



THE KIMMEL CENTER
ACADEMY OF MUSIC
MERRIAM THEATER



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.@July4thPhilly and @KimmelCenter bring the best of Broadway to Independence Mall with blockbuster exclusive performances, giveaways, and family fun, Monday, 7/2. #July4thPhilly

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**WAWA WELCOME AMERICA ANNOUNCES FEATURED
BROADWAY SHOWS FOR THE RETURN OF THE
KIMMEL CENTER'S BROADWAY ON INDEPENDENCE
CELEBRATION AS PART OF FESTIVAL LINEUP
JULY 2, 2018, 7:00 – 8:30 P.M.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Philadelphia, PA, May 21, 2018) — The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, in association with Wawa Welcome America, is thrilled to announce the full lineup of Broadway shows presented as part of *Kimmel Center's Broadway on Independence*. It's the second annual FREE concert taking place on the mainstage during Philadelphia's Wawa Welcome America festival on Monday, July 2, 2018 from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. It will be part of a grand celebration at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia's Historic District. Audiences will get a star-studded sneak peek at the Kimmel Center's 2018/19 Broadway Philadelphia season, including Broadway stars singing selected songs. There will also be family-friendly Broadway trivia, games, and more.

The FREE 90-minute celebration of musical theater will feature cast members singing select musical performances from eight of Broadway's hottest shows coming to Philadelphia, including *Roald Dahl's*

Charlie & The Chocolate Factory; Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical; Anastasia; CATS; Beautiful – The Carole King Musical; and more.

Students from the Kimmel Center's ShowStoppers after-school musical theater program will be on hand for special performances of "Hamiltunes," selections from the highly anticipated **HAMILTON**. Dena Blizzard, New Jersey comedian and Off-Broadway star, will return to emcee this event. Also in attendance will be the Kimmel Center's resident Tony-voter and curator of the Broadway season, Frances Egler. She will share behind-the-scenes stories and insight about upcoming shows.

"We are thrilled to celebrate Independence Day in Philadelphia, our nation's birthplace. The Wawa Welcome America festival is such a treasured part of this tradition," said Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. "This year, we are once again creating a fantastic experience for our subscribers and Broadway lovers alike, bringing arts to our broad and diