

AHMANSON THEATRE
2015/16 SEASON

SEAN HAYES
AN
ACT OF
GOD

A NEW COMEDY

DIRECTED BY
JOE
MANTELLO

WRITTEN BY
DAVID
JAVERBAUM



Photo: Ben Miller/Capture Imaging

FIRST SEASON PRODUCTION

**The Sound
of Music**

MUSIC BY
Richard Rodgers

LYRICS BY
Oscar Hammerstein II

BOOK BY
Howard Lindsay &
Russel Crouse

SUGGESTED BY
The Trapp Family Singers
by Maria Augusta Trapp

CHOREOGRAPHED BY
Danny Mefford

DIRECTED BY
Jack O'Brien

SEP 20 – OCT 31, 2015

SECOND SEASON PRODUCTION

**The Bridges of
Madison County**
The Broadway Musical

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY
Robert James Waller

BOOK BY
Marsha Norman

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY
Jason Robert Brown

DIRECTED BY
Bartlett Sher

DEC 8, 2015
– JAN 17, 2016

THIRD SEASON PRODUCTION

Sean Hayes
in
An Act of God

BY
David Javerbaum

DIRECTED BY
Joe Mantello

JAN 30 – MAR 13, 2016

FOURTH SEASON PRODUCTION

**A Gentleman's
Guide to Love
& Murder**

BOOK AND LYRICS BY
Robert L. Freedman

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY
Steven Lutvak

CHOREOGRAPHED BY
Peggy Hickey

DIRECTED BY
Darko Tresnjak

MAR 22 – MAY 1, 2016

FIFTH SEASON PRODUCTION

Rachel York and Betty Buckley
in
Grey Gardens

BOOK BY
Doug Wright

MUSIC BY
Scott Frankel

LYRICS BY
Michael Korie

DIRECTED BY
Michael Wilson

JUL 6 – AUG 14, 2016



INSPIRING OUR FUTURE

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PRESENT

SEAN HAYES

AN ACT OF GOD

BY

DAVID JAVERBAUM

ALSO STARRING

DAVID JOSEFSBERG

JAMES GLEASON

SCENIC DESIGN
SCOTT PASK

COSTUME DESIGN
DAVID ZINN

LIGHTING DESIGN
HUGH VANSTONE

SOUND DESIGN
FITZ PATTON

MUSIC
ADAM SCHLESINGER

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101 PRODUCTIONS, LTD.

DIRECTED BY

JOE MANTELLO

AN ACT OF GOD is based on the memoir by **GOD** (and David Javerbaum).

This production is entirely subsidized by Angels.

JANUARY 30 – MARCH 13, 2016 AHMANSON THEATRE



CAST

GodSEAN HAYES
MichaelDAVID JOSEFSBERG
Gabriel JAMES GLEASON

STANDBY

*The standby will never substitute for listed performers unless a specific announcement is made at the time of the performance....
and only if God commands it.*

STANDBY

Peter Husmann

An Act Of God will be performed without an intermission.

The use of any recording device, either audio or video, and the taking of photographs, either with or without flash, is strictly prohibited. Please turn off all electronic devices such as cell phones and pagers prior to the beginning of the performance.

FIND THE FALSE GODS!!!

Over the millennia mankind has worshipped thousands of false gods and goddesses. Forty-two of the falsest are hidden horizontally, vertically and diagonally in the grid below. Find them and exorcise them! When you're finished, the remaining letters will spell, from left to right and top to bottom, a holy message directly from God.

R Y N O G A W A Y N E Y R A T
 O A E U P O S E I D O N H A V
 E R T L T A O C L A Z T E U Q
 O E O H T O I A D G A D N R O
 S H Y M S U E Z P E L E K A I
 I U O C G I A A A R D N I M M
 R H C G J M U M T N I N U M A
 I M I E A N O B B R A H M A N
 S R N R H I N A Y J U K A M A
 F H U S U H L U H T C O I U Z
 N H I A C Y B E L E R S I S I
 A V H V G A R B U D D H A A E
 T I S N A N A O D I N T I N R
 O R O L O K I A H R I M A N O
 W D S T I R I P S T A E R G S

AHRIMAN (Zoroastrian)
AMUN (Egyptian)
BRAHMA (Hindu)
CTHULHU (H.P. Lovecraft)
ENKI (Sumerian)
GREAT SPIRIT (Sioux)
INDRA (Hindu)
ISIS (Egyptian)
JAH (Rastafarian)
MARU (Maori)
OSIRIS (Egyptian)
POSEIDON (Greek)
SHIVA (Hindu)
VISHNU (Hindu)
ZEUS (Greek)

AHURA MAZDA (Zoroastrian)
ANANSI (West African)
BUDDHA (Buddhism)
CYBELE (Phrygian)
EROS (Greek)
HERA (Greek)
INTI (Incan)
IZANAKI (Japanese)
KAMA (Hindu)
ODIN (Norse)
PELE (Hawaiian)
QUETZALCOATL (Mayan)
TARYENYAWAGON (Iroquois)
WOTAN (Germanic)

AKUJ (Turkana)
BAAL (Canaanite)
COYOTE (Native American)
DAGDA (Irish)
FRIGG (Germanic)
HINA (Polynesian)
ISHTAR (Babylonian)
IZANAMI (Japanese)
LOKI (Norse)
ORO (Tahitian)
PINGA (Inuit)
RAM (Hindu)
THOR (Norse)
ZAMBA (Yaoundé)

