



Chippewa Valley Musical Productions is performing “Seussical” Nov. 12-20. The Broadway musical comes to Chippewa’s stage under the guest direction of Emmy Award winner and Broadway performer George Abud. Photo provided by James Pecar

‘Seussical’ the musical comes to Chippewa stage

By: Alex Szwarc | **Fraser - Clinton Township Chronicle** | Published October 28, 2021

CLINTON TOWNSHIP — Next month, Chippewa Valley Musical Productions will perform “Seussical,” a musical comedy based on the many children’s stories of Dr. Seuss.

The Broadway musical comes to Chippewa Valley’s stage under the guest direction

of Emmy Award winner and Broadway performer George Abud. It features Seuss characters including Horton the Elephant, The Cat in the Hat, Gertrude McFuzz and Jojo.

“In ‘Seussical,’ a gang of small school kids find their way into an old theater to discover a very unusual hat. After imagining all that ‘hat’ could hold, one of them places it on the head of what appears to be a mannequin,” a press release states. “From that simple act of imagination, The Cat in the Hat springs to life to take the kids on a spectacular exploration of their own imaginations and what could befall those imaginations if they silence all their ‘thinks’ and allow themselves to simply fall in line.”

Between cast and crew, about 70 students are involved in the production.

Junior Courtney Serra portrays Mayzie La Bird.

“She is very sassy and doesn’t care what others think,” she said. “As a teenager, it’s hard to not care what others think of you, but it was definitely cool to get his role.”

For Serra, the most enjoyable part of being in the musical is when they first learn the choreography and get to the point where students are immersed in their characters.

“It won’t be exactly like the original Seussical,” she said. “It’s cool to see how George turned it around a little and made it more interesting.”

Junior Logan Leitch plays the mayor of Whoville.

“In this show, the mayor is a very showy character because he has to show off his town, but at the same time, he has to be very uptight, almost angry at times,” Leitch said.

He indicated that the ideas Abud comes up with are amazing, with students having the chance to add their own interpretations.

“It takes a story almost everyone knows and puts a lot of spin on it that you wouldn’t think it would,” Leitch said. “It’s a very exciting show.”

As to what the audience can expect from Chippewa’s adaptation of “Seussical,” Holly Zamojski said it’s a different story than what most may think.

“There’s a lot of real-world issues, and if you pay attention closely, you’ll be able to see that,” Zamojski, who plays Gertrude McFuzz, said.

Abud is the recipient of a Daytime Emmy Award for his work on NBC’s “Today Show.” He received a 2020 Drama Desk Award nomination for Outstanding Featured Actor in a Musical for his role as Nerd Face in the new musical *Emojiland*.

He and Chippewa Choral Activities Director James Pecar attended high school together at Grosse Pointe North and, for some time, have wanted to collaborate on a musical.

“There’s never any time because you can’t leave New York for three months, but this year, because theaters in the professional world were just starting to open back up and weren’t roaring yet, there was more a possibility to do this,” Abud said.

The New York resident said he wanted to make “Seussical” more interesting and timely.

“I wanted to bring a more professional approach to the kids,” he said. “In general, there’s the thought that kids don’t have the capacity to hold on to a high level of nuance.”

In 2015, he made his Broadway debut with *The Visit*.

“The joy is giving the kids at Chippewa the opportunities that I so appreciate myself that could change their life,” Abud said. “Seeing potential in them that others may not necessarily see is nice. I feel we made the most perfect cast out of the people we have.”

In keeping with the theme of the show, CVHS Musical Productions is supporting the Clinton-Macomb Public Library through a book drive. At the performance, donations of new and gently used books will be collected to promote reading and to help support the community.

Performances are scheduled for Nov. 12, 13, 18, 19 and 20 — all at 7 p.m. There will also be a matinee performance at 1 p.m. Nov. 20.

Tickets cost \$15 and can be purchased at cvhsmusicals.org. Face masks are strongly recommended.

