



NEWS

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**HAPPINESS IS...
THE COMPLETE PEANUTS GANG!**

**THE YORK THEATRE COMPANY
PRESENTS
"YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN"
BASED ON THE COMIC STRIP "PEANUTS" BY CHARLES M. SCHULZ
BOOK, MUSIC AND LYRICS BY CLARK GESNER
ADDITIONAL DIALOGUE BY MICHAEL MAYER
ADDITIONAL MUSIC AND LYRICS BY ANDREW LIPPA
MUSIC DIRECTION BY ERIC SVEJCAR
CHOREOGRAPHY BY JENNIFER PAULSON-LEE
DIRECTED BY MICHAEL UNGER**

**THE "PEANUTS" GANG WILL FEATURE
JOSHUA COLLEY, GREGORY DIAZ, AIDAN GEMME, MILLY SHAPIRO,
MAVIS SIMPSON-ERNST, JEREMY T. VILLAS AND GRAYDON PETER YOSOWITZ**

**PERFORMANCES BEGIN TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2016
LIMITED ENGAGEMENT THROUGH JUNE 26, 2016
AT YORK THEATRE COMPANY AT SAINT PETER'S**

OPENING NIGHT IS TUESDAY, MAY 31, 2016 AT 7:00 P.M.

New York, NY (April 29, 2016) – **The York Theatre Company** (*James Morgan, Producing Artistic Director; Evans Haile, Interim Executive Director*), in association with **Van Dean, Tony Heyes/Mia Moravis** and **Sister Productions**, has announced the complete cast for the hit musical *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* with book, music and lyrics by **Clark Gesner** and additional material by **Andrew Lippa** and **Michael Mayer**.

Directed by York's Associate Artistic Director **Michael Unger**, and with music direction by **Eric Svejcar** and choreography by **Jennifer Paulson-Lee**, the seven-member "Peanuts" gang will feature **Joshua Colley** (*Elf, The Musical*) as Charlie Brown, **Gregory Diaz** (*School of Rock*) as Schroeder, **Aidan Gemme** (*Finding Neverland*) as Snoopy, **Milly Shapiro** (*Matilda*) as Sally, **Mavis Simpson-Ernst** (*Evita*) as Lucy, and **Jeremy T. Villas** (*Kinky Boots*) as Linus. **Graydon Peter Yosowitz** (*The Odyssey*) will perform the role of Charlie Brown from June 1-7.

Performances are set to begin Tuesday, May 24, 2016 for a limited engagement through Sunday, June 26, 2016 at The York Theatre Company at Saint Peter's (619 Lexington Avenue, entrance on East 54th Street, just east of Lexington Avenue). Opening Night is Tuesday, May 31, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Come spend a couple of days in the lives of Charlie Brown and his pint-sized philosopher friends—from bright, uncertain morning to starlit, hopeful evening—and all of the lonely brown-bag lunches, kite-flying failures, book reports, glee club rehearsals, and suppertimes in between. Audiences of all ages will learn that "Happiness is" the simple joys of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*.

"This production is based on a concert that was presented at Feinstein's/54 Below by Van Dean of Broadway Records and Jennifer Tepper," said James Morgan, Producing Artistic Director at The York Theatre Company. "The York Theatre Company, along with our associate producers, has put together a cast of talented young performers, ages 9-13, for this exciting new production which will combine the simplicity of the original 1967 Off-Broadway version with additions from the 1999 Broadway revival."

Clark Gesner had a long association with The York Theatre Company, including the mainstage production of his musical *The Jello is Always Red* in 1998, which Morgan directed. *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown's* Director Michael Unger had the pleasure of directing Clark in a production of Molière's *School for Wives* at Vermont's Weston Playhouse. "He was the most charming, eternally youthful man you could ever hope to meet," stated Unger. "Clark was a mix of the finest traits of all the show's characters. This delightful classic will be told through fresh, youthful eyes and voices—with an authenticity only possible from performers close in age to the characters they are portraying."

The creative team for *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* includes **Brian Prather** (sets), **Grier Coleman**, (costumes), **Graham Kindred** (lights), and **Daniel Logan** (props). The Production Stage Manager is **TJ Kearney** and the Assistant Stage Manager is **Rachel Calter**. Casting is by **Nora Brennan Casting**.

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown will play the following performance schedule: Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m., Thursdays – Saturdays at 8:00 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

Tickets for *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* are priced at \$67.50 - \$72.50 and may be purchased by calling (212) 935-5820, online at www.yorktheatre.org, or in person at the box office at the York Theatre at Saint Peter's (Citicorp Building, entrance on East 54th Street, just east of Lexington Avenue), Tuesday through Friday (12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.). York Theatre Members receive priority booking and save almost 35% on matinee performances and 30% for regular performances. Student and Senior Rush tickets are available in-person beginning one hour prior to performances for \$20 cash only. The York Theatre also offers \$25 tickets for guests aged 35 years and under.