ON THE PHONE WITH GOD AND HIS HEAD WRITER

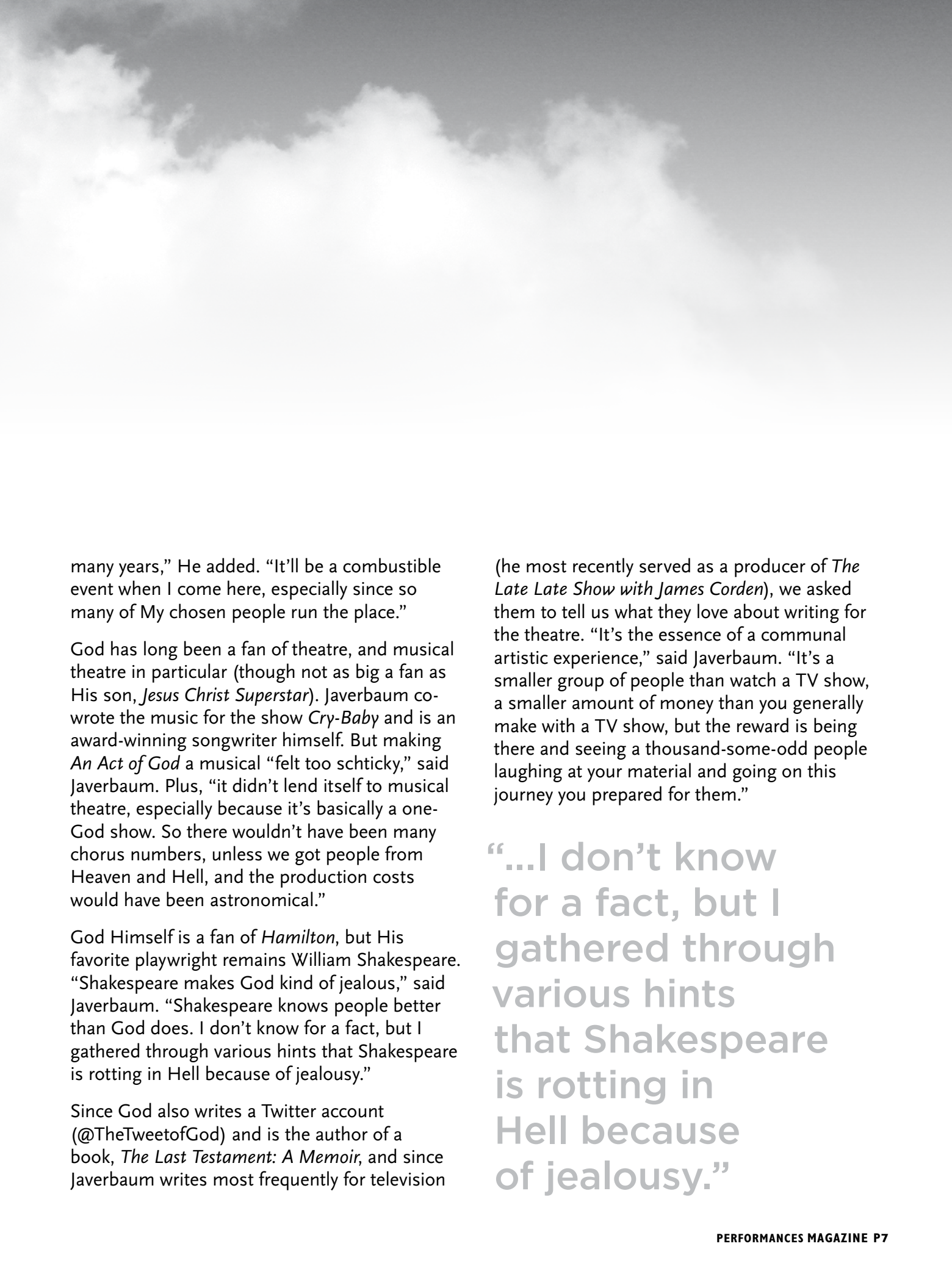
By Sarah Rothbard

“It’s the first time God has been allowed within a 20-mile radius of Hollywood in many years...”

It’s not every day that you get on a conference call with God. But He’s easier to get hold of now that He has a show at the Ahmanson Theatre. In advance of *An Act of God*, Center Theatre Group got on the phone with Him on a Friday afternoon, along with playwright and former *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* head writer David Javerbaum. Javerbaum, it should be noted, had better reception than God.

In *An Act of God*, the Almighty takes the form of Emmy Award winner Sean Hayes in order to answer some of the deepest questions that have plagued mankind since the beginning of the universe. God is bullish on inhabiting Hayes, whom He called “one of my greatest creations. He is a tremendously funny guy, and I need that as God, because comedy is not my strong suit.” He added that Hayes has some surprises in store for audiences who know him best as the lovable Jack McFarland on *Will & Grace*. Hayes is “really drunk with power,” said God. “He’s an egotistical megalomaniac, just like me. And he’s a song-and-dance man, which I’ve always aspired to be, metaphorically.”

God comes to L.A. from Broadway, and He is glad to be entertaining audiences in a city that’s “godless in a whole different way than New York was godless,” He said. “The godlessness in L.A. is purer in some ways” than in New York, and “more out and out contemptuous,” and some new jokes will reflect that change. “It’s the first time God has been allowed within a 20-mile radius of Hollywood in



many years,” He added. “It’ll be a combustible event when I come here, especially since so many of My chosen people run the place.”

