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Brandon Victor Dixon and Steven Pasquale
join
Sutton Foster
in
The Wild Party

Book, Music and Lyrics by Andrew Lippa
Directed by Leigh Silverman; Choreographed by Sonya Tayeh

The Final Production of the 2015 *Encores! Off-Center* Season
Jeanine Tesori, Artistic Director; Chris Fenwick, Music Director

July 15 – 18 at New York City Center

New York, N.Y., June 10, 2015—**Brandon Victor Dixon** and **Steven Pasquale** will join the previously announced **Sutton Foster** in **Andrew Lippa's *The Wild Party***, running July 15 – 18, 2015 at New York City Center. (**NOTE:** Brandon Victor Dixon will replace the previously announced Joshua Henry, who has had a scheduling conflict.) The production will be directed by **Leigh Silverman**, with choreography by **Sonya Tayeh**. **Jeanine Tesori** is the Artistic Director of *Encores! Off-Center* and **Chris Fenwick** is Music Director.

The complete cast for *The Wild Party* is as follows: John Ellison Conlee, Brandon Victor Dixon, Sutton Foster, Kimiko Glenn, Steven Pasquale, Ciara Renée, and Miriam Shor, with Penelope Armstead-Williams, James Brown III, Rachel DeBenedet, Raymond J. Lee, Kenita Miller, Talene Monahan, Sydney Morton, Clifton Oliver, Charlie Pollock, Britton Smith, Ryan Steele, and Samantha Sturm.

Andrew Lippa's *The Wild Party*, adapted from the Jazz Age narrative poem by Joseph Moncure March, is the story of one tragic, decadent night in a Manhattan apartment shared by Queenie (**Sutton Foster**) and her menacing lover Burrs (**Steven Pasquale**). The couple decides to throw the party to end all parties, where Queenie meets a handsome stranger (**Brandon Victor Dixon**) who wants to lure her away. The show opened at Manhattan Theatre Club on February 24, 2000 and played 54 performances. (**NOTE:** Steven Pasquale made his New York stage debut and understudied the role of Burrs in the MTC production of *The Wild Party*.)

The Wild Party is the final production of New York City Center's acclaimed ***Encores! Off-Center*** series, which is returning for a third season of landmark Off-Broadway musicals. The season will open on June 24 with ***A New Brain*** starring **Jonathan Groff**, followed by ***Little Shop of Horrors***, starring **Jake**

Gyllenhaal, Ellen Greene, and Taran Killam, playing for three performances on July 1 and 2.

THE CAST

John Ellison Conlee (Eddie)'s theater credits include *The (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence* (Obie Award), *Murder Ballad*, *The Full Monty* (Tony Award nomination), *The Constant Wife*, *1776*, *The Madrid*, *Pig Farm*, *Luther*, *The Butter and Egg Man*, *Once in a Lifetime*, and many others. His recent film and TV work includes *When I Live My Life Over Again*; Hal Hartley's *My America* and *Ned Rifle*; "Nurse Jackie"; "Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt"; and "Boardwalk Empire" (SAG Award nomination). John has also had recurring roles on "Parks and Recreation" and "Brotherhood."

Brandon Victor Dixon (Black) originated the role of Berry Gordy in Broadway's *Motown: The Musical* (Grammy nomination for Best Musical Theater Album, Drama League Award nomination). A graduate of Columbia University, Brandon starred in the *Encores!* productions of *House of Flowers* and *Cotton Club Parade* and originated the role of Adult Simba in the Cheetah Company of *The Lion King*. Brandon then starred as Harpo in *The Color Purple* on Broadway, for which he received a Tony Award nomination. Off-Broadway credits include *The Scottsboro Boys* (Olivier, Lucille Lortel, Drama League, and Outer Critics Circle Award nominations) and *Ray Charles Live!* (Ovation Award nomination). His television credits include "The Good Wife," "Law & Order: Criminal Intent," and "One Life to Live."