York Theatre Company offers the **54th Street Membership Program**, an exclusive membership package for as low as \$54.00 - with elite benefits that includes a 30% discount on tickets to York Theatre Productions (2 per membership), exclusive member pre-sale opportunities, 50% off on all lobby concessions, 20% off on all lobby merchandise, in addition to special member only receptions. The \$125 **Platinum Membership** Program offers additional perks.

For additional information, please visit www.yorktheatre.org.

BIOS

Joshua Colley (*Charlie Brown*) most recently appeared in *A Bronx Tale* at Paper Mill Playhouse and as Michael in *Elf, The Musical* at Madison Square Garden. Broadway credits include Gavroche in the revival of *Les Misérables* and Les in Disney's Tony Award-winning musical *Newsies*. National tour: Gavroche in the 25th Anniversary tour of *Les Misérables*. He began his professional acting career at the age of nine. Joshua can be heard voicing the role of Pig Robinson, a character he originated for the hit animated television show "Peter Rabbit" and is proud to be the original voice of The Shadow King on the series "Team Umizoomi," both on

Nickelodeon's Nick Jr., and many others. He will be featured in the upcoming Hollywood Bowl concert of *The Little Mermaid*.

Gregory Diaz (*Schroeder*) is excited to be a part of this production. He has appeared in Broadway at the White House with the *School of Rock*. Professional credits include Commercials (Apple iPhone 6s, TriHonda and AFI) and Film (*Carrie Pilby*).

Aidan Gemme (*Snoopy*) Broadway credits include *Finding Neverland*, *Waiting for Godot* and *Mary Poppins*. Off-Broadway and regional theater: *The Cradle Will Rock*, *Finding Neverland* (IRNE Promising Young Actor nominee), and *Mary Poppins*. Film and Television credits include *Tomorrowland*, *Deliver Us From Evil*, *Santa Pups*, *Treasure Buddies*, "Dora the Explorer," and "The Colbert Report."

Milly Shapiro (*Sally*) Broadway: *Matilda*, *The Musical* (Original Cast and Recording, Honorary Tony Award Winner, Grammy Award Nominee). Concert: *Shapiro Sisters: Live Out Loud: You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. Readings: *Table* (David Shire Workshop); *The Geranium on the Windowsill* (MMAC). Voice Over: "Sesame Street." Regional: *Annie*; *Les Misérables* (Entertainment Revue of Tampa Bay). TV: "The 67th Annual Tony Awards;" "Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade;" "Live! With Kelly and Michael." Album: *The Shapiro Sisters: Live Out Loud - Live at 54 BELOW; Carols for a Cure, Volume 15*.

Mavis Simpson-Ernst (*Lucy*) Made her Broadway debut at age nine in *Evita* and at age eight performed in the national tour of *Les Misérables*. TV: "Broad City" and "Sisters" Short, Young Abbi Jacobsen, Comedy Central), "POWER" (Suzie Spencer, Starz); "Project Runway," (Model, Lifetime); "Brain Games" (Daughter, National Geographic Channel); "The Late Show with David Letterman." Film: *5 Doctors*, *Jingle Boys*, *The Grand March*, *The Prayer* and *A Scientist's Guide to Living and Dying*. Opera/NYC theater: *AZAIQ* (Marina, Italy and Philadelphia, International Opera Theater); *A Little Princess* (Sara Crewe, Signature Theater); *A Little Princess In Concert* (Lavinia, 54 Below). Mavis is thrilled to be playing Lucy in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*.

Jeremy T. Villas (*Linus*) is excited to be a part of this production. In February 2015 he made his Broadway debut in *Kinky Boots* and in January 2016 he performed with the Washington National Opera House production of *Lost in the Stars*. Jeremy is a scholarship recipient at the Alvin Ailey Dance School and has performed with the Company at Lincoln Center. He was recently awarded a scholarship to ABT's 2016 Summer Intensive and is a student at the Professional Performing Arts Middle School.

Graydon Peter Yosowitz (*Charlie Brown/Snoopy* - Standby) is super excited to be a part of this production! Recent credits include *Wall to Wall Stephen Schwartz* (Symphony Space) and *The Odyssey* (Delacorte Theatre). Television: "The Jim Gaffigan Show." Grateful to Nina Trevens and the TADA! Ensemble for the opportunity to be a part of a very special family!

Clark Gesner (*Book, Music, Lyrics*) is most renowned for *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. He was an important figure in early children's television, writing for "Captain Kangaroo," "Mister Mayor," The Children's Television Workshop, and its programs, "Sesame Street" and "The Electric Company." Other credits include *Animal Fair*, *The Ransom of Red Chief*, the musical review *The Jello is Always Red* (1998), *The Adventures of Betty Boop*, and *The Utter Glory of Morrissey Hall*. Gesner also acted in various small theater productions in New York City (*Musicals in Concert*) and in summer stock at the Weston Playhouse in Vermont for many years. Gesner authored *Stuff, etc.: A Collection* (1970) and wrote special material for television, Broadway and night-club reviews.

