://mediatheatre.org))

**Cabaret** (Sept. 21-Oct. 22, Arden Theatre Company). Meine damen und herren, mesdames et messieurs, ladies and gentlemen, this musical, based on stories by Christopher Isherwood, is a full-throated, tuneful love triangle set in 1931 Berlin. (215-922-1122, [ardentheatre.org](http://ardentheatre.org))

**Kathleen Turner: Finding My Voice** (Sept. 25, two shows, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Suzanne Roberts Theatre). The famed actress makes her world debut as a cabaret chanteuse. (215-985-0420, [philadelphiatheatrecompany.org](http://philadelphiatheatrecompany.org))

**Next to Normal** (Sept. 28-Oct. 15, Resident Theatre Company, Knauer Performing Arts Center, West Chester). A seemingly conventional family is about to undergo quite a transformation. (610-356-2787, [rtcwc.org](http://rtcwc.org))

**TouchTones** (Oct. 19-Dec. 3, Arcadia Stage, Arden Theatre Company). World premiere of this musical by Villanova's Michael Hollinger and composer Robert Maggio about love, sex, the communications age, and the fantasy at the other end of the line. (215-922-1122, [ardentheatre.org](http://ardentheatre.org))

**Phantom of the Opera** (Nov. 1-12, Academy of Music). It's the longest-running show on Broadway, and in the surge of new subscribers since the announcement that *Hamilton* is coming, the Kimmel Center sneaked *Phantom* into the schedule at the last moment. Cue the fiendish laughter! (215-893-1999, [kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org))

**Annie** (Nov. 7-Jan. 7, 2018, Walnut Street Theatre). One of the biggest-ever Broadway hits, with great songs and unforgettable characters. (215-547-3550, [walnutstreettheatre.org](http://walnutstreettheatre.org))

**My Fair Lady** (Nov. 15-Dec. 17, Quintessence Theatre Group). Supremely tuneful concert-style performance of Shaw's recasting of the Pygmalion myth in Edwardian London. (215-987-4450, [quintessencetheatre.org](http://quintessencetheatre.org)).

**Finding Neverland** (Nov. 21-26, Academy of Music). The musical backstory to the creation of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*. (215-893-1999, [kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org))

**Company** (Dec. 1-3, 11th Hour Theatre Company). Concert version of Sondheim's great study of solitude and commitment. (267-987-9865, [11thhourtheatrecompany.org](http://11thhourtheatrecompany.org))

**The Color Purple** (Dec. 12-17, Forrest Theatre). Beloved novel, beloved film, and beloved musical. (215-893-1999, [kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org))