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## **Ann Harada, Julius Thomas III, Ginna Le Vine, Jillian Gottlieb and More to Star in THE NEW WORLD Premiere at Bucks County Playhouse**



By BWW News Desk

Pilgrims wash ashore in Massachusetts - turning North American life on its ear - in the world premiere production of the new musical comedy, "The New World." Performances begin November 7 and run through December 2, with an official opening on November 11 at 7:30 pm.

Producers Robyn Goodman, Alexander Fraser, Stephen Kocis, and Josh Fiedler recently announced the cast and creative team of the musical, which received its first reading at the Playhouse's Oscar Hammerstein Festival in 2014. "The New World" includes 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) will direct with choreography by Bucks County Playhouse Artistic Associate Lorin Latarro ("Waitress").

"The New World" 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!

"We're thrilled to present this original musical comedy developed for and by Bucks County Playhouse. Our talented creative team has reimagined 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.

"Since Robyn and I were first inspired by the incredible history of the Playhouse and our proximity to Oscar Hammerstein and his remarkable impact on the theatre, we dreamed of drawing talented writers to these bucolic hills to create work," says Producing Director Alexander Fraser. "Over the past three years, this creative team has worked tirelessly in honing their very original idea of turning the story of the first Thanksgiving upside down. 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. 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 Rizowy, 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." Last month, the Playhouse hosted a world-premiere musical, "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" are on sale now and range from \$40 - \$75. Special rates for groups of 10 or more. For complete details, and to purchase tickets, visit [buckscountyplayhouse.org](http://buckscountyplayhouse.org), call 215-862-2121, or visit the box office at 70 South Main Street, New Hope, PA.

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: Ginna LeVine, Julius Thomas III, Ana Harada and Jillian Gottlieb. Photo by Josh Lerher.