

GOODSPEED TO HONOR THREE-TIME TONY AWARD-WINNING COMPOSER AND LYRICIST JASON ROBERT BROWN

*On June 8th Jason Robert Brown will be presented with
The Goodspeed Award for Outstanding Contribution to Musical Theatre
The event will culminate in an exclusive live performance by the honoree*

Goodspeed Musicals is thrilled to announce that the Award-winning Composer and Lyricist **Jason Robert Brown** will be the latest recipient of *The Goodspeed Award for Outstanding Contribution to Musical Theatre*.

Executive Director Michael Gennaro shared, “Goodspeed is delighted to bestow this honor upon such an extraordinary artist - one of the most esteemed talents of musical theater today. His exceptional work is marked by a unique wit, style, energy and finesse. Jason Robert Brown exemplifies all that the Goodspeed Award celebrates.”

Mr. Brown is a skilled composer, lyricist, conductor, arranger, orchestrator, director and performer – best known for his dazzling scores to several of the most renowned musicals of his generation, including the generation-defining *The Last Five Years*, his debut song cycle *Songs for a New World*, and the seminal *Parade* written with Alfred Uhry, for which he won the 1999 Tony Award for Best Score. Jason’s score for *The Bridges of Madison County*, a musical adapted with Marsha Norman and directed by Bartlett Sher received two Tony Awards (for Best Score and Orchestrations). In addition, Brown’s work has been showcased in the Goodspeed Musicals productions of **13** which went on to Broadway and London’s West End and *My Paris*, both at The Terris Theatre.

Jason Robert Brown will be honored on June 8, 2019 as Broadway luminaries and arts supporters gather for Goodspeed Musicals’ gala event to support its New Works Initiatives. A much-anticipated annual event saluting the best in musical theatre, the Goodspeed Gala has become the place to be each summer. The Honorary Committee includes **Georgia Stitt**, Chair; **Tony Danza**, **Kurt Deutsch**, **Robert Horn**, **Marsha Norman** and **Alfred Uhry**. The evening will include cocktails, dinner, silent and live auctions and entertainment including a special performance by the honoree. The event will be held at The Riverhouse at Goodspeed Station, 55 Bridge Street, East Haddam, CT. Sponsors for this year’s gala include Hoffman Auto Group and Viking River Cruises.

“Nobody does the work of supporting and celebrating musical theater with as much love, enthusiasm and consistency as Goodspeed Musicals, and nobody’s been doing it for longer. I am especially moved to be this year’s honoree at the Goodspeed Gala, helping to continue their amazing work, and getting to do it with some very fine musicians and singers. The first time I worked at Goodspeed was in 1994, and in these past twenty-five years (!), I’ve been thrilled every time I’ve come to this magical corner of

Connecticut. I can't wait for June and an opportunity to make some great music and celebrate the incredible legacy of Goodspeed Musicals," Brown stated.

The New York Times referred to Jason as "a leading member of a new generation of composers who embody high hopes for the American musical." Brown has been hailed by the Philadelphia Inquirer as "one of Broadway's smartest and most sophisticated songwriters since Stephen Sondheim." His outstanding music has been enjoyed the world over.

Originally designed for and presented to Ira Gershwin more than 20 years ago, this is Goodspeed's most prestigious honor. Goodspeed is pleased to bestow this annual award upon a member of the theatre community in recognition of their extraordinary talent. Previous honorees include **Julie Andrews, Martin Charnin, Kristin Chenoweth, Sue Frost, Ira Gershwin, Sheldon Harnick, Jerry Herman, William Ivey Long, Thomas Meehan, Michael P. Price, Chita Rivera, Gerald Schoenfeld, Stephen Schwartz, Susan Stroman, Charles Strouse, Tommy Tune, Tony Walton and Paul Williams.**

For additional information regarding this event, please contact Mary Miko mmiko@goodspeed.org or by phone 860.873.8664, x368

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ABOUT JASON ROBERT BROWN:

JASON ROBERT BROWN is the ultimate multi-hyphenate – an equally skilled composer, lyricist, conductor, arranger, orchestrator, director and performer – best known for his dazzling scores to several of the most renowned musicals of his generation, including the generation-defining "**The Last Five Years**", his debut song cycle "**Songs for a New World**", and the seminal "**Parade**", for which he won the 1999 Tony Award for Best Score.

JASON ROBERT BROWN has been hailed as "one of Broadway's smartest and most sophisticated songwriters since **Stephen Sondheim**" (Philadelphia Inquirer), and his "extraordinary, jubilant theater music" (Chicago Tribune) has been heard all over the world, whether in one of the hundreds of productions of his musicals every year or in his own incendiary live performances. The New York Times refers to Jason as "a leading member of a new generation of composers who embody high hopes for the American musical." Jason's score for *The Bridges of Madison County*, a musical adapted with Marsha Norman from the bestselling novel, directed by Bartlett Sher and starring **Kelli O'Hara** and **Steven Pasquale**, received two Tony Awards (for Best

