

Tuesday, September 9, 2008

Reichard, Colella, Lewis & More Set for NAMT Festival of New Musicals

By Broadway.com Staff



Norm Lewis

Directors and preliminary casting have been set for eight shows to be presented at the National Alliance for Musical Theatre's 20th annual Festival of New Musicals. This industry-only event will be held at New World Stages on October 20 and 21. The lineup so far is as follows:

Barnstormer

Book and lyrics by Cheryl Davis, music by Douglas Cohen, directed by Jerry Dixon

Cast: Kenita Miller, Norm Lewis, Tina Fabrique, Stu James, C.E. Smith, Glenn Turner, Rema Webb

Before Amelia Earhart, there was Bessie Coleman, the first black aviatrix who rose from the cotton fields of Texas and the barbershops of Chicago to finally conquer the skies of France. Her brief but dynamic life inspired the disenfranchised to pursue their dreams, including her own nephew who became a Tuskegee Airman.

Beatsville

Music and lyrics by Wendy Wilf, book by Glenn Slater, directed by Robert Longbottom

Cast: Todd Buonopane, Alli Mauzey

In Greenwich Village, 1959, tragically square Walter Paisley find that his clay figures, sculpted nudes, and papier-mâché busts bring him the acceptance he desperately yearns for. But what if the world discovered that Walter's body of work consists of actual bodies? *Beatsville* is described as "a bebop-inflected black comedy."

The Cuban and the Redhead

By Robert Bartley and Danny Whitman, directed by Robert Bartley

Cast: Jenn Colella (Lucy), Tony Yazbeck (Desi), Eileen Galindo, Adinah Alexander, Michelle Blakely, Jessica Carter, Hattie Davis, Morgan James Jay Russell, Tim Salamandyk, Kirsten Wyatt

Escaping the bloodshed of his native Cuba, a young boy sets sail on a journey that leads him all the way to Hollywood and into the arms of a fiery, redheaded movie star named Lucille Ball. Desi and Lucy put their money, their trust and their dreams on the line in a gamble to save their marriage, risking it all on an untested medium called television. (This work was formerly known as *Dance With Me*).

The Legend of Stagecoach Mary

By Thomas Mizer and Curtis Moore, directed by Christopher Gatelli

Cast: Danielle Lee Greaves (Mary), Sara Chase, Madeleine Doherty, J. Austin Eyer, Josh Henry, Steve Kazee, Telly Leung, J. Elaine Marcos, Jason Patrick Sands, Nick Wyman

Ex-slave Mary Fields turns the idea of the real Wild West hero on its head when she travels to 1880s Montana to find freedom, adventure and her long-lost best friend. Along the way, she discovers a gaggle of square-dancing nuns and a town full of cowboys in need of a little lesson in the American Dream.

Ordinary Days

By Adam Gwon, directed by Matt Toronto

Cast: Jared Gertner, Kate Shindle, Kate Wetherhead

When Deb loses her most precious possession—the notes to her graduate thesis—she unwittingly starts a chain of events that turns the ordinary days of four New Yorkers into something extraordinary.



Pamela's First Musical

Book by Wendy Wasserstein, music by Cy Coleman, lyrics by David Zippel, directed by David Zippel

Cast: Daniel Reichard, Lila Coogan (Pamela), Steven Bogardus

Pamela's mother has passed away, and she lives with her father and two brothers who don't understand her. Pamela's active fantasy life and infatuation with Broadway cast CDs keeps her from being too sad or lonely. On her 11th birthday, she learns that her father is about to re-marry a physical trainer with

Daniel Reichard a perky and perfect teenage daughter of her own. Just when Pamela thinks her entire world is going to crash, her eccentric Aunt Louise, a New York fashion designer, arrives and sweeps her off to New York City and her first Broadway musical.

See Rock City & Other Destinations

Book and lyrics by Adam Mathias, music by Brad Alexander, directed by Kevin Del Aguila

Cast: Jill Abromovitz, John Jellison, Cassie Wooley

Winner of the 2008 Richard Rodgers Award for Musical Theatre, *See Rock City & Other Destinations* ventures to tourist destinations across America, mapping out stories of sightseers who need to get a little lost in order to find themselves.

The Yellow Wood

Book by Michelle Elliott, music by Danny Larsen, lyrics by Elliot and Larsen, directed by B.D. Wong

Cast: Jason Tam (Adam), Randy Blair, Bob De Dea, MaryAnn Hu, Diana Huey

Seventeen-year-old Adam is frantically trying to memorize Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken" before English, but because he didn't take his Ritalin, he can't get much farther than the "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood..." before a fantastic wood begins coming to life in his school. Adam struggles to get beyond his ADD, his cultural heritage and his unique but unruly imagination.