Sutton Foster (Queenie) currently stars in Darren Star's TV Land series "Younger." She starred on Broadway as the title character in *Violet* (Tony, Drama Desk, Drama League and Outer Critic Circle award nominations), a role she originated in the *Encores! Off-Center* production. Other Broadway credits include *Anything Goes* (Tony Award), *Shrek*, *Young Frankenstein*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Little Women*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Tony Award), *Les Misérables*, *Annie*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* and *Grease*. Off-Broadway: *Trust* (Second Stage) and *Anyone Can Whistle* (City Center *Encores!*). She has traveled all over the United States and internationally with music director Michael Rafter, performing songs from her two albums: *Wish* and *An Evening with Sutton Foster: Live at the Café Carlyle*. On television she starred in Amy Sherman Palladino's "Bunheads" (Critics' Choice Television Award nomination), and made appearances on "Psych," "Royal Pains," "Law & Order: SVU," "Flight of the Conchords," and "Sesame Street." She holds an honorary doctorate from Ball State University, where she also teaches.

Kimiko Glenn (Mae) is best known for playing Soso in the Netflix original series "Orange is the New Black" (SAG Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series). Her theater credits include the first national tour of *Spring Awakening*, *Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots* (La Jolla Playhouse), and *Love's Labour's Lost* (Shakespeare in the Park). She has a recurring role on the F/X comedy series "Married," and just wrapped the film *Nerve* for Lionsgate.

Steven Pasquale (Burrs) made his NY Stage debut in the original MTC production of *The Wild Party*. He most recently starred in *Carousel* at Chicago Lyric Opera and on Broadway in *The Bridges of Madison County* (Drama Desk, Drama League nominations). Other New York credits include *Far From Heaven*, *The Intelligent Homosexual...*, *A Soldier's Play*, *A Man of No Importance*, *Beautiful Child*, *Spinning Into Butter* and *The Spitfire Grill*. He originated the role of Fabrizio in *The Light in the Piazza* (Seattle's Intiman Theatre). Television credits include "Rescue Me," "Do No Harm," Sofia Coppola's "Platinum," and "The Good Wife." He is the executive producer, director and star of the DirecTV comedy "Almost There" and is currently filming the highly anticipated F/X show "American Crime Story." His solo album, *Somethin' Like Love*, was released in 2009.

Ciara Renée (Kate) starred as the Leading Player in the recent Broadway revival of *Pippin*. Renée also appeared in *Big Fish* on Broadway. She starred as Esmeralda in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* at the Paper Mill Playhouse, and has been seen in productions of *Sondheim on Sondheim*, *Dreamgirls*,

Carousel, and *Passing Strange*, among others. Ciara will be playing Hawk Girl in the upcoming CW series "Legends of Tomorrow."

Miriam Shor (Madelaine True) began her career with several acclaimed Off-Broadway productions, including *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* by John Cameron Mitchell. She reprised her role of Yitzhak in the critically-lauded 2001 film adaptation. Miriam has appeared on television in "The West Wing," "Damages," "Mildred Pierce," and "The Good Wife." She can currently be seen as Diana Trout on TV Land's "Younger" (created by Darren Star) and she'll next appear in the film *Puerto Ricans in Paris* opposite Luiz Guzman when it makes its world premiere at the LA Film Festival.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Andrew Lipppa (Music, Lyrics, and Book) wrote the theatrical oratorio *I Am Harvey Milk*, which received its New York premiere in October at Lincoln Center with Kristin Chenoweth and Mr. Lipppa as Harvey Milk. *Life of the Party*, an evening celebrating 20 years of his work, premiered at London's award-winning Menier Chocolate Factory in June 2014. He also wrote the Drama Desk-nominated music and lyrics for the Broadway musical *Big Fish* as well as the music for Aaron Sorkin's Broadway play *The Farnsworth Invention*. Other musicals include *The Addams Family* (music and lyrics), *A Little Princess* (music), *john & jen* (music/book), *Asphalt Beach* (music and lyrics) and *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (additional music/lyrics and arrangements). He is currently working on a musical adaptation of Jules Feiffer's book *The Man in the Ceiling* with Mr. Feiffer. Accolades include a Tony and Grammy nomination, the Gilman/Gonzalez-Falla Theater Foundation Award, ASCAP's Richard Rodgers/New Horizons Award, The Drama Desk and The Outer Critics Circle Award.