Score and Orchestrations). *Honeymoon In Vegas*, based on **Andrew Bergman's** film, opened on Broadway in 2015 following a triumphant production at Paper Mill Playhouse. A film version of his epochal Off-Broadway musical *The Last Five Years* was released in 2015, starring **Anna Kendrick** and **Jeremy Jordan** and directed by **Richard LaGravenese**. His major musicals as composer and lyricist include: *13*, written with **Robert Horn** and **Dan Elish**, which began its life in Los Angeles in 2007 and opened on Broadway in 2008 (and was subsequently directed by the composer for its West End premiere in 2012); *The Last Five Years*, which was cited as one of Time Magazine's 10 Best of 2001 and won Drama Desk Awards for Best Music and Best Lyrics (and was subsequently directed by the composer in its record-breaking Off-Broadway run at Second Stage Theatre in 2013); *Parade*, written with Alfred Uhry and directed by **Harold Prince**, which premiered at Lincoln Center Theatre in 1998, and subsequently won both the Drama Desk and New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards for Best New Musical, as well as garnering Jason the Tony Award for Original Score; and *Songs for a New World*, a theatrical song cycle directed by **Daisy Prince**, which played Off-Broadway in 1995, and has since been seen in hundreds of productions around the world, including a celebrated revival at New York's City Center in the summer of 2018. *Parade* was also the subject of a major revival directed by **Rob Ashford**, first at London's Donmar Warehouse and then at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. His orchestral adaptation of E.B. White's novel *The Trumpet of the Swan* premiered at the Kennedy Center with **John Lithgow** and the National Symphony Orchestra, and was recorded for PS Classics. Future projects include a new chamber musical created with Daisy Prince and **Jonathan Marc Sherman** called *The Connector*; an adaptation of Lillian Lee's *Farewell My Concubine*, created with **Kenneth Lin** and **Moisés Kaufman**; and a collaboration with **Billy Crystal**, **Amanda Green**, **Lowell Ganz** and **Babaloo Mandel** on a musical of *Mr. Saturday Night*. Jason is the winner of the 2018 Louis Auchincloss Prize, the 2002 Kleban Award for Outstanding Lyrics and the 1996 Gilman & Gonzalez-Falla Foundation Award for Musical Theatre. Jason's songs, including the cabaret standard "Stars and the Moon," have been performed and recorded by **Ariana Grande**, **Audra McDonald**, **Kristin Chenoweth**, **Billy Porter**, **Betty Buckley**, **Renée Fleming**, **Jon Hendricks** and many others, and his song "Someone To Fall Back On" was featured in the Walden Media film, *Bandslam*.

As a soloist or with his band **The Caucasian Rhythm Kings**, Jason has performed concerts around the world. For the past four years (and ongoing), his monthly sold-out performances at New York's SubCulture have featured many of the music and theater world's most extraordinary performers. His newest collection, *How We React and How We Recover*, was released in June, 2018 on Ghostlight Records. His previous solo album, *Wearing Someone Else's Clothes*, was named one of Amazon.com's best of 2005, and is available from Sh-K-Boom Records. A concert film featuring **Anika Noni Rose** was broadcast on PBS. His collaboration with singer **Lauren Kennedy**, *Songs of Jason Robert Brown*, is available on PS Classics. Jason's piano sonata, *Mr. Broadway* was commissioned and premiered by **Anthony De Mare** at Carnegie Hall. Jason is also the composer of the incidental music for the Broadway revival of *You Can't Take It With You*, David Lindsay-Abaire's *Kimberly Akimbo* and *Fuddy Meers*, and Kenneth Lonergan's *The Waverly Gallery*, and he was a Tony Award nominee for his contributions to the score of *Urban Cowboy the Musical*. He has also contributed music to the hit Nickelodeon television series, *The Wonder Pets* as well as *Sesame Street*. Jason spent ten years teaching at the USC School of Dramatic Arts, and has also taught at Harvard University, Princeton University and Emerson College.

For the new musical *Prince of Broadway*, a celebration of the career of Harold Prince, Jason was the musical supervisor and arranger. Other New York credits as conductor and arranger include *Urban Cowboy the Musical*

on Broadway; ***Dinah Was***, off-Broadway and on national tour; ***When Pigs Fly*** off-Broadway; William Finn's ***A New Brain*** at Lincoln Center Theater; the 1992 tribute to Stephen Sondheim at Carnegie Hall (recorded by RCA Victor); Yoko Ono's *New York Rock*, at the WPA Theatre; and Michael John LaChiusa's ***The Petrified Prince*** at the Public Theatre. Jason orchestrated Andrew Lippa's ***John and Jen***, Off-Broadway at Lamb's Theatre. Additionally, Jason served as the orchestrator and arranger of Charles Strouse and Lee Adams's score for a proposed musical of ***Star Wars***. Jason has conducted and created arrangements and orchestrations for **Liza Minnelli**, **John Pizzarelli**, and **Michael Feinstein**, among many others.

Jason studied composition at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y., with **Samuel Adler**, **Christopher Rouse**, and **Joseph Schwantner**. He lives with his wife, composer **Georgia Stitt**, and their daughters in New York City. Jason is a proud member of the Dramatists Guild and the American Federation of Musicians Local 802. Visit him on the web at www.jasonrobertbrown.com