



NEWS RELEASE

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BRAND NEW MUSICALS ANNOUNCED FOR GOODSPEED'S 2018 TERRIS THEATRE SEASON

- The Tour-de-Force *YOU ARE HERE* by Bartram & Hill -
 - New musical adaptation of *CYRANO* in collaboration with members of the Grammy-winning THE NATIONAL -
- PLUS**
- The return of our holiday hit sweetened with even more Connecticut flavor -

EAST HADDAM, CONN., FEBRUARY 8, 2018: Goodspeed Musicals is thrilled to announce three enticing productions planned for [The Terris Theatre](#) in Chester, Conn. in 2018. First will be the inspiring *You Are Here* by Drama Desk Award nominees Bartram and Hill. This soaring musical will run May 18 – June 10. Next up will be a new musical adaptation of the enduring love story *Cyrano*. This exciting new take on the classic will be adapted by Erica Schmidt in collaboration with the indie band **The National**. *Cyrano* will run

August 3 – September 2. Finally, ***A Connecticut Christmas Carol***, a musical adaptation of the Dickens holiday classic spiced with the flavor of the Nutmeg State, returns to The Terris Theatre November 30 – December 30, 2018.

YOU ARE HERE – July 20, 1969... a man walks on the moon... and Diana, a Chicago housewife, walks out of her comfortable suburban life. Suddenly alone in a fast-changing world, she finds a series of unexpected encounters can turn one small step into a giant, life-changing leap. This intimate, hilarious and heart-breaking tour-de-force musical will leave you cheering for the resilience of the human spirit. *You Are Here* features music and lyrics by **Neil Bartram** and book by **Brian Hill**.

Bartram and Hill have collaborated extensively in the past, most notably on ***The Story of My Life***, which was produced at The Terris Theatre in 2008 before making the trip to Broadway where it was nominated for four Drama Desk Awards, including Outstanding Musical, and won a Barrymore Award for Outstanding Ensemble. Their hit musical ***The Theory of Relativity*** was a highlight of Goodspeed's 2014 Festival of New Musicals and further developed at The Terris Theater in 2015. The pair are currently developing musical adaptations of Disney's famous ***Bedknobs and Broomsticks*** and Ray Bradbury's cult classic ***Something Wicked This Way Comes*** for the stage.

You Are Here will be directed by **Sarna Lapine** who directed the acclaimed 2017 Broadway revival of ***Sunday in the Park with George***. Ms. Lapine served as Associate Director for the Broadway production of ***Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*** and as Assistant Director for ***Sondheim on Sondheim***, ***South Pacific*** and ***The Light in The Piazza***, among others.

CYRANO – The legendary romance about a proud and impassioned poet who ghostwrites love letters is rekindled in a timeless and unconventional new musical. Cyrano agrees to woo his true love, Roxanne, on behalf of another in this classic tale of unrequited love. New music by members of the Grammy Award-winning indie alternative band The National drives this story of mistaken identity, selfless courage and buried desire. Adapted by **Erica Schmidt** from *Cyrano de Bergerac* by **Edmond Rostand**, *Cyrano* will feature Music by **Aaron** and **Bryce Dessner** of The National, and Lyrics by **Matt Berninger** of The National and **Carin Besser**.

Aaron Dessner is a New York based songwriter/multi-instrumentalist/producer, best known as a member of the Grammy Award-winning indie alternative band The National. Aaron produced **Frightened Rabbit's** album *Painting Of A Panic Attack* on Atlantic Records, **Lisa Hannigan's** *At Swim* and worked as an associate producer on **Mumford & Sons'** 2015 album *Wilder Mind*.

Bryce Dessner is a member of The National and co-founder of the Brassland label, alongside **Alec Hanley Bemis** and his twin brother Aaron Dessner. Bryce contributed music to the major motion picture *The Revenant* and is curator for the MusicNOW Festival held annually for over a decade in his hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio. He has collaborated on projects as a performer and composer with some of the most

prominent names in modern music, including **Sufjan Stevens**, the **Bang on a Can All-Stars**, **Philip Glass**, **Erik Friedlander** and **Nico Muhly**.

Matt Berninger is the front man and lyricist for indie alternative bands The National and **EL VY**. The National's seventh album *Sleep Well Beast* has earned a 2018 Grammy Award for Best Alternative Album. He is currently developing a television series with Carin Besser and **Tom Berninger** based on their award-winning film *Mistaken for Strangers*.

Carin Besser co-produced and edited the film *Mistaken for Strangers*. As a writer, Ms. Besser has been co-writing lyrics for indie rock band The National since their 2007 album *Boxer*.