God has long been a fan of theatre, and musical theatre in particular (though not as big a fan as His son, *Jesus Christ Superstar*). Javerbaum co-wrote the music for the show *Cry-Baby* and is an award-winning songwriter himself. But making *An Act of God* a musical “felt too schticky,” said Javerbaum. Plus, “it didn’t lend itself to musical theatre, especially because it’s basically a one-God show. So there wouldn’t have been many chorus numbers, unless we got people from Heaven and Hell, and the production costs would have been astronomical.”

God Himself is a fan of *Hamilton*, but His favorite playwright remains William Shakespeare. “Shakespeare makes God kind of jealous,” said Javerbaum. “Shakespeare knows people better than God does. I don’t know for a fact, but I gathered through various hints that Shakespeare is rotting in Hell because of jealousy.”

Since God also writes a Twitter account (@TheTweetofGod) and is the author of a book, *The Last Testament: A Memoir*, and since Javerbaum writes most frequently for television

(he most recently served as a producer of *The Late Late Show with James Corden*), we asked them to tell us what they love about writing for the theatre. “It’s the essence of a communal artistic experience,” said Javerbaum. “It’s a smaller group of people than watch a TV show, a smaller amount of money than you generally make with a TV show, but the reward is being there and seeing a thousand-some-odd people laughing at your material and going on this journey you prepared for them.”

“...I don’t know for a fact, but I gathered through various hints that Shakespeare is rotting in Hell because of jealousy.”

WHO'S WHO



SEAN HAYES (*God*), who received critical acclaim for his roles in theatre, television and film, quickly gained fame as the sarcastic and hilarious Jack McFarland on NBC's *Will & Grace*. In 2011, Hayes made his Broadway debut in the wildly successful *Promises, Promises*

alongside Kristin Chenoweth. He received a leading-actor Tony nomination for his performance in addition to a Grammy nomination for the soundtrack recording. That same year, he served as the host of the Tony Awards and was awarded an Emmy as a result. Previously, Hayes was seen on stage in New York in the New York City Center production of *Damn Yankees* with Jane Krakowski and Cheyenne Jackson. In 2003, Hayes and producing partner Todd Milliner formed Hazy Mills Productions. Projects include *Situation: Comedy*, *Hot in Cleveland*, *The Soul Man*, *Grimm* and the Emmy Award-winning *Hollywood Game Night*. Hayes became a household name in 1998, when he landed the coveted role of Jack on *Will & Grace*. His portrayal garnered him an Emmy Award (along with six nominations), four Screen Actors Guild Awards and seven Golden Globe nominations. Hayes also starred in *Martin & Lewis* for which he earned a Screen Actors Guild Award nomination. Previous film credits include *The Bucket List*, *Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss*, *Pieces of April*, *The Cat in the Hat* and *The Three Stooges*.



DAVID JOSEFSBERG (*Michael*). Broadway: *An Act of God*, *Honeymoon in Vegas*, *Les Misérables*, *Motown*, *Wedding Singer*, *Grease*. Off-Broadway: *Altar Boyz* (Drama League nomination). National Tour: *Tommy* (Jeffrey Finn Productions). TV: Arthur "The Fonz" Fonzarelli in

The Unauthorized Story of 'Mork & Mindy' (ayyyy!), *Made in Jersey*. Comedy: Stephen Lynch tour, David's comedy duo, Joberg and Gurner, is signed to Comedy Central Records. The album is called *Manhood*. ILYE|BJ&CJ. Twitter @djosefsberg. Instagram @davidsjosefsberg.



JAMES GLEASON (*Gabriel*). Theatre: CTG/Mark Taper Forum – *Stuff Happens* (U.S. premiere) and *A History of the American Film*. Geffen – *The Weir*. L.A. Theatre Works – *The Great Tennessee Monkey Trial*, *Top Secret*. Off-Broadway – *Curse of the Starving*

Class, *Speed-The-Plow*. Regional – *Bedroom Farce*, *Snoopy* (original cast and cast recording). Television: *Days and Nights of Molly Dodd* (Jimmy McQuinn), *Frasier*, *First Monday*, etc. Films: *Mother*, *Revenge of the Nerds*, *The World's Greatest Lover*. Member of the Groundlings (1977-1981). www.jimmytheg.com.



PETER HUSMANN (*Standby*) is thrilled to be a part of this West Coast production of *An Act of God*. Most recent credits include John Adams in *1776* and Daddy Warbucks in *Annie*. Loves to backpack and hang with his girls. Hugs and kisses to his wife, Suzy, and daughters

Alex and Ronni for their love, support and sense of humor! Enjoy!

GOD (*Creator*) is the original multi-hyphenate and triple threat, an auteur and visionary whose bold creations and intelligent designs have earned Him international recognition since Day One. Though best known for his performance art, He is also a writer whose previous literary efforts, *The Old Testament* and *The New Testament*, have collectively sold an impressive 7,000,000,000 copies. They have also been adapted numerous times for the big screen, most recently by Ridley Scott in *Exodus*, a project he regrets green-lighting. *An Act of God* is His first work written directly for the stage, although His 1827 comic romp *The Book of Mormon* was recently adapted into a successful, albeit unauthorized, Broadway musical. The current production marks his first appearance in California not involving the consumption of psychotropic drugs. God lives in heaven with His wife Ruth and their children Zach, Jesus and Kathy. He is managed by David Miner at 3 Arts Entertainment.

