

NEWS RELEASE

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WE GOT A BEAUTIFUL FEELIN' AUDIENCES WILL FALL FER THE CAST OF RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN'S TRIUMPHANT **OKLAHOMA!**

Beginning July 14 at The Goodspeed

EAST HADDAM, CONN May 24, 2017: "People will say we're in love" with this wild western cast of Rodgers and Hammerstein's beloved ***Oklahoma!***. Having directed last summer's hit ***Bye Bye Birdie*** Jenn Thompson returns to The Goodspeed to take on the show that changed American musicals forever. For the first time at Goodspeed, this country classic will welcome city slickers, cowboys and everyone in between! So kick up your boots and join us for this lively and legendary musical which runs July 14-September 23 at The Goodspeed in East Haddam, Conn [Official Press Opening will be August 2, 2017].

Cowboy Curly and farm girl Laurey are taking their sweet time falling in love. Can these stubborn romantics admit their feelings before it's too late? Passion, laughter and high-kicking choreography blossom in a land where the wind comes sweepin' down the plain. A legendary score—including "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," "The Surrey With the Fringe on Top" and the rousing title tune—will put you in a brand new state!

Oklahoma! features music by **Richard Rodgers** and book and lyrics by **Oscar Hammerstein II**, and is based on the play *Green Grow the Lilacs* by **Lynn Riggs**. Original dances by **Agnes de Mille**. *Oklahoma!* will be sponsored by Liberty Bank, Updike, Kelly & Spellacy P.C. and Robinson+Cole.

Curly will be played by **Rhett Guter** who will be returning to The Goodspeed after charming fans as Conrad Birdie in last summer's hit *Bye Bye Birdie*. Laurey will be played by **Samantha Bruce** who performed Off-Broadway in ***The Fantasticks***.

Aunt Eller will be played by **Terry Burrell** who performed ***Swinging on a Star*** first at Goodspeed Musicals and then on Broadway. Her other Broadway credits include ***Dreamgirls*** and ***Into the Woods***. She has performed in the National Touring companies of ***Copacabana*** and ***Show Boat***.

Will Parker will be played by **Jake Swain** who returns to The Goodspeed after performing as Harvey Johnson in *Bye Bye Birdie*. Ado Annie will be played by **Gizel Jimenez** who starred in *The Theory of Relativity* at The Terris Theater in 2015. Her Off-Broadway credits include *Big River* for City Center ENCORES!, *Party People* at The Public Theater and *Unseamly* at Urban Stages. Gizel starred as Anna in Disney's *Frozen – Live at the Hyperion*. She performed as Rosalia in the First National Tour of *West Side Story*.

Andrew Carnes will be played by **C. Mingo Long** who performed in *Purile* and *House of Flowers* at City Center ENCORES!. He has also performed in the National Tours of *Parade* and *Les Misérables*.

Ali Hakim will be played by **Matthew Curiano** whose National Tour credits include *Ragtime* and *Camelot*. Jud Fry will be played by **Matt Faucher** who is returning to The Goodspeed after performing in *Camelot*. He performed in the First National Tour of *Beautiful The Carole King Musical*.

The ensemble includes **Kelly Berman, Morgan Cowling** who has performed in the Off-Broadway production of *Marry Harry* and the National Tour of *The Phantom of the Opera*, **Lauren Csete** who appeared in *Aida* at The MUNY and *West Side Story* at the Paper Mill Playhouse and The MUNY. **Mark Deler** who performed in Broadway's *West Side Story*, **Tamrin Goldberg** who appeared in the Off- Broadway production *The Zombies: A Musical* (Playwrights Horizons) and **Tripp Hampton** who performed in the National Touring company of *South Pacific* and First National Tour of *S'Wonderful: The New Gerswhin Musical*.