Cyrano will be directed by Princess Grace Award recipient Erica Schmidt whose previous directing credits include *Richard II* with **Robert Sean Leonard** at The Old Globe, Turgenev's *A Month In The Country* with **Peter Dinklage** and **Taylor Schilling** at Classic Stage Company, Dennis Kelly's *Taking Care of Baby* at Manhattan Theatre Club and the Obie Award winning *Invasion!*. Ms. Schmidt wrote and directed *All The Fine Boys* which was presented this past spring at The New Group featuring **Abigail Breslin** and **Isabelle Fuhrman**.

National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu recently approved Goodspeed Musicals for an Art Works grant for the further development of *Cyrano*.

The creative team behind *A Connecticut Christmas Carol* returns to further develop this holiday hit with hopes to move the production to The Goodspeed in the future as an annual tradition. Some of the most beloved storytellers in Connecticut history come alive for a yuletide gathering you won't forget. Famed actor and local legend William Gillette leaves his castle on the Connecticut River to adapt Dickens' holiday classic in the 1920s. Local heroes Mark Twain, P.T. Barnum and more make spirited appearances opposite Gillette's Scrooge in a highly theatrical twist on a family favorite. Custom-made for Goodspeed with all original music, here's a tuneful, heartfelt confection spiced with enough Nutmeg State flavor to sweeten your season. *A Connecticut Christmas Carol* features Book by **L J Fecho**, and Music and Lyrics by **Michael O'Flaherty**, Goodspeed's Resident Music Director for over 25 years.

L J Fecho serves as Artistic Director of Genesis Theatre in Reading, Penn. Fecho has worked for Broadway Producer Alexander H. Cohen, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Goodspeed Musicals, Hudson Guild, Manhattan Theatre Club and Fulton Theatre. His play *Just Another Illegitimate Child of John Lennon* was presented at the Philadelphia Fringe. He wrote the book for *Genesis – The Musical*, which was presented at the 2006 Goodspeed Festival of New Musicals.

Michael O'Flaherty has been Goodspeed's Resident Music Director for twenty-seven seasons. His Broadway credits include *By Jeeves*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*. His regional credits include Paper Mill Playhouse, North Shore Music Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, Ford's

Theatre, The Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Kennedy Center, Pittsburgh Public Theatre and the Smithsonian Institution. Michael served as Musical Supervisor and Cabaret Director of the Williamstown Theatre Festival for 11 years.

A Connecticut Christmas Carol will be directed by **Hunter Foster**, who co-wrote Goodspeed's ***Circus in Winter*** at The Terris Theatre in 2014. Mr. Foster was nominated for an Outer Critic Award for Best New Off-Broadway musical for ***Summer of '42***, which had a developmental production at The Terris Theatre in 2000. Hunter won a Suzie Bass Award for Best World Premiere for ***Clyde and Bonnie***. He has directed ***Million Dollar Quartet*** (Westchester Broadway, Ogunquit Playhouse, Casa Mañana, St. Louis Rep, Paper Mill Playhouse and Geva Theatre) and ***The Bridges of Madison County***, ***Clue*** and ***The Buddy Holly Story***, among many others, for Bucks County Playhouse.

For over 30 years, The Terris Theatre has been Goodspeed's home for developing *fresh, innovative* and *original* new musicals. Many new and reimagined musicals have been developed in Chester, Conn., before moving on to Broadway, Off-Broadway, National Tours and other Regional Theatres. Because this is a developmental theatre, the show can change on a day-to-day basis. New scenes are added, songs are moved, costumes are changed, dialogue is tweaked—all based on audience response and feedback.

The new THREE SHOW package includes a season ticket for all three shows at The Terris Theatre - starting at \$108. Advance season ticket packages will be available starting February 26 through the Box Office (860.873.8668), open seven days a week. Single tickets go on public sale March 26, 2018.

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAMS:

YOU ARE HERE

BRIAN HILL (Book) As an actor, Brian spent three seasons with the Shaw Festival, appeared as Raoul in the Toronto production of ***The Phantom of the Opera*** and as Joe Gillis in ***Sunset Boulevard***. For the Stratford Festival he directed Gilbert and Sullivan's ***Patience*** and was associate director for ***Man of La Mancha*** and ***Fiddler on the Roof***. He was resident director of the Toronto, Vancouver and national companies of ***Forever Plaid*** and served as associate director for the U.S. National Tours of ***Sunset Boulevard*** and ***The Sound of Music***. He was director and dramaturge of ***Come From Away*** for the CMTP, Goodspeed Musicals and NAMT. For Disney Theatrical Productions he was resident director of the Toronto and Broadway companies of ***The Lion King*** and associate director of Broadway's ***The Little Mermaid***.

With composer/lyricist Neil Bartram, he has written ***The Adventures of Pinocchio***, ***The Theory of Relativity***, (which is now available for licensing through Music Theatre International) and ***The Story of My Life***, which premiered on Broadway in 2009, earning four Drama Desk Award nominations (Outstanding Musical, Music, Lyrics, and Book). Current Bartram and Hill projects include ***Bethune*** and ***Senza Luce*** (CMTP),

Belles Soeurs, *You Are Here*, **Bedknobs and Broomsticks** (Chicago Shakespeare Theater) and **Something Wicked This Way Comes** (Delaware Theatre Company). Brian wrote the new book for the Old Globe's production of **October Sky** and the revised book for the Goodman Theatre's acclaimed production of *Brigadoon*.

NEIL BARTRAM (Music and Lyrics) Neil is the composer and lyricist of Broadway's *The Story of My Life* with book writer Brian Hill (four Drama Desk Award nominations including two for Neil – Outstanding Music and Outstanding Lyrics). His adaptation of Carlo Collodi's *The Adventures of Pinocchio* was commissioned by Chicago Shakespeare Theater and is now licensed through the Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization. His musical *The Theory of Relativity*, commissioned by Sheridan College and their Canadian Music Theatre Project, was written specifically for and about college age students and had its US premiere at Goodspeed Musicals in 2015 with its London premiere in the same year. It is now licensed worldwide by Music Theatre International. Neil also wrote the music and lyrics for **Spin**, an adaptation of the Korean film "Speedy Scandal" which was directed by **Eric Schaeffer** at the Signature Theatre, Arlington, VA. Recently Neil wrote the score for Chicago Shakespeare Theater's and Asolo Rep's productions of **Shakespeare in Love**.

Current projects include *Senza Luce* and *Bethune* (both commissioned by **Michael Rubinoff** and the CMTP), *You Are Here* (commissioned by the Signature Theatre), a musical adaptation of **Michel Tremblay's** play *Les Belles-Soeurs*, a musical based on **Ray Bradbury's** classic novel [Something Wicked This Way Comes](#) and the stage adaptation of Disney's beloved film *Bedknobs & Broomsticks*, all with book writer Brian Hill. Neil's awards include the ASCAP Foundation's Yellen Award, a Jonathan Larson Foundation Award, a Dramatists Guild Fellowship and a Dora Award. Cast albums include *The Story of My Life* and *The Theory of Relativity* (both on PS Classics).

Neil is a member of the Dramatists Guild, ASCAP, and is an alumnus of the BMI Lehman Engel Music Theatre Workshop. Neil is published by Warner/Chappell Music.

SARNA LAPINE (Director) Ms. Lapine is a freelance director based in New York. Most recently, she directed the critically acclaimed Broadway revival of *Sunday in the Park with George*, starring **Jake Gyllenhaal** and **Annaleigh Ashford**. Upcoming productions include **Kate Hamill's Little Women** (Primary Stages) and *You Are Here* (Goodspeed).

Additional credits include **Dirty Dancing** (US National Tour), *Sondheim on Sondheim* for the Boston Pops and the Los Angeles Philharmonic; Associate Director, The National Theatre's **War Horse** (North America & Japan Tour); Director, National Tour of Lincoln Center Theater's *South Pacific*; and resident director on the First National *South Pacific* Tour. On the concert front, Lapine has developed and directed projects for Encores! (City Center), the Boston Pops, Umeda Arts Theatre in Japan, the 92 Street Y and the Bucks County Playhouse, and has co-conceived and directed critically acclaimed cabaret shows for **Paolo Szot** (Café Carlyle) and the actress **Emily Bergl** (54Below & Café Carlyle). Select directing credits: **Other Desert Cities** (Theatre Aspen, Henry Award for Outstanding Direction of a Play), **Tribes** (Segal Centre of Montreal), **Hope and Gravity** by **Michael Hollinger** (Creede Repertory Theater), *Sunday in the Park with George* (Short North Stage), **Waiting for Lefty** and **The Year of Magical Thinking** (Intiman Theatre). Lapine has directed readings at Ensemble Studio Theatre, New Dramatists, BMI, Ars Nova, New York Theater Workshop, The LARK, Stella Adler, The Araca Group, Boomerang Theatre and Dixon Place, among others. She has been a teaching artist at The Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute and Fordham University.

