

NEW YORK CITY CENTER ANNOUNCES 2014 *ENCORES!* SEASON

Released May 21, 2013

The 2014 season of New York City Center's Tony Award-winning *Encores!* series will open with ***Little Me*** directed by **John Rando** and starring **Christian Borle** ("Smash," *Peter and the Starcatcher*) on February 5, 2014. The season will continue with ***The Most Happy Fella***, directed and choreographed by **Casey Nicholaw** and starring **Shuler Hensley** (*Oklahoma!*, *The Whale*), followed by ***Irma La Douce***, directed by **John Doyle**. *Encores!* Music Director **Rob Berman** will helm all shows.

Little Me, Neil Simon's first musical, is the story of the glamorous Belle Poitrine, a self-invented celebrity who has spent her life in pursuit of wealth, culture and social position. Her seven oddball lovers are played by one actor: seven plum roles, from an innocent college boy to an octogenarian lecher to the dying king of a tiny European country that doesn't seem to exist. The *Encores!* production will star **Christian Borle**.

Based on the novel *Little Me: The Intimate Memoirs of that Great Star of Stage, Screen and Television/Belle Poitrine*, by Patrick Dennis, *Little Me* has a book by **Neil Simon**, music by **Cy Coleman** and lyrics by **Carolyn Leigh**. The original production starred Sid Caesar as Belle's seven love interests. It opened at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre on November 17, 1962 and ran for 257 performances. Songs include "I've Got Your Number," "Real Live Girl" and "The Other Side of the Tracks." *Little Me* will run February 5 – 9.

The Most Happy Fella, Frank Loesser's most ambitious and romantic musical, tells the heart-stopping story of a love triangle between an aging Napa Valley farmer, a young waitress and a handsome, restless ranch hand. *The Most Happy Fella* will star **Shuler Hensley**.

The Most Happy Fella is based on the play *They Knew What They Wanted* by Sidney Howard. It has a book, music and lyrics by **Frank Loesser**. Loesser's score displays an astonishing range – ardent operatic numbers stand side by side with Broadway show-stoppers – and includes "Somebody Somewhere," "My Heart Is So Full of You," "Big D" and "Standing on the Corner." It opened at the Imperial Theatre on May 3, 1956 and ran for 676 performances. *The Most Happy Fella* will run April 2 – 6.

(**HISTORICAL NOTE:** *The Most Happy Fella* was revived by the New York City Center Light Opera at City Center for a limited run of 16 performances from February 10 through February 22, 1959.)

Encores! breaks the mold with its first musical not written on American soil with ***Irma La Douce***, the tale of a Parisian lady of the evening and the law student who falls in love with her. It has music by **Marguerite Monnot** and English book and lyrics by **Julian More, David Heneker** and **Monty Norman**.

After a three-year run in Paris, an English-language version of *Irma La Douce*, directed by Peter Brook, enjoyed tremendous success first in London and then on Broadway. It opened at the Plymouth Theatre on September 29, 1960 and ran for 524 performances. The score produced one standard, "Our Language of Love," and also features "The Valse Millieu" and "Dis Donc." *Irma La Douce* will run May 7 – 11.

Christian Borle (multiple parts, *Little Me*) won a Tony Award for his role in *Peter and The Starcatcher* and was nominated for *Legally Blonde*. His other Broadway credits include *Mary Poppins*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Monty Python's Spamalot* and *Footloose*. Borle has starred Off-Broadway in the Signature Theatre Company's revival of *Angels in America* and *Elegies: A Song Cycle* by William Finn at Lincoln Center. He most recently starred in NBC's musical drama "Smash" as composer Tom Levitt. Borle starred in the *Encores!* production of *On The Town*. He will be seen in Michael Mann's upcoming cyber crime movie.

Shuler Hensley (Tony, *The Most Happy Fella*) recently appeared as Ben Marino in the *Encores!* production of *Fiorello!*, in the title role in *The Whale* at Playwrights Horizons and as Hannibal Lecter in *Silence! The Musical*. On Broadway he played The Monster in *Young Frankenstein*, Jud in *Oklahoma!* and Inspector Javert in *Les Misérables*.

John Rando (Director, *Little Me*) recently directed the staged performance of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Carousel* at the New York Philharmonic. Rando's Broadway credits include *A Christmas Story*, *The Wedding Singer*, *Urinetown* (Tony Award for Best Director), *A Thousand Clowns* and Neil Simon's *The Dinner Party*. Off-Broadway credits include *All in the Timing* (revival) and *The Toxic Avenger*, among many others. His many *Encores!* credits include *It's a Bird...It's a Plane...It's Superman*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *On the Town* and *Damn Yankees*.

Casey Nicholaw (Director and Choreographer, *The Most Happy Fella*) won the 2011 Tony Award for his work as co-director of *The Book of Mormon*. He directed and choreographed the Broadway productions of *Elf: The Musical* and *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Tony nomination) and choreographed *Monty Python's Spamalot*, (Tony nominations). His *Encores!* credits include *Anyone Can Whistle*, *Follies* and *Bye Bye Birdie*.

John Doyle (Director, *Irma La Douce*) most recently directed Stephen Sondheim's *Passion* at Classic Stage Company. His Broadway credits include *Sweeney Todd* (Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards, Best Director of a Musical); *Company* (Tony Award, Best Revival) and *A Catered Affair*, and his Off-Broadway credits include *Wings*

and *Road Show*. He directed the London productions of *Gondoliers*, *Sweeney Todd* and *Mack and Mabel*.

The 2014 *Encores!* season is made possible, in part, by the Stephanie and Fred Shuman Fund for *Encores!*, Stacey and Eric Mindich, and Newman's Own Foundation.

New York City Center (Arlene Shuler, President & CEO) has played a defining role in the cultural life of the city for nearly 70 years. It was Manhattan's first performing arts center, dedicated by Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia in 1943 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, Manhattan Theatre Club and New York City Opera; 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." This summer City Center is launching *Encores! Off-Center*, a new series featuring seminal 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 and a partnership with London's Sadler's Wells Theatre and Jazz at Lincoln Center, remain central to City Center's identity. City Center is dedicated to providing educational opportunities to New York City students and teachers with 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. City Center completed an extensive renovation project in October 2011 to revitalize and modernize its historic theater.

Encores! subscriptions can be purchased starting August 5, 2013 through CityTix® at 212-581-1212 or online at www.NYCityCenter.org.

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2014 ENCORES! SEASON

Little Me (February 5 – 9, 2014)

Based on the novel *Little Me: The Intimate Memoirs of that Great Star of Stage, Screen and Television/Belle Poitrine*, by Patrick Dennis

Music by Cy Coleman

Lyrics by Carolyn Leigh

Book by Neil Simon

Directed by John Rando

Starring Christian Borle

The Most Happy Fella (April 2 – 6, 2014)

Based on the play *They Knew What They Wanted* by Sidney Howard

Music, Book and Lyrics by Frank Loesser

Directed and choreographed by Casey Nicholaw

Starring Shuler Hensley

Irma La Douce (May 7 – 11, 2014)

Music by Marguerite Monnot

Original Book and Lyrics by Alexandre Breffort

English Book and Lyrics by Julian More, David Heneker and Monty Norman

Directed by John Doyle