Joining them will be **Olivia Nicole Hoffman, Kate Arrington Johnson** who performed in *Mamma Mia* and *Oklahoma!* at The MUNY, **Howard Kaye** who appeared in the Broadway production of *Miss Saigon*, **Morgan McCann, Andrew Ryan Purcell**, and **Alex Ringler** who is returning to the Goodspeed after appearing in the 2015 hit *La Cage aux Folles*. Alex has performed in Broadway's *West Side Story* as well as the National Tours of *A Chorus Line* and *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert*.

The rest of the ensemble will be **Marco Antonio Santiago** who performed in the National Tour of *The Wedding Singer*, **Alex Stewart**, and **Madison Turner** who performed in the National Tour of *Rock of Ages*. The swings will be **Rebecca Brudner** and **Aaron Patrick Craven**.

Oklahoma! will be directed **Jenn Thompson** who was nominated for two Lucille Lortel Awards, the Off-Broadway Alliance Award and five Drama Desk Awards including Outstanding Director and Revival. Connecticut audiences may also remember Jenn from her 19 seasons with the award-winning River Rep at the Ivoryton Playhouse. Most recently she directed a production of *The Secret Garden* at Denver Center. Jenn was a 2012 finalist for SDC's Joe A. Callaway award for Excellence in Directing.

Choreography will be by **Katie Spelman**. Ms. Spellman will make her Goodspeed debut as choreographer of *Oklahoma!*. Most recently, she served as Associate Choreographer for *Amélie* on Broadway, Assistant Choreographer for *American Psycho* on Broadway and Associate Director for the West End's *Close to You*. Other New York credits include *What's It All About?* at New York Theatre Workshop (Associate Director), *Brooklynite* at Vineyard Theatre (Associate Choreographer), and *Once* on Broadway and the first National Tour (Associate Movement Director). She has also assisted and performed with Goodman Theatre, Writers Theatre, the House Theatre, Drury Lane in Oakbrook and Marriott Theatre.

Scenic design will be by **Wilson Chin** who designed last year's season opener *Anything Goes* at The Goodspeed and the recent critically-acclaimed production of *Next To Normal* at TheaterWorks Hartford. Chin designed the critically-acclaimed Broadway production of *Next Fall* which was nominated for two Tony Awards including Best Play. In New York, Wilson has designed productions for Ars Nova, Manhattan Theatre Club, Naked Angels, Primary Stages, The Public Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company and Second Stage Theatre among others. Regional credits include designs for Alliance Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Geffen Playhouse, Guthrie Theatre, Hartford Stage, Huntington Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, Signature Theatre, Steppenwolf and many more. Chin has won quite a few awards including the LA Stage Raw Theatre Award, Sage Aware, Broadway World Award, St Louis Theater Circle Award and the Dora Award.

Costume design will be by **Tracey Christensen** whose designs can be seen in the current Broadway revival of *Sunset Boulevard*. Her other Broadway credits include Associate Designer for *Wonderful Town*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Constant Wife*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Shrek* and *A Little Night Music* as well as Assistant Designer for *Bells Are Ringing*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Damn Yankees*. Ms. Christensen has been Costume Designer for many Goodspeed favorites including *Red, Hot and Blue!*; *City of Angels*; *Something's Afoot*; *Good News!* and *Guys and Dolls* (2015 Connecticut Critics Circle Award). She was also nominated for the 2007 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Costume Design for *Seussical the Musical* and she won the 2007 LA Stage Alliance Ovation Award for Best Costume Design for *Souvenir*.

Lighting design will be by **Philip Rosenberg** whose Broadway credits include *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, *The Elephant Man*, *It's Only a Play* and *Cheers Live on Stage*. He has served as associate lighting designer in over 35 Broadway plays and musicals.

Sound design will be by **Jay Hilton** who has a long association with Goodspeed Musicals and has designed countless productions at both The Terris Theatre and The Goodspeed. His work has also been heard on Broadway, National Tours and Regional theatres from coast to coast. He also serves as Goodspeed's audio supervisor.