CYRANO

ERICA SCHMIDT (Director & Adapter) Ms. Schmidt's directing credits include *Richard II* with Robert Sean Leonard (The Old Globe); *All The Fine Boys* (The New Group, wrote the play and directed); Turgenev's *A Month In The Country* with Peter Dinklage and Taylor Schilling (Classic Stage Company); Dennis Kelly's *Taking Care Of Baby* (Manhattan Theatre Club); Jonas Hassen Khemiri's *I Call My Brothers* and the Obie Award winning *Invasion!* (both for The Play Company); *Humor Abuse* (Manhattan Theatre Club, also co-creator/writer, Lucille Lortel Award); *Rent* (Tokyo); Moliere's *Imaginary Invalid*, Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Sorcerer* and Copland's *The Tender Land* (all at Bard Summer Scape); *Carnival* (The Paper Mill Playhouse); Quincy Long's *People Be Heard* (Playwrights Horizons); Gary Mitchell's *Trust* (The Play Company, Callaway Award nominee); *As You Like It* (The Public Theater/NYSF, chashama, New York International Fringe Festival Winner for Best Direction); *Debbie Does Dallas* (wrote the adaptation and directed Off-Broadway for The Araca Group); *Spanish Girl* (Second Stage Uptown). Ms. Schmidt was a Princess Grace Award recipient in 2001.

AARON DESSNER (Music) is a New York based songwriter/multi-instrumentalist/producer, best known as a member of the Grammy Award-winning band The National. Their albums *Alligator* (2005), *Boxer* (2007) and *High Violet* (2010) were named among albums of the decade in publications throughout the world. Their most recent release, *Trouble Will Find Me* (2013), debuted at #3 on both the US Billboard Chart and the UK Albums Chart. Dessner has also made a name for himself as an influential producer, working with some of the most talented and respected musicians in the rock world.

Most recently, Aaron produced Frightened Rabbit's album *Painting Of A Panic Attack* on Atlantic Records, Lisa Hannigan's *At Swim* and worked as an associate producer on Mumford & Sons' 2015 album *Wilder Mind*. He also recently produced **This Is The Kit's** *Bashed Out* (2015) which received rave reviews and was hailed by many as the band's break-through album. It was named BBC 6's 2015 Album of the Year. Other recent production credits include **The Lone Bellow's** *Then Came the Morning* (2015) and Australian band **Luluc's** album *Passerby* (2014), which was featured on many best album of the year lists.

In 2013, Aaron produced **Local Natives'** second full-length album, *Hummingbird*. Local Natives first met Aaron while on tour with The National and though they were hesitant to work with a producer at all, Local Natives ultimately felt that Aaron could be a big help in shaping their album, so they decamped to his Brooklyn studio. As Local Natives singer/guitarist **Taylor Rice** tells it, "Aaron helped capture some magical moments on this album. He really pushed us." The band's sophomore album received rave reviews and Dessner's distinctive touch as a producer won the attention of many.

Aaron also worked with Brooklyn-based singer/songwriter **Sharon Van Etten** on her album *Tramp* (2012). Sharon and Aaron spent over fourteen months working in his studio, and the end result was one of Sharon's most acclaimed release yet. On her experience working with Aaron, Sharon remarked, "He really understood my songs and the potential as to where they could go – he helped me feel comfortable taking chances."

Other production credits include **Doveman's** 2009 album *The Conformist* and the Red Hot Organization's AIDS charity compilation *Dark Was The Night* (2009), on which Aaron collaborated with his brother and bandmate Bryce. The record features exclusive recordings and collaborations from a long list of artists including **David Byrne, Arcade Fire, Sufjan Stevens, Sharon Jones, Cat Power, Grizzly Bear, My Morning**

Jacket and Spoon. *Dark was the Night* has raised over 2 million dollars for AIDS charities.

Day of the Dead, the follow-up to *Dark Was the Night*, was released in May 2016. A charity tribute album to the **Grateful Dead**, *Day of the Dead*, was created, curated and produced by Aaron and Bryce. The compilation is a wide-ranging tribute to the songwriting and experimentalism of the Dead which took four years to record, features over 60 artists from varied musical backgrounds, 59 tracks and is almost 6 hours long. All profits help fight for AIDS/ HIV and related health issues around the world through the Red Hot Organization.

Aside from his work as a producer, Aaron co-founded and curates the Eaux Claires Music & Arts Festival in Wisconsin, Haven in Copenhagen and Crossing Brooklyn Ferry, which took place at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2012 and 2013. He is also a co-curator of the bi-annual Boston Calling Music Festival.