Andrew Lipka (*Additional Music and Lyrics*). Broadway credits include *Big Fish*; *The Addams Family*, wrote the music for the Broadway production of Aaron Sorkin's new play *The Farnsworth Invention*; wrote three new songs and did the arrangements for the Broadway version of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (including "My New Philosophy" for Tony Award-Winner Kristin Chenoweth). His oratorio, *I Am Harvey Milk* (words and music), was premiered by the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus and the recording, released in 2013, reached number two on the iTunes Classical Chart. Other credits include *Asphalt Beach*; *The Wild Party* at the Manhattan Theatre Club (winner of the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Off-Broadway Musical and the Drama

Desk Award for Best Music); *A Little Princess*; *John & Jen*. Mr. Lipa is proud to have been music director for Kristin Chenoweth since 1999 for many of her concerts. He conducted/played her sold-out shows at the Metropolitan Opera House in NYC in 2007, at Carnegie Hall in 2004, and at the Donmar Warehouse in London in 2002. Vocal selections from *The Addams Family*, *A Little Princess*, *The Wild Party* and *John & Jen* are published by Hal Leonard. Hal Leonard also released *The Andrew Lipa Song Book* in Winter, 2013.

Michael Unger (*Director*) is the Associate Artistic Director and Director of Education at The York Theatre Company. He is also the Producing Artistic Director of NewArts: Newtown Musicals which brings high-level performing arts education and programming to the resilient community of Newtown, CT. Michael also directed *From Broadway With Love: A Benefit Concert for Sandy Hook* (CD and DVD available) to raise support and awareness for Newtown, CT. Selected directing credits include *A Christmas Carol* (McCarter Theatre); *Two Point Oh* at 59E59 (New York Times Critics' Pick); *Time Stands Still* at Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theatre (Cape Cod Chronicle Best of 2015); the musical *Big* (starring John Tartaglia, Kerry Butler and lyricist, Richard Maltby, Jr.) and *Knickerbocker Holiday* for the York Theatre's Musicals in Mufti series. Other directing credits include: *My Sister in this House* (Deaf West – Ovation Recommended); *Grease* (Paramount Theatre); *Crimes of the Heart* (Theatre Aspen); and, upon the request of composer, John Kander, new versions of *The Happy Time* (Signature Theatre, DC) and *The Rink* starring Leslie Uggams and Janet Metz (Cape Playhouse). World premieres include *Caligula, an Ancient Glam Epic* (NYMF- Winner: Best of the Fest) and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Barrington Stage). He is featured in the documentary film, *Midsummer in Newtown*, which recently premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Eric Svejcar (*Music Director*). Composing credits: *Caligula, an Ancient Glam Epic* (NYMF Audience Award); *A ROCKIN' Midsummer Night's Dream* (NewArts: Newtown Musicals, Newtown CT); *The Murder of Isaac* (Centerstage Baltimore); and songs for *White Noise* (NYMF). With playwright David Zellnik he adapted and orchestrated Disney's *Peter Pan Jr.*, published by MTI. Eric music directed and arranged the 2006 Off-Broadway revival of *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, and music directed *Big* for the York Musicals in Mufti series.

Jennifer Paulson-Lee (*Choreographer*) Recent credits include *Magic To Do* under a special partnership with Princess Cruise Lines and Stephen Schwartz with director Gabriel Barre; *A Rockin' Midsummer Night's Dream* (World Premiere, CT); *Susannah* (St. Petersburg Opera); *Camelot* (Ft. Worth's Casa Manana Theatre); *City of Angels* (Goodspeed Opera House); *Enter Laughing, the musical* (associate Dir./Choreographer – York Theatre NYC, Bay Street in Sag Harbor and Mark Taper in LA); and *HMS Pinafore, The Consul* (Opera NJ). As part of an initiative by the 12.14 Foundation, Ms. Lee choreographed *Seussical, the musical*, working with director Michael Unger starring John Tartaglia and a double cast of 84 local Newtown, CT residents from ages 5-18 as a way to bring immediate healing – to remember, honor and inspire through the performing arts (visit 12.14foundation.org).

The York Theatre Company is the only theater in New York City — and one of very few in the world — dedicated to developing and fully producing new musicals and preserving neglected, notable shows from the past. For over four decades, York's intimate, imaginative style of producing both original and classic musicals has resulted in critical acclaim and recognition from artists and audiences alike. Under the guidance of Producing Artistic Director James Morgan since 1997, the York has focused on new musicals in its Mainstage Series — most of them world, American, or New York premieres — by some of the field's most esteemed creators, and has also helped launch the careers of many talented new writers. Over 35 cast recordings from York Theatre Company productions are now available on CD, including its acclaimed revival of *Closer Than Ever* (2013 Off-Broadway Alliance Award for Best Revival); commercial transfers of such York premieres as *The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!)*, *Souvenir* (Tony Award Nomination for actress Judy Kaye), and *Jolson & Company*, and revivals of *Pacific Overtures* and *Sweeney Todd* (four Tony Nominations including Best Revival) have all showcased the importance of the York and its programs. Recent hits have included *Rothschild and Sons*, *Plaid Tidings* and *Cagney*, starring Robert Creighton as James Cagney and the original York Cast, currently playing to sold-out houses at the Westside Theatre.

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