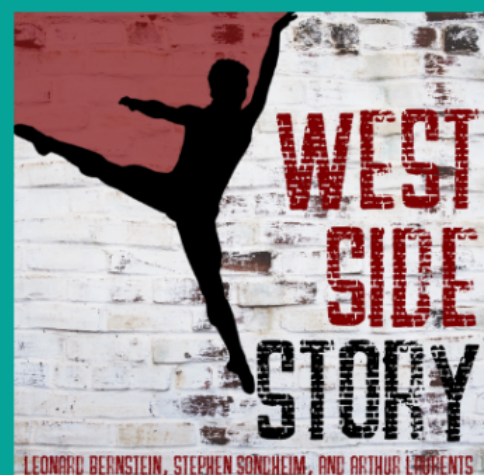
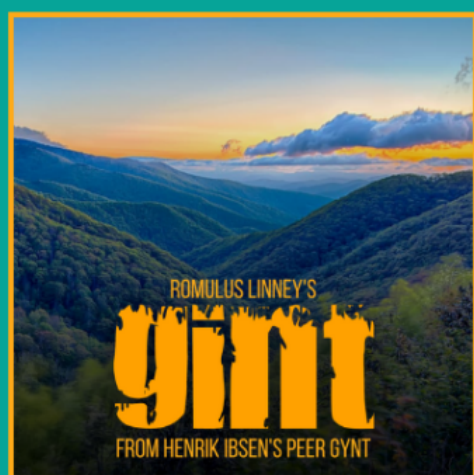
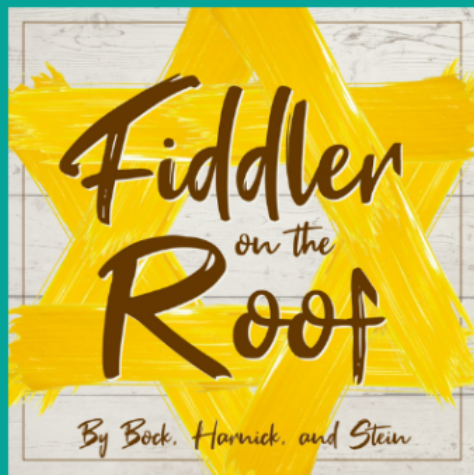
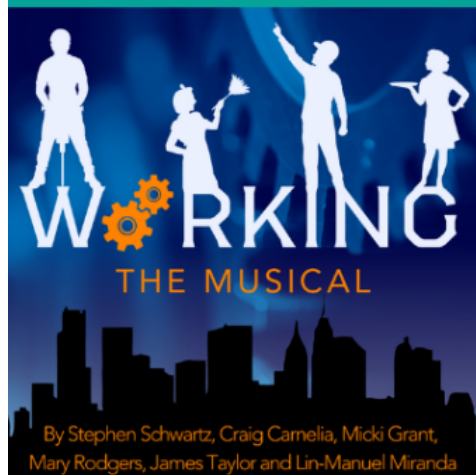


The Ritz Theatre Company Gears Up for Dynamic 2023-2024 Season



Haddon Township, New Jersey Jun 2, 2023 ([Issuewire.com](http://www.Issuewire.com)) - The Ritz Theatre Company gets set to go big in the months ahead, officially announcing a bold, new season beginning in September that reinforces the organization's ongoing commitment to "embracing diversity in our stories and those who share them."

“It seems like I always start out by saying that this is our best season yet,” says Producing Artistic Director Bruce A. Curless. “And I could do that again this year... but it’s so much more than the best season yet! It is a season full of variety, a perfect blend of classics and new theatrical works, featuring everything from a new British panto to two of the most significant musicals of all time. There truly is something for everyone and you won’t want to miss a single show.”

Leading off the 2023-2024 season for The Ritz is **ROCK OF AGES**, an electric show that takes you back to the time of big bands with big egos playing big guitar solos and sporting even bigger hair. This Tony Award-nominated musical features the hits of such famous 80s bands as Night Ranger, REO Speedwagon, Pat Benatar, Twisted Sister, Styx, Journey, and Bon Jovi. Directed by Edwin “Rico” Santiago (**IN THE HEIGHTS**, 2022), the show runs from September 8 through September 24, 2023.

Up next at The Ritz is August Wilson’s **MA RAINEY’S BLACK BOTTOM**, a riveting portrayal of rage, racism, self-hatred, and exploitation. It’s 1927 and Ma Rainey, the “Mother of the Blues,” is recording new sides of old favorites in a rundown studio in Chicago. Fiery and determined, Ma Rainey fights to retain control over her music, while her cocky trumpet player Levee dreams of making his own name in the business. A 2020 adaptation of **MA RAINEY’S BLACK BOTTOM**, starring Viola Davis and Chadwick Boseman, premiered on Netflix and was nominated for five Academy Awards. Directed by Darryl Thompson, Jr., this compelling play runs at The Ritz from October 13 through October 29, 2023.