DAVID JAVERBAUM (*Playwright*) is a 13-time Emmy-winning former head writer and executive producer of *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*. He is the co-author of that show's bestsellers *America: The Book* and *Earth: The Book*, and the sole author of *The Last Testament: A Memoir by God* and *What to Expect When You're Expected: A Fetus's Guide to the First Three Trimesters*. His Twitter account @TheTweetOfGod has over two million followers. He is also a Tony-nominated lyricist whose collaborations with songwriter Adam Schlesinger include the Broadway musical *Cry-Baby*, the Grammy-winning songs for Stephen Colbert's Christmas special *The Greatest Gift of All* and Neil Patrick Harris' opening number for the 2011 Tony Awards, "Broadway Is Not

Just for Gays Anymore.” He created the talk show *No, You Shut Up!* with Henson Studios for Fusion. He most recently served as a producer of *The Late Late Show with James Corden*. He lives with his wife and children in California.

JOE MANTELLO (*Director*) received Emmy and Critics’ Choice Award nominations for his performance in HBO’s *The Normal Heart*. Directing credits include *The Humans*, *Airline Highway*, *The Last Ship*, *Casa Valentina*, *I’ll Eat You Last*, *The Other Place*, *Dogfight*, *Other Desert Cities*, *The Pride*, *Pal Joey*, *9 to 5*, *November*, *The Receptionist*, *The Ritz*, *Blackbird*, *Three Days of Rain*, *The Odd Couple*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* (Tony nomination), *Laugh Whore*, *Assassins* (Tony Award), *Wicked*, *Take Me Out* (Tony Award), *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *A Man of No Importance*, *Mizlansky/Zilinsky*, *Design for Living*, *The Vagina Monologues*, *Bash*, *Love! Valour! Compassion!* (Tony nomination) and *Corpus Christi*. Acting credits include *The Normal Heart* (Tony nomination) and *Angels in America* (Tony nomination). He is a member of Naked Angels, an associate artist at Roundabout and has received Outer Critics Circle, Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, Helen Hayes, Clarence Derwent, Obie and Joe A. Callaway awards.

SCOTT PASK (*Scenic Design*). With Joe Mantello: *Airline Highway*, *Casa Valentina*, *I’ll Eat You Last*, *Pal Joey* (Tony nomination), *The Ritz*, *9 to 5*, *Take Me Out*, *Blackbird*, *November*, *Bash*, *The Mineola Twins*. Over 40 Broadway productions including *The Book of Mormon* (Tony Award), *Something Rotten*, *The Visit*, *Finding Neverland*, *It’s Only a Play*, *Pippin* (Tony nomination), *The Pillowman* (Tony Award), *Hair*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (Tony nomination), *The Coast of Utopia* (Tony, Outer Critics Circle and Drama Desk Awards), *Nine* and *Urinetown*. Cirque du Soleil’s *Amaluna*. @scottpaskstudio.

DAVID ZINN (*Costume Design*). Broadway: set and costume design for *Fun Home* (Tony nomination), *The Last Ship*, *Seminar*; set design for *Violet*, *The Real Thing*, *The Realistic Joneses*; costume design for *Airline Highway* (Tony nomination), *Rocky*, *Other Desert Cities*, *Good People*, *In the Next Room...* (Tony, Drama Desk nominations), *Xanadu* and others. Off-Broadway set and costume design includes *Placebo*, *The Flick* (Drama Desk nominations) and *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Playwrights Horizons), *Choir Boy* (MTC) and *Dogfight* (Second Stage).

HUGH VANSTONE (*Lighting Design*) won the 2013 Tony Award for best lighting design for *Matilda* (Shubert). He lives in London where his work has garnered three Olivier Awards. Recent Broadway Credits: *I’ll Eat You Last* (Booth), *Ghost* (Lunt Fontanne) – Tony nomination for best lighting, *La Bête* (Music Box), *A Steady Rain* (Schoenfeld), *God of Carnage* (Jacobs), *Mary Stuart* (Broadhurst) – Tony and Drama Desk nominations for best lighting, *Spamalot* (Shubert) – Tony nomination for best lighting. More at hughvanstone.com.

FITZ PATTON (*Sound Design*). Broadway: *Blackbird* (current), *The Humans* (current), *It’s Only a Play*, *Airline Highway*, *The Other Place* (MTC), *I’ll Eat You Last*, *Outside Mullingar* (MTC), *Casa Valentina* (MTC). 2010 Lucille Lortel and Drama Desk Awards for *When the Rain Stops Falling* (LCT) and 2011 nominee for *The Other Place* (MCC) prior to its Broadway run at MTC. *Symphony: The Holy Land*, completed in January. Founder of Chance Magazine, a new theatre design magazine that debuted last summer.

ADAM SCHLESINGER (*Songwriter/Music Producer*). Previous collaborations with David Javerbaum include *Cry-Baby: The Musical*, *A Colbert Christmas: The Greatest Gift Of All*, *The Maya Rudolph Show* and original songs for the Tony and Emmy telecasts. He has won two Emmys and a Grammy, and has been nominated for Tony and Academy Awards. He is a member of the band Fountains Of Wayne.

PETER NIGRINI (*Projection Design*). Broadway: *The Heidi Chronicles*, *The Best Man*, *Fela!*, *9 to 5*. Elsewhere: *Here Lies Love* (Public Theater), *Far From Heaven* (Playwrights Horizons), *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Second Stage), *Notes from Underground* (Yale Rep), *The Grace Jones Hurricane Tour*, *Rent* (New World Stages), *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (NYC Opera), *Blind Date* (Bill T. Jones). For Nature Theater of Oklahoma, *No Dice* and *Life & Times* (Burgtheater, Vienna). Upcoming: *The SpongeBob Musical*, *Dear Evan Hansen* and *Amélie*.

