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## THE MORNING CALL

November 2, 2017

### Theater: 'Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder' tour stops in Bethlehem



The New World, a world premiere musical comedy at Bucks County Playhouse, running Nov. 7-Dec. 12, features Ginna Le Vine, Julius Thomas III, Ana Harada and Jillian Gottlieb. (Josh Lerher / CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

By: Jodi Duckett

Pilgrims wash ashore in Massachusetts, turning North American life on its ear, in the world premiere production of the musical comedy "The New World," running Nov. 7-Dec. 2 at Bucks County Playhouse in New Hope.

"The New World" re-imagines the myth of the first meeting of the Pilgrims and Native Americans in the year 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.

"We're thrilled to present this original musical comedy developed for and by Bucks County Playhouse. Our talented creative team has re-imagined an important moment in history when love and food

brought disparate cultures together and created the great melting pot we call America today," says Executive Producer [Robyn](#) Goodman.

"The New World" had its first reading at the playhouse's Oscar Hammerstein Festival in 2014. It features a book 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").

"Over the past three years, this creative team has worked tirelessly in honing their original idea of turning the story of the first Thanksgiving upside down," says producing director Alexander Fraser. "The result is a very funny musical that allows us to laugh at ourselves as we debunk everything we thought we knew from history class."

The cast includes a mix of Broadway veterans and newcomers led by Ann Harada ("Avenue Q" and "Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella") as Chief Massasoit, and featuring Julius Thomas III (Broadway's "The Scottsboro Boys," "Motown: The Musical") as Squanto, 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.

"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."

Last month, the playhouse hosted a world-premiere musical, "Rock and Roll Man: The Alan Freed Story." The year will end Dec. 8-31 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.

**"The New World,"** Nov. 7-Dec. 2 (official opening 7:30 p.m. Nov. 11), Bucks County Playhouse, 70 S. Main St., New Hope. Tickets: \$40-\$75. 215-862-2121, [bcptheater.org](http://bcptheater.org).