Wig and Hair design will be by **Mark Adam Rampmeyer** whose work has been seen at The Goodspeed in the current production of *Thoroughly Modern Millie*; *Anything Goes*; *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Chasing Rainbows*, as well as *La Cage aux Folles*, *Good News!*, *42nd Street* and *Big River* to name a few. On Broadway, he designed *West Side Story*, *Lysistrata Jones* and *The Farnsworth Invention*.

The Music Director will be **Michael O'Flaherty** who is in his 26th season as Goodspeed's Resident Music Director. His Broadway credits include *By Jeeves* and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. O'Flaherty has written music and lyrics for *A Connecticut Christmas Carol* which will be produced at The Terris Theatre this fall. **F. Wade Russo** will be assistant music director. Orchestrations will be provided by **Dan DeLange** who has created the orchestrations for over 40 Goodspeed productions. His orchestrations for *Show Boat* have been nominated for the Best Revival Musical Oliver Award in London.

Casting for *Oklahoma!* is by **Paul Hardt** of StewartWhitley Casting.

Oklahoma! will run July 14- September 23, 2017 [Official Press Opening August 2] Curtain times are Wednesday at 2:00p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Thursday at 7:30 p.m. (with select performances at 2:00 p.m.), Friday at 8:00 p.m., Saturday at 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. (with select performances at 6:30 p.m.).

Tickets are available through the Box Office (**860.873.8668**), open seven days a week, or online at goodspeed.org. For show highlights, exclusive photos, special events and more, visit us at goodspeed.org and follow us on [Facebook](#), Twitter [@goodspeedmusicl](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

Under the leadership of Executive Director Michael Gennaro, Goodspeed Musicals is dedicated to the preservation, development and advancement of musical theatre. Goodspeed produces three musicals each season at The Goodspeed in East Haddam, Conn., and additional productions at The Terris Theatre in Chester, Conn., which was opened in 1984 for the development of new musicals. The first regional theatre to receive two Tony Awards (for outstanding achievement), Goodspeed also maintains The Scherer Library of Musical Theatre and The Max Showalter Center for Education in Musical Theatre. Goodspeed gratefully acknowledges the support of United Airlines, the official airline of Goodspeed Musicals; official audio sponsor Sennheiser; and official auto sponsor Hoffman Audi. Goodspeed is also grateful for the support of the Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts.

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GOODSPEED MUSICALS

OKLAHOMA! FACT SHEET

Production: *Oklahoma!*
Music by: Richard Rodgers
Book and Lyrics by: Oscar Hammerstein II

Based on the play *Green Grow the Lilacs* by Lynn Riggs

Theatre: The Goodspeed
6 Main Street, East Haddam, Connecticut

Director: Jenn Thompson
Choreographer: Katie Spelman
Original Dances: Agnes de Mille
Scenic Designer: Wilson Chin
Costumer Designer: Tracy Christensen
Lighting Designer: Philip Rosenberg
Sound Designer: Jay Hilton
Wig & Hair Designer: Mark Adam Rampmeyer
Orchestrations: Dan DeLange
Music Director: Michael O'Flaherty

Principals: Rhett Guter (Curly)
Samantha Bruce (Laurey)
Terry Burrell (Aunt Eller)
Jake Swain (Will Parker)
Gizel Jimenez (Ado Annie)
C. Mingo Long (Andrew Carnes)
Matthew Curiano (Ali Hakim)
Matt Faucher (Jud Fry)

Ensemble: Kelly Berman
Morgan Cowling
Lauren Csete
Mark Deler
Tamrin Goldberg
Tripp Hampton
Olivia Nicole Hoffman
Kate Arrington Johnson (Gertie)
Howard Kaye (Ike)
Morgan McCann (Cord)
Andrew Ryan Purcell
Alex Ringler
Marco Antonio Santiago
Alex Stewart
Madison Turner

Swings: Rebecca Brudner
Aaron Patrick Craven

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Background: The original Broadway production opened on March 31, 1943. It was a box-office smash and ran for an unprecedented 2,212 performances, later enjoying award-winning revivals, national tours, foreign productions and an Academy Award-winning 1955 film adaptation. It has long been a popular choice for school and community productions. Rodgers and Hammerstein won a special Pulitzer Prize for *Oklahoma!* in 1944.