PAUL KIEVE (*Illusion Consultant*). Broadway: *An Act of God*, *Finding Neverland*, *Matilda*, *Pippin*, *Ghost* (DD Award), *Sideshow*, *The Woman in White*, *Macbeth* (Armory). Movies: *Hugo*, *Harry Potter & the Prisoner of Azkaban*. Consultant to David Copperfield, Penn & Teller. Awarded the Magic Castle Hollywood’s Creative Fellowship. Other: *Phantom U.S.* tour, *Zorro*, *Batman Live*, *Before the Dawn* with Kate Bush. Associate artist at The Old Vic, London. www.stageillusion.com.

GREGORY MEEH (*Special Effects Design*) designs special effects for theatre, opera, film. Credits: *Kà*, *Cirque du Soleil*; Broadway: *Misery*, *Doctor Zhivago*, *The Last Ship*, *The Addams Family*, *Spamalot*, *Twelfth Night* (Lincoln Center, Eddy Award), *An Inspector Calls* (Drama Desk Award), *The Phantom of the Opera*.

CAPARELLIOTIS CASTING (*CASTING*). Current Broadway: *Blackbird*. Recent and Select Broadway/Off-Broadway: *An Act of God*, *Fish in the Dark*, *It's Only a Play*, *Airline Highway*, *Disgraced*, *Sex with Strangers*, *Lost Lake*, *The Country House*, *Casa Valentina*, *Holler If Ya Hear Me*, *The Trip to Bountiful*, *Fences*. Also: MTC, Second Stage, Atlantic, LCT3, Ars Nova, Old Globe, Goodman, Arena, McCarter and others. Film/Television: *American Odyssey* (NBC), *How to Get Away With Murder* pilot (ABC), *Ironside* pilot (NBC), *Steel Magnolias* (Sony for Lifetime).

LORA K. POWELL (*Production Stage Manager*). L.A.: *Carrie The Killer Musical Experience*, *Wicked*, *The Producers*, *The Lion King*, *Harmony*, *The Scottsboro Boys*, *Backbeat*, *Seminar*, *Follies*, *Parfumerie*, *Maurice Hines Tappin' Thru Life*, *Satchmo at the Waldorf*, *Disney's Aladdin – A Musical Spectacular*, *Scary Musical the Musical*. Broadway/NY: *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Chicago*, *The Life*, *Annie* and *The Wizard of Oz*. National Tours: *Blithe Spirit*, *Wicked*.

JOHN "JP" POLLARD (*Stage Manager*). L.A.: *Carrie The Musical*, S.F.: *The Search For Signs...* with Lily Tomlin, various regional and international. In addition to theatre, he has also spent time as the personal assistant to actress Sarah Jessica Parker. Special thanks to LKP for this amazing opportunity. Proud Equity member since 1983.

AURORA PRODUCTIONS (*Technical Supervisor*). Current Projects: *The Book of Mormon* (Broadway and national tours), *Matilda* (Broadway and national tour), *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *The Flick*, *Allegiance*, *School of Rock*, *Noises Off*, *Blackbird*, *Hughie*, *Eclipsed*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, *The Crucible*, *Shuffle Along* and *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. Aurora has been providing technical supervision and production management to the entertainment industry since 1989. www.auroraprod.com.

101 PRODUCTIONS (*General Management/Executive Producer*). Wendy Orshan and Jeffrey M. Wilson founded their company in 1994. Their associates are Ron Gubin, Chris Morey and Jeff Klein. Current Broadway: *An American in Paris*, *Hughie*, *Eclipsed*. Special Projects: New Island Festival (Governor's Island, New York),

A Broadway Celebration: In Performance at the White House for PBS and IBM's Centennial Gala.

JEFFREY FINN (*Producer*) is a four-time Tony Award nominee and the recipient of the 2013 Robert Whitehead Award for Outstanding Achievement in Commercial Theatre Producing. His Broadway credits include *Hughie*, *An Act of God*, *The Elephant Man*, *The Realistic Joneses*, *I'll Eat You Last*, *Dead Accounts*, *Scandalous*, *Seminar*, *American Idiot*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Oleanna*, *Blithe Spirit* and *On Golden Pond*. London: *The Elephant Man*. Upcoming: *The Honeymooners*, a new Broadway musical comedy based on the legendary CBS television series. Jeffrey is most proud of his twin sons, Alex and Marc Finn. www.JeffreyFinnProductions.com.

THE SHUBERT ORGANIZATION (*Producer*) has produced and co-produced hundreds of plays and musicals. Under the leadership of Philip J. Smith, Chairman, and Robert E. Wankel, President, the Shubert Organization owns and operates 17 historic Broadway theatres as well as six off-Broadway venues.

CARL MOELLENBERG (*Producer*). Seven Tony Awards for *Spring Awakening*, *Hair*, *Pippin*, *Death of a Salesman*, *War Horse*, *Curious Incident*, *All the Way*. Producer of 39 Broadway productions, seven tours, five overseas shows. Chairman of Dominion Pictures, which produces films (*Newcomer*, *Wakefield*) and provides film debt financing via Dominion Capital.

ROY PUTRINO (*Producer*) has produced on Broadway with *It's Only A Play*, and has been involved with *How to Succeed...* and *Grace* as well as *Passion Play* in the West End. Off-Broadway producing includes *Clinton: The Musical* and *Getting The Band Back Together*. Winner of the 2013 Distinguished Citizen Award and the 2015 Mission Award for the Ramapo Performing Arts.

ADAM ZOTOVICH (*Producer*). Productions include *The Color Purple*, *Legally Blonde*, *All My Sons*, *A View from the Bridge*, *The Addams Family*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Evita*, *An American in Paris*, *Hughie* starring Forest Whitaker and the upcoming musical *Dear Evan Hansen*. Crain's "40 Under 40," President of New Vintage Theatricals, Ltd.

ARIELLE TEPPER MADOVER (*Producer*) produces on Broadway and the West End. Madover is the Board Chair of The Public Theater, on the Board of Governors for the Broadway League and emeritus member of the Syracuse University Board of Trustees

and The Dalton School. Her most recent shows include *The Elephant Man*, *Annie* and *Red*.

STACEY MINDICH (*Producer*). Recently on Broadway: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (Tony Award), *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, *Lucky Guy*, *Annie* and *The Heiress*. This Season: *Dear Evan Hansen*, an original musical at Second Stage. Stacey is the recipient of the 2016 Robert Whitehead Award for excellence in commercial producing. Most beloved productions: Russell, Danny and Charlie.

GROVE ENTERTAINMENT (*Producer*). Broadway: *Tuck Everlasting*, *On Your Feet! The Story of Emilio and Gloria Estefan*. Tours: *An Act of God* starring Sean Hayes, *Dirty Dancing* and *The Sound of Music*. Upcoming: *The Blonde Streak*, *Bull Durham*, a new play based on the life of Oscar Levant in partnership with Sean Hayes and a new musical featuring the songs of Jimmy Buffett.

BOB BOYETT (*Producer*). Broadway: *An Act of God*, *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Gin Game*, *Ann*, *War Horse*, *South Pacific*, *The Coast of Utopia*, *The History Boys*, *Spamalot*, *Sunday In The Park With George*, Tom Stoppard's *Rock 'n' Roll* and *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?* (partial list).

RICHARD WINKLER (*Producer*). Following a 35-year international career as a lighting designer, Richard began producing in 2009. Tony Awards: *The Norman Conquests* (2009), *La Cage* (2009), *Memphis* (2010), *Vanya & Sonia* (2013). Other Broadway includes: *King Charles*, *Something Rotten!*, *Disgraced* (2013 Pulitzer Prize), *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella*. West End includes *Memphis*, *The Children's Hour* (Keira Knightley), *Betrayal* (Kristin Scott Thomas), *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (Olivier Award).

FG PRODUCTIONS (*Producer*). Wendy Federman: Four-time Tony Award winner for *Hair*, *Pippin*, *All The Way* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Fifteen additional Tony Award nominations. Candy Gold: Producer: *Eclipsed*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, *The Realistic Joneses*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Dead Accounts*, *End of the Rainbow*. Board of the American Repertory Theater. Always: Carly, David and Marty.

MARCO GOMEZ (*Producer*). Venture Hill Entertainment, LLC currently in N.Y., *On Your Feet*, *The Color Purple*, *Hughie*, touring *Matilda*, DOMA Theatre Co. producer, *Young Frankenstein*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *American Idiot* in Los Angeles, recipient of Bitter Lemons, NAACP,

LA Weekly, Ovation, Eddon and Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards.

JAY & CINDY GUTTERMAN (*Producer*). *All The Way* (Tony), *Spring Awakening* (Tony), *Glengarry Glen Ross* (Tony), *Catch Me* (Tony nomination), *Merchant of Venice* (Tony nomination), *Evita* (Tony nomination), *The Addams Family*, *Race*, *The Seagull*, *You Can't Take It With You* (Tony nomination, Outer Critics). Love to Lance, Samantha, Josh, Harrison and Barnaby.

JAMIE KAYE-PHILLIPS (*Producer*). With Jeffrey Finn Productions, Broadway projects include *Hughie*, *An Act of God*, *The Elephant Man* (Tony nomination), *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (investor), *The Realistic Joneses*, *I'll Eat You Last*, *Dead Accounts* and *Seminar*. Upcoming: *The Honeymooners*, a new Broadway musical comedy based on the legendary CBS television series.

CORINNE HAYOUN (*Producer*) made her producing debut with *An Act of God* on Broadway and is proud to continue the journey with it out west. A former agent at CAA, Corinne is currently a manager across TV, film and theatre, as well as a board member for the Lilly Awards Foundation.

DENVER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS (*Producer*) is the largest non-profit theatre organization in the nation, presenting Broadway tours and producing theatre, cabaret, musicals and innovative, multimedia plays. The DCPA entertains and educates 800,000 people each year, creating unforgettable shared experiences that are bold in vision yet universal in appeal.

FOR CENTER THEATRE GROUP

MICHAEL RITCHIE (*Artistic Director*) is in his 11th season as Center Theatre Group's Artistic Director, and has led over 190 productions to the Ahmanson, Taper and Douglas stages since his arrival in 2005. From 1996 to 2004 Michael was the Producer of the Williamstown Theatre Festival and prior to that he was a Production Stage Manager in NYC. At Center Theatre Group, he premiered six musicals that moved to Broadway – *The Drowsy Chaperone* (which won 13 Tony Award nominations), *Curtains* (eight Tony nominations) *13, 9 to 5: The Musical*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* and *Leap of Faith*. He has produced 40 world premieres including the musicals *Minsky's*, *Venice* and *Sleeping Beauty Wakes*, and the plays *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* (a Pulitzer Prize finalist that also moved to Broadway), *Water & Power* and *Yellow Face*,

and he presented a broad range of plays and musicals ranging from *Dead End* to *The Black Rider* to *Edward Scissorhands* to blockbusters such as *God of Carnage*, *Mary Poppins*, *Jersey Boys* and *August: Osage County*. In addition, Michael inaugurated Center Theatre Group's Artistic Development Program, designed to foster the development and production of new work.