BRYCE DESSNER (Music) is a member of The National and co-founder of the Brassland label, alongside Alec Hanley Bemis and his twin brother Aaron Dessner. Together Aaron and Bryce have collaborated on projects such *The Long Count* and music for films such as *Transpecos* and *Big Sur*.

Apart from his regular collaborations with his brother, Bryce alone contributed music to the major motion picture *The Revenant* and is curator for the MusicNOW Festival held annually for over a decade in his hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio. He has collaborated on projects as a performer and composer with some of the most prominent names in modern music including Sufjan Stevens, the Bang on a Can All-Stars, Philip Glass, Erik Friedlander and Nico Muhly.

Increasingly, Bryce has gained renown for his solo compositions, and is quickly becoming a fixture of the programming and commissioning schedules at classical concert halls and art centers in all the world's major cities.

MATT BERNINGER (Lyrics) is the front man and lyricist for indie bands The National and **EL VY**. He is currently developing a television series with Carin Besser and **Tom Berninger** based on their award-winning film *Mistaken for Strangers*.

CARIN BESSER has been co-writing lyrics for indie alternative band The National since their 2007 album *Boxer*. She also edited and co-produced the documentary *Mistaken for Strangers*. She lives in Los Angeles with husband Matt, daughter Isla, and brother-in-law Tom.

A CONNECTICUT CHRISTMAS CAROL

MICHAEL O'FLAHERTY (Music & Lyrics) is completing his 27th season as Goodspeed's Resident Music Director, with more than 80 productions to his credit. His original musical *Genesius* was included in Goodspeed's New Works Festival in 2008 and later had a showcase production in New York City. His holiday musical *A Connecticut Christmas Carol* was developed at The Terris Theater last season. He has music directed at Paper Mill Playhouse, North Shore Music Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, Ford's Theatre, The Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Kennedy Center, Pittsburgh Public Theatre and the Smithsonian Institution. Broadway credits include *By Jeeves*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *A Streetcar Named*

Desire. He was Musical Supervisor and Cabaret Director of the Williamstown Theatre Festival for 11 years.

L J FECHO (Book) is the Artistic Director of Genesis Theatre in Reading, Penn. He has worked for producer Alexander H. Cohen, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Goodspeed Musicals, Hudson Guild, Manhattan Theatre Club and Fulton Theatre. He is a member of producer Ken Davenport's Mastermind Group. His play *Just Another Illegitimate Child of John Lennon* was presented at the Philadelphia Fringe. He wrote the book for *Genesis – The Musical*, which was presented at the 2008 Goodspeed Festival of New Musicals and then as an Equity Showcase. In addition to *A Connecticut Christmas Carol* which debuted at The Terris Theater in 2017, Fecho wrote a Pennsylvania Dutch version of *A Christmas Carol* with Michael O'Flaherty, titled *The Belsnickel Scrooge*, which was presented at Genesis Theatre.

HUNTER FOSTER (Director) A director, writer and actor, he was the librettist for two new musicals that made their world premiere at The Terris Theatre: *Summer of '42* and *The Circus in Winter*. Mr. Foster directed last season's developmental production of the original musical *A Connecticut Christmas Carol*. He is also an Artistic Associate at the Bucks County Playhouse, where he has directed *Clue*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Company*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *The Buddy Holly Story* (2016 & 2017), *National Pastime*, *The Rocky Horror Show* (2013, 2014, 2016 and 2017), *Summer of '42* and *It's a Wonderful Life*. He most recently directed the world premiere of the new musical *One Hit Wonder* for the University of Michigan. Other directing credits include *The Foreigner*, *Cabaret*, *My Fair Lady* (Cape Playhouse); *Grease* (North Carolina Theatre); *Spamalot* (Casa Mañana); and he has directed productions of *Million Dollar Quartet* for The Paper Mill Playhouse, Geva Theatre, Ogunquit Playhouse, Gateway Playhouse, St. Louis Rep, Center Rep. and the Westchester Broadway Theatre. Other book writing credits include the musicals *Jasper in Deadland* (Prospect theatre, 5th Ave.), *Clyde and Bonnie: A Folktale* (New York Musical Theatre Festival, Aurora Theatre), *The Hollow* (Signature Theatre) and *Blue Ridge Sky*. Hunter is a graduate of the University of Michigan. Hunterfosterofficial.com

Under the leadership of Executive Director Michael Gennaro, Goodspeed Musicals is dedicated to the preservation, development and advancement of musical theatre and is the first theatre in the nation to receive two Tony Awards (for outstanding achievement). 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. 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, and official auto sponsor Hoffman Audi. Goodspeed is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development with support from the Connecticut Office of the Arts.

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