Both Rodgers and Hammerstein shared a mutual attraction to Lynn Rigg's play *Green Grow the Lilacs*. Other than the scores and the ending, the plot between the two shows is almost identical. They transformed a show based on a popular folksong into a Broadway hit. Rodgers and Hammerstein were rather unorthodox when creating *Oklahoma!*. They made a point to cast singers who could act, rather than the other way around (which happened to be the norm at the time). This musical, building on the innovations of the earlier *Show Boat*, epitomized the development of the "book musical", a musical play where the songs and dances are fully integrated into a well-made story with serious dramatic goals that are able to evoke genuine emotions.

Description: The Rodgers & Hammerstein classic that changed American musicals forever dawned at Goodspeed for the very first time. Cowboy Curly and farm girl Laurey are taking their sweet time falling in love. Can these stubborn romantics admit their feelings before it's too late? Passion, laughter and high-kicking choreography blossom in a land where the wind comes sweepin' down the plain. A legendary score—including "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," "The Surrey With the Fringe on Top" and the rousing title tune—will put you in a brand new state!

Dates: July 14- September 23

Performances: Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Thursday at 7:30 p.m., (with select performances at 2:00 p.m.), Friday at 8:00 p.m., Saturday at 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. (with select performances at 6:30 p.m.).

Tickets: Start at \$29.00. All prices subject to change based on availability.
Goodspeed Box Office (860.873.8668) or online at goodspeed.org

Special Events:

Friday Dinner Theatre Package: Includes dinner at the Gelston House (located next door to The Goodspeed) and a ticket to the 8pm performance. Only \$89!

Sunday Sips Ticket & Drink Special: Sunday, July 16, 6:30p.m. \$51 per person.

Teen Nights: July 19 & 20. 7:30p.m.; July 21, 8p.m. Each adult who buys a regular priced ticket may purchase a \$15 ticket for teen ages 13-18. Meet the cast for autographs on July 21.

Meet the Cast: A lively discussion with the cast after the Thursday evening performances on August 10 & 24 and September 7. FREE.

Lady Katherine Lunch Cruise: Wednesday, August 30. Enjoy summer on the beautiful Connecticut River! Add a leisurely cruise and sumptuous buffet aboard the Lady Katherine to your theatre ticket for just \$43. Pair an 11a.m. lunch cruise with the 2p.m. performance

Sensory-Friendly Performance: Sunday, Sept 24, 2p.m. This family-friendly performance is designed and intended for those who are on the autism spectrum or who have other sensory issues. At this performance, the theatre environment will be altered, providing a safe, friendly, comfortable and judgment-free zone that is welcoming for all. This performance is recommended for those families and caregivers who are familiar with and accepting of behaviors exhibited by some individuals with autism – and would like to bring a loved one to the theatre. [LEARN MORE](#)

40 Below Tickets: Patrons ages 21-40 can enjoy \$25 tickets for any evening performance between July 14 and 30. Must present ID at pick-up. Not available for Season Tickets. Generously funded by *The Burry Fredrik Foundation*.

Student Rush: \$15 tickets available for any evening performance, beginning at 10am on the day of the show. Must present student ID at pick-up.

Dinner Discounts: Reserve tickets for a Wednesday, Thursday, or Sunday evening performance and enjoy special dinner offers at local restaurants.

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and Instagram: [goodspeedmusicals](https://www.instagram.com/goodspeedmusicals)

[Headshots and show art available upon request: elisa.hale@goodspeed.org]

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