STEPHEN D. ROUNTREE (*Managing Director*) joined Center Theatre Group last year as its new Managing Director. He was previously the President and CEO of The Music Center (2002-2014) and held the position of CEO of the Los Angeles Opera concurrently from 2008-2012. Prior to The Music Center, Rountree served the J. Paul Getty Trust for 22 years, starting in 1980 as Deputy Director of the Getty Museum. In 1984, he was appointed Director of the Getty Center Building Program, with responsibility for managing all aspects of project development, design, and construction of the Getty Center in Los Angeles. In January 1998, he was named Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the Getty Trust. He currently serves as a Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Occidental College and is a trustee of The Ahmanson Foundation, Children's Hospital of Los Angeles and the Grand Park Foundation. He advises numerous non-profit institutions on matters relating to non-profit management and building programs. His involvement was critical to the building of Walt Disney Concert Hall at The Music Center, serving on the boards of the LA Phil and Walt Disney Concert Hall, Inc.

DOUGLAS C. BAKER (*Producing Director*) is now in his 26th season at Center Theatre Group. Previously, he managed Broadway and touring productions including *Tru*, *Born Yesterday*, *The Gospel at Colonus*, *Annie*, *A Chorus Line*, *Working*, *The Wiz* and *Legends!*, which premiered at the Ahmanson Theatre in 1986 and starred Mary Martin and Carol Channing. Doug is a member of the Achievement Hall of Fame of Chagrin Falls Schools in Ohio and a graduate of Albion College. He is an active member of the Broadway League, the Independent Presenters Network and is a proud member of the Association of Theatrical Press Agents and Managers. In May 2013 Doug received The Broadway League's prestigious Outstanding Achievement in Presenter Management Award.

JEFFREY UPAH (*General Manager, Ahmanson Theatre*) has worked in management at Center Theatre Group since 2006 on more than 50 musicals, plays and special events including both pre-Broadway productions and Broadway tours. Some of his favorites include *Follies*,

God of Carnage and *The Black Rider* (having previously worked on Robert Wilson productions in Boston, Houston and Sao Paulo, Brazil). Prior to Center Theatre Group, he was the marketing manager for the last two of his 11 seasons with The Santa Fe Opera, and worked in various capacities at Yale Repertory Theatre, American Repertory Theatre and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, among others. He graduated magna cum laude with his studies in film and theatre from Washington University in St. Louis, and received an MFA in theatre management from the Yale School of Drama.

GORDON DAVIDSON (*Founding Artistic Director*) led the Taper throughout its first 38 seasons, guiding over 300 productions to its stage and winning countless awards for himself and the theatre—including the Tony Award for theatrical excellence, Margo Jones Award, The Governor's Award for the Arts and a Guggenheim fellowship. *The Kentucky Cycle* and *Angels in America* (Part One) won the Pulitzer in consecutive years and, in 1994, three of the four plays nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play were from the Taper (*Angels in America* won). In 1989 Gordon took over the Ahmanson and, in 2004, he produced the inaugural season in the Kirk Douglas Theatre.

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Voice of God

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ONLINE

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Center Theatre Group would like to thank its exceptional staff for their ongoing commitment, dedication and extraordinary efforts.



NEXT AT THE AHMANSON...
*A Gentleman's Guide to
Love & Murder*

He Has A Way With Wicked Comedy

A Q&A with Tony-winning Director Darko Tresnjak

I think it's quite safe to say that a great deal of the success of the show is in the Tony Award-winning staging and just the absolute fun of it. How did you get involved with *Gentleman's Guide* in the first place?

Well, in the beginning, several friends and agents told me about it; people seemed to think I was the right person for the show. And then Robert Freedman came to see my production of *The Women* at the Old Globe. He loved that and I think he thought that I would be a good match, because that's another wicked comedy. That seems to be my specialty, you know? I like naughty things! I like things that are both appealing *and* a little bit subversive. So, we all met up and when I dug into this musical about a charming young man who lies and kills eight of his relatives and prospers in the banking industry and his punishment is that he ends up in a three-way with two gorgeous women, I said: "Okay! Sign me on!" It was four years of work before we premiered the piece at Hartford Stage – but from the beginning, I thought Robert and Steven Lutvak were consummate craftsmen. There were pieces already when I came along, like the door trio ["I've Decided to Marry You"], which has become kind of a signature, where I thought "this is great."

There are several things about the staging I'd love for you to address. One is the idea of having one man play all of the eight people who die. (Jefferson Mays was nominated for a Tony playing the role on Broadway.)

There were some people who were worried about whether an audience was going to follow the story of a killer [Monty Navaro]. Why would anyone sign on for this? And I said, "easy; because if you have a talented actor getting killed over and over again, then each murder is a reward, because he's going to come back as another delightful characterization." So, the way the audience looks forward to the act of killing, that's what

is subversive about the show, because he's going to come out next as Lady Salome, or whoever.

And, also, it makes it a little less unforgiveable; it's not quite so horrifying, because it's so overtly theatrical.

Yes. I mean, a) they're horrible people, the whole family that he kills – they're all awful, one after the other, in different ways – and b) it just means he'll be back as another delightful characterization, so the audience looks forward to it.

