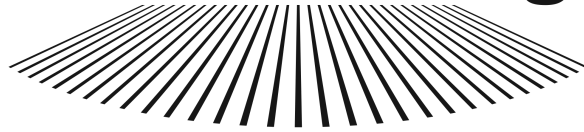


The Western Stage



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT

Cheryl Worthy

Email: CWorthy@hartnell.edu

831 755-6816

Written by Kathy Cusson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BANDSTAND

Music by Richard Oberacker

Book and Lyrics by Robert Taylor and Richard Oberacker

Originally Produced on Broadway by:

Tom Smedes, Gabrielle Palitz, Terry Schnuck, Roger Horchow, Peter Stern, Michael Palitz, Jane Dubin, David Lyons, Sarah Perot, James L. Nederlander, James & Catherine Berges, Darren Deverna & Jere Harris, Jeff & Ellen Adler, Nancy & Randy Best, Deep End Productions, Patty Baker, Terry D. Loftis/Scott D. Huffman, Independent Presenters Network/Charles & Lisa Siegel, Rosie Gunther McCooe/J. Scott & Sylvia G. Bechtel, Roy Putrino/Heather Shields, Diane & John Kalishman/Alison & John Ferring and The Shubert Organization in association with Paper Mill Playhouse

Finding salvation in a song – a powerful story of music, survival, and the unbreakable bonds forged in battle that will move you to tears and lift your spirit with its authentic 1940s big band sound!

THE STORY:

Set in 1945, "Bandstand" follows Donny Novitski, a war veteran and talented musician who dreams of winning a national swing band competition with his fellow veterans. Haunted by the horrors of war and struggling to reintegrate into civilian life, Donny and his band members find that coming home is more challenging than they ever imagined. When singer Julia Trojan, a war widow seeking answers to her own painful questions, joins the group, their music becomes a path toward healing and hope. As they compete for fame and recognition, these survivors must confront their demons, support each other through invisible wounds, and discover that the greatest battles are sometimes the ones fought after the war ends. Through soaring melodies and heart-wrenching honesty, "Bandstand" is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the redemptive power of music.

BACKGROUND OF BANDSTAND:

"Bandstand" premiered at The Paper Mill Playhouse in New Jersey in 2015 before opening on Broadway at the Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre in 2017. The production received widespread critical acclaim and earned multiple accolades, including a Tony Award nomination for Best

Orchestrations. The show was particularly praised for its honest and compassionate portrayal of veterans' experiences and PTSD, with its swing and jazz-influenced score authentically capturing the sound of the 1940s big band era. Notable songs include "Welcome Home," "You Deserve It," "Nobody," and the powerful title number "Bandstand." The musical stands out for its respectful treatment of veterans' issues while delivering an entertaining and emotionally resonant theatrical experience that honors the sacrifices of those who served, and as being the first musical certified by the organization Got Your 6, a national network of veteran service providers, managed by the Bob Woodruff Foundation.

THE AUTHORS:

Richard Oberacker (Music, Book & Lyrics) is an award-winning composer, lyricist, and book writer whose work has been celebrated for its emotional depth and musical sophistication. "Bandstand" marks his Broadway debut, and his passion for honoring veterans' stories is evident throughout the piece. Oberacker's composition seamlessly blends period-authentic swing and jazz styles with contemporary musical theater storytelling.

Robert Taylor (Book & Lyrics) collaborated with Richard Oberacker to create the book and lyrics for "Bandstand," bringing authentic emotional truth to the characters' struggles with post-war trauma and reintegration. Together, Oberacker and Taylor crafted a musical that respects its historical setting while speaking powerfully to contemporary audiences about sacrifice, survivor's guilt, and the healing power of community.

ARTISTIC TEAM:

Directed by: Melissa Chin-Parker

Music Direction: Don Dally

Choreography: Izzy Pedego

Stage Management: Maddie Jeul Farias

Assistant Stage Managers: Gabby Price, Arianna Rico

Scenic Design: Scott Boynton

Assistant Scenic Design: Irena Hadzi-Dordevic

Costume Design: Maegan Roux

Lighting Design: Derek Duarte

Sound Design: Dante Carballo

Props Design: Thomas Verdos

Hair & Makeup Design: Reina Cruz Vazquez

CAST:

Donny Novitski: Sadat Hossein

Julia Trojan: Edella Oroz Westerfield

June Adams: Lizz Weihrauch

Wayne Wright: Eric Wishnie

Jimmy Campbell: Ethan McDaniel

Davy Zlatic: Christian McCooey

Johnny Simpson: Josh Kaiser

Nick Radel/Donny understudy: Dean Marchant

ENSEMBLE:

Michael/Roger Cohen/Jackson/ James Haupt: Ty Ortega

Jean Ann Ryan: Reina Cruz Vazquez

Oliver/Tom/Studio Singer: John G. Bridges
Al: James "Pete" Russell
Studio Singer/Bartender/Andre Baruch: Taylor LaBau
Paula/Talent Booker: Jacqueline Aguilar-Madrigal
Student/Bobby/Young Woman: Marilyn Cruickshank
Jo/Betsy/Studio Singer: Alina del Rosario
WAC/Wayne's Wife: Joelle McGrath
Desk Clerk: Dahlia Rose

WHEN:

November 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 2025
Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2:00 p.m.

WHERE:

The Mainstage Theater on the Hartnell College Main Campus, 411 Central Avenue, Salinas, CA.

TICKETING INFORMATION:

Adult \$30; Seniors/Military/Teachers \$24; Hartnell Students FREE; Other Students \$16; Youths (5-15) \$12; Hartnell Faculty/Staff \$15; Student Rush \$5; Group tickets available by contacting the TWS Box Office.

Online tickets and more information: westernstage.com/tickets or call (831) 755-6816.

TWS Box Office is open Wednesday-Saturday 5:00-8:00pm. and Sundays with performances 12-3pm. Leave VM to get callback within 24 hours.

ACCOMMODATIONS:

This event is wheelchair accessible. Individuals requiring other accommodations should contact the ticket office at least one week prior to the event.

CURRENT COVID-19 INFORMATION

The Western Stage is not requiring masking or proof of COVID-19 negative test result or vaccination at this time. Ticket holders are asked to not attend if they have temperature or other symptoms, or have been recently exposed to COVID-19, or have recently tested positive for COVID-19. This policy is subject to change based increase infection rates and or Hartnell College policy updates.

ABOUT THE WESTERN STAGE – ESTABLISHED 1974:

The Western Stage (TWS) is a professionally managed, community-based theatre company and educational program that provides opportunities for high-level artistic experiences. Led by its educational mission and believing that strong arts experiences are important for building innovative, creative, and resilient communities, TWS offers a robust variety of programs designed for personal growth and skill development in a safe space where students and theatre enthusiasts may engage in theatre production while working side-by-side with theatre professionals. Through its annual production season, TWS provides strong pathways for artists throughout the continuum of a career in theatre and its related performing arts. TWS presents new works that speak to the history and culture of the Salinas Valley and provides educational opportunities for students of all skill levels to explore and develop their unique talent.
www.westernstage.com

ABOUT HARTNELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT – ESTABLISHED 1920

Located in the heart of Salinas Valley, Hartnell Community College District is a leading institution serving over 12,000 students annually across our main campus in Salinas, the Alisal Campus, and education centers in King City, Castroville, and Soledad. HCCD is a Seal of Excelencia Certified institution and a recognized Hispanic-serving institution since 2000. We offer associate and bachelor's degrees and certificate programs to prepare students for successful transfer to four-year universities or immediate entry into the workforce. [Learn more](#) about our programs and initiatives.

###