Leigh Silverman (Director), a two-time Obie winner, directed the *Encores! Off-Center* and Broadway productions of Jeanine Tesori's *Violet* (Tony Award nomination). Her other Broadway credits include *Chinglish* and *Well*. Recent Off-Broadway credits include *Kung Fu* and *Golden Child* (Signature Theater); *In The Wake, No Place To Go*; *Yellow Face* (Pulitzer finalist) and *Well (The Public Theater)*; *the (curious case of the) Watson Intelligence* (Pulitzer finalist), *The Call, Go Back To Where You Are*; and *Blue Door* (Playwrights Horizons); *From Up Here* and *The Madrid* (MTC) and *Coraline* (MCC).

Sonya Tayeh (Choreographer)'s theater credits include *Head Over Heels* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Kung Fu* (Signature Theatre), *The Last Goodbye* (Old Globe, Williamstown), *Spring Awakening* (San Jose Repertory Theatre) and *Walk For Water* (Cirque du Soleil). An Emmy Award nominee for "So You Think You Can Dance," Sonya has also worked with Madonna, Florence and the Machine, Kylie Minogue and Miley Cyrus. Her concert dance credits include *Lamentation Variation* (Martha Graham Dance Company); *Wave, Next Wave* and *Quartet* (Los Angeles Ballet); and *The Root of Me, Endurance to Move*, and *Battles* (Tayeh Dance Company). She has won many accolades for her choreography, including the Lucille Lortel and Obie awards for her work on David Henry Hwang's *Kung Fu*.

Chris Fenwick (*Encores! Off-Center* Music Director) is currently the music director of *Fun Home* on Broadway. He music directed the original productions of Michael John LaChiusa's *Giant, Los Otros, Queen of the Mist*, and *See What I Wanna See*. Broadway credits include *Rocky, Grease, Les Liaisons Dangereuses, The Pajama Game, Wonderful Town*, and *Elaine Stritch at Liberty*. Other credits include the Off-Broadway productions of *Hello Again, Here Lies Jenny, Road Show, Happiness*, and *Mother Courage*, and concerts with Patti LuPone at Carnegie Hall, Ravinia Festival, and many more. Chris was music director of the *Encores! Off-Center* productions of *Pump Boys and Dinettes; Faust; tick, tick...BOOM!; I'm Getting My Act Together...;* and *The Cradle Will Rock*.

Jeanine Tesori (*Encores! Off-Center* Artistic Director) won the Tony Award for Best Original Score for *Fun*

Home, a nominee for the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and the winner of the 2015 Tony Award for Best Musical. She composed the scores to the Broadway productions of *Violet; Caroline, or Change* (2004 Tony nomination for Best Original Score); *Shrek the Musical* (Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations for her music); and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. Her Off-Broadway musical *Violet* (Obie Award, New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Musical and Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Musical) was presented as a one-night only event during the *Encores! Off-Center* inaugural season, and moved to Broadway last season. Jeanine has written music for several plays, including *Twelfth Night* at Lincoln Center (Tony nomination for best score), John Guare's *A Free Man of Color* and Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*, which was part of the 2006 Shakespeare in the Park season and starred Meryl Streep. Her film scores include *Nights in Rodanthe*, *Every Day* and *You're Not You*. Her opera, *A Blizzard on Marblehead Neck* (libretto by Tony Kushner) premiered at Glimmerglass Festival in 2011 and her newest opera, *The Lion, the Unicorn and Me*, had its world premiere run at D.C.'s Washington National Opera in December 2013. She is a lecturer in music at Yale University.

New York City Center's *Encores! Off-Center* series has been called "a summer theater highlight" by Charles Isherwood of *The New York Times* and "my favorite new arts institution" by Linda Winer of *Newsday*. The series presents Off-Broadway musicals that pushed creative boundaries when they were first produced. Filtered through the lens of today's artists, these shows are presented not as historical documents but as living, vital works that continue to resonate with audiences. The series also features **The Lobby Project**, a series of **free** performances, conversations and readings by groundbreaking artists, poets, authors, and performers that takes place in City Center's grand tier lobby one hour before the mainstage performance. The Lobby Project events place each musical in the context of its legacy and provide insights into the work the audience is about to experience. (**NOTE:** see the list of *The Wild Party* Lobby Project events below.)

New York City Center gratefully acknowledges the *Encores! Off-Center* Founding Sponsors, Stacey and Eric Mindich and Stacy Bash-Polley; Series Sponsor, American Express; Major Supporters, Nathalie and Pablo Salame; with additional support provided by The Frederick Loewe Foundation; Paula and Ira Resnick; Alec Stais and Elissa Burke; and the Stephanie and Fred Shuman Fund for *Encores!*

The Lobby Project is sponsored by The Frederick Loewe Foundation.