You know, we did so well in New York around Christmas time. And I thought, "It's the perfect antidote to holiday entertainment. *Everyone* wants to murder their family!" So, I think those are the reasons why it works.

One of the real virtues of the production is its theatricality: in addition to the one actor who plays all the D'Ysquiths, you have an ensemble of six who take on different guises, you've got a toy stage. I wonder if you can talk about the theatrical approach.

Well, a friend said that in all likelihood we could get a really good cast, if everyone took ownership [of the show]. So, the way that the piece is constructed is that the ensemble is six; they play many different characters, but each one has a breakaway role. For example, one actress plays Lady Eugenia, or there's the unfortunate ice skater, Miss Barley, who falls through the ice, there's the detective and the magistrate. I think it's good for the morale.

I've done over forty shows with [costume designer] Linda Cho – we started in the swamp at Williamstown, so I was really happy when she won the Tony Award because she's been my partner in crime in plays, operas, musicals. And then with Alexander [Dodge – set designer and Tony nominee], we just actually remembered that Robert and Steven kept talking about

(continues on page 16)

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Edwardian toy theatres and we thought, “Great! Let’s give them an Edwardian toy theatre!” So, the idea actually came from them.

And then we had a lot of fun with the projections. You know, clearly falling off the [church] tower is based on *Vertigo*. But then, the scene with the bees in the garden, that’s based on *Maytime*. That’s completely based on Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy; they always seem to have a swing and canopies covered with lilacs and stuff, so I just told the actors, “pretend you’re Jeanette and Nelson and he’ll just die, stung by bees.” There are actually lots of references throughout.

So much of the entertainment is that each of these D’Ysquiths die in different and comic ways. I understand that the hole in the ice [in “Poison in My Pocket”] was originally supposed to be a Ferris wheel?

We went through so many different versions of this – there was a car and a Ferris wheel and this and that. Then one day, we were doing a workshop in Hartford – this is eight months before the premiere and it’s my favorite day in the collaboration – and Jefferson Mays was in the room. You know, it’s so much work, a new musical, and I didn’t think the structure of the Ferris wheel worked for me. I wanted something more kinesthetic, like bodies moving. And I thought how do I tell them *again* to rewrite it? Then I started swaying, listening to the music [sings] You and I go sailing by/ And no one will know... And I thought “it’s a skating waltz!” I grabbed Jefferson and I said, “Ice skate with me!” He said, “What?” I said, “Be like Torvill and Dean – skate!” So Jefferson and I started doing a mad skating routine and I said, “It’s on ice, it’s a lake and he cuts a hole in the ice and they fall through!” And what happened is thirty minutes later, on a napkin pretty much, Steven and Robert came up with “As I’m cutting, I am contemplating/And the truth is, it’s a tad exhilarating.” They also came up with “With the rhythm of the violinist/I’ll be sawing where I think the ice is thinnest” – which I think are just about my favorite, most sophisticated rhymes in the show.

I spoke at great length with Steve and Robert about the fact that, if you think about it for a moment, Monty (our homicidal hero) is not the most likeable guy...

Well, he’s a talented, ambitious young man and he has a talent for murder! And everybody in the audience responds to ambition. What I said, from the moment I started working on it, is “this is the comic side of *The Talented Mister Ripley*.” Why do people like those Patricia Highsmith books and movies? Why do we like to see people get away with it? Because a part of *us* wants to get away with it – whatever it is. In this instance, casting is very, very important. And it helps that the family is

odious. And there is an injustice; they treated Monty’s mother like hell.

I want to fast forward. You’ve been with this show for several years, you’ve been through some of the ups and downs, legally, and then you’re finally able to do it and it goes well in Hartford and it goes well in San Diego and it moves to Broadway. And I just want to talk to you about the Broadway experience and ultimately taking home a Tony, what that experience was like.

Well it was, for me, overall very joyous. And I didn’t have anything to compare it to because I had never done a Broadway show before! You know, this is my first time directing a new musical. I’ve directed musicals before, but this is my first new one. So I don’t have anything bad to say about any of it. I’m most grateful and it was fun. About the Tonys, I decided things like this don’t come along often in life, so I just made up my mind to enjoy myself and be present. It was fun – it was *fun*!

The show has run for over a year on Broadway and is on tour. And I understand that, if anything, the projections and set are going to be larger. What can people expect from the tour?

Well, what they can expect is we have committed to keep exploring the piece and to making it better. It’s interesting, when a show runs for a long time, you see things and you go “oh! I can do this even better.” I’m determined to do an even better production of it! And then the other thing is our show is based on personality. It very much depends on who are in these roles. It’s not a mechanical experience at all, so we’re committed to tailoring it to the talent that we selected for the tour. So I’m very much going to tweak it for the people coming in. The D’Ysquith role is a virtuosic part; you have to tailor it for the virtuoso playing it.

When I went to see the show recently, one of the things I noticed – and I found very moving – was how many young people were in the audience. They clearly had listened to the cast album and knew the score.

Yes. It’s attracting more and more young people. It seems to kind of have a cult status with many of them. You know, some of them have posted videos on YouTube of them doing the door trio – in one instance, a girl does all three parts! It’s very funny. I hear from friends who teach in musical theatre programs around the country and people are coming in with songs from *Gentleman’s Guide*. It’s a new musical that requires, especially for women, a certain kind of Julie Andrews purity of singing and there isn’t a lot of that being written, so I think people with those kind of voices are really responding to it. So, audiences are getting younger. ●