For the holiday season, The Ritz is proud to present the world premiere of **HOLLYSTALK (OR, HOW A GIANT OF A MISTAKE BECAME THE BEST CHRISTMAS SURPRISE!)**. Created in the holiday tradition of British pantomime and following the success of their 2021 hit show **THE ABSOLUTE FANTASTICAL ADVENTURES OF CINDY ELLA...**, writers Bruce Curless and Brian Bacon are at it again with a brand-new Christmas romp for patrons of all ages. With such well-known characters as Jack, Little Bo Peep, Tweedle Dee, and Tweedle Dum all crossing paths, this show is sure to be a side-splitting, song-and-dance-filled evening of family fun. The new musical runs at The Ritz from December 1 through December 17, 2023.

The Ritz ushers in the New Year with a Black Box production of **WORKING: THE MUSICAL**, a musical exploration of 26 people from all walks of life performed by a cast of six. Based on Studs Terkel’s best-selling book of interviews with American workers, the show paints a vivid portrait of the workers that the world so often takes for granted: the schoolteacher, the phone operator, the waitress, the millworker, the mason, the housewife, just to name a few. With music from such celebrated composers as Stephen Schwartz and Lin-Manuel Miranda, this piece is often touted as the musical about “us.” Directed by AJ Klein, the show runs at The Ritz from January 12 through January 28, 2024.

The month of February has a special treat in store for fans of true musical theatre “Tradition,” as The Ritz aims to present a stirring, new production of **FIDDLER ON THE ROOF**. Winner of nine Tony Awards when it debuted in 1964, this classic musical is the brainchild of Broadway legends Jerome Robbins and Harold Prince, songwriters Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, and book writer Joseph Stein. Touching audiences worldwide with its humor, warmth, and honesty, this universal show is a staple of the musical theatre canon, with its seminal theme of tradition continually cutting across barriers of race, class, nationality, and religion. Directed by Ritz Associate Artistic Director Matthew Weil, the show runs from February 16 through March 3, 2024.

To kick off spring, The Ritz is set to stage an immersive and gripping production of Agatha Christie’s **MURDER ON THE NILE**, the famous three-act murder mystery set aboard the river cruiser Lotus. At the onset of the play, the idyllic surroundings of a honeymoon voyage down the Nile are shattered by a shocking and brutal murder. Under scrutiny is a multitude of memorable passengers, all with a reason to

kill. The tension and claustrophobia build, as an alarming and audacious conspiracy is laid bare. Directed by Bruce Curless, **MURDER ON THE NILE** runs from April 5 through April 21, 2024.

Before the school year is out, The Ritz will invite audiences across the region to visit Westerberg High for **HEATHERS: THE MUSICAL**, the darkly delicious story of Veronica Sawyer, a brainy, beautiful teenage misfit who hustles her way into her high school's most powerful and ruthless clique: the Heathers. Brought to you by the award-winning creative team of Kevin Murphy and Laurence O'Keefe, the show is a hilarious, heartfelt, and homicidal musical based on one of the greatest teen comedy films of all time. Directed by Roberta Curless (**SHE LOVES ME**, 2022), **HEATHERS** runs at The Ritz from May 10 through May 26, 2024.

The Ritz Black Box returns in June for an intimate production of Romulus Linney's **GINT**, a powerful and poignant retelling of Henrik Ibsen's masterpiece **PEER GYNT**, yet now set in Appalachia. The play unfolds like a strange dream, beginning with Pete Gint, a ragged young man in the Appalachian Mountains in 1917, who spends most of his time lying, drinking, and getting into trouble. Gint is determined to become "something great, grand, and glorious," but he's not sure what that is. Directed by Matthew Weil, this fascinating, thought-provoking play runs at The Ritz from June 7 through June 23, 2024.

Doubling as the season's "Finale Ultimo" and big "Summer Blockbuster" is the classic musical **WEST SIDE STORY**, arguably the most famous musical ever written. Shakespeare's **ROMEO AND JULIET** is transported to modern-day New York City as two young, idealistic lovers find themselves caught between warring street gangs, the "American" Jets and the Puerto Rican Sharks. Their struggle to survive in a world of hate, violence, and prejudice is one of the most innovative, heart-wrenching, and relevant musical dramas of our time. Directed by Edwin "Rico" Santiago, this final show of the season runs from July 12 through July 28, 2024.

Subscriptions to the new Ritz season go on sale June 5th (www.ritztheatreco.org/subscriptions), with the organization offering several different packages for theatre enthusiasts. The popular "Premium" package, for example, bestows theatergoers with tickets to all nine shows, free snacks at the concession stand, voting privileges for the fourth annual Ritzy Awards, plus additional discounts and bonuses.

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