New York City Center (Arlene Shuler, President & CEO) has played a defining role in the cultural life of the city since 1943. It was Manhattan's first performing arts center, dedicated by Mayor Fiorello La Guardia with a mission to make the best in music, theater, and dance accessible to all audiences. Today, City Center is home to many distinguished companies, including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, City Center's Principal Dance Company, as well as Manhattan Theatre Club; a roster of renowned national and international visiting artists; and its own critically acclaimed and popular programs. The Tony-honored *Encores!* musical theater series has been hailed as "one of the very best reasons to be alive in New York." In summer 2013, City Center launched *Encores! Off-Center*, a series that features landmark Off-Broadway musicals filtered through the lens of today's most innovative artists. Dance has been integral to the theater's mission from the start — and dance programs, including the annual *Fall for Dance* Festival, remain central to City Center's identity. Vital partnerships with arts organizations including Jazz at Lincoln Center and London's Sadler's Wells Theatre enhance City Center's programmatic offerings. City Center is dedicated to providing educational opportunities to New York City students and teachers through programs such as *Encores! In Schools* and the Young People's Dance Series. Special workshops cater to families, seniors, and other groups, while events such as the *Fall for Dance* DanceTalk series offer learning opportunities to the general public. In October 2011, City Center completed an extensive renovation project to revitalize and modernize its historic theater.

The Wild Party will play five performances from July 15-18, 2015 according to the following schedule:

Wednesday, July 15 and Thursday, July 16 at 7:30 pm; Friday, July 17 at 8 pm; and Saturday, July 18 at 2 and 8 pm. Tickets start at \$25 and can be purchased at the New York City Center Box Office (West 55th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues), through CityTix® at 212-581-1212, or online at www.NYCityCenter.org.

Program and Artists subject to change.

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LOBBY PROJECT CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Wild Party

These pre-show lessons, conversations, and performances will take place in City Center's beautiful Grand Tier lobby one hour before curtain and are free for that evening's ticket holders. Each Lobby Project event will be 45 minutes long.

On Decadence

When: Weds July 15 at 6:30pm

*Dec-a-dence (dekədəns): from French *décadence*, from medieval Latin *decadentia*; luxurious self-indulgence, related to decay.* The experimental performing arts masterminds at **theatreMAMA** (whose clients include *Pippin*, *Chicago*, and *Blue Man Group*) will create an evening of decadent indulgence—from sinfully rich Myzel's chocolate to exotic tear-away costumes to a special celebrity guest appearance. Come ready to be surprised, and leave your good manners at the door.

Dance with Sonya Tayeh

When: Thurs July 16 at 6:30pm

So You Think You Can Dance staple **Sonya Tayeh's** method of teaching is as searingly powerful as her choreography. This Lobby Project event will offer a rare glimpse into Tayeh's creative process; she'll discuss how she developed the choreography for *The Wild Party* and lead audience members through some of the steps. Don't wear your strappy heels to this one!

1920s Mixtape

When: Fri July 17 at 7pm

Songwriter, performer, and *Off-Center* alum **Lorenzo Wolff** will lead a group of top-tier jazz musicians as they take on classic songs ranging from grunge to classical to bubblegum pop and reimagine them through the musical lens of the 1920s.

The Evolution of Social Dance

When: Sat July 18 at 1pm

The 1920s and 1930s marked a cataclysmic shift in how Americans socialized through dance. With the growing popularity of jazz music came a style of dance that burst away from the formalized waltzes and foxtrots of the day—and with jazz came social spaces where people of different races and social classes interacted freely. In this dance lecture/lesson, choreographers **Torya Beard** and **Ayodele Casel** will use movement to lead audience members through the evolution of the dance form.

Andrew Lippa: Stories and Lost Songs

When: Sat July 18 at 7pm

Andrew Lippa—the triple-threat bookwriter, composer, and lyricist of *The Wild Party*—will appear in conversation with *Encores! Off-Center* Artistic Director **Jeanine Tesori** to talk about how he came to write the musical. Lippa will also perform selected material written for *The Wild Party* that didn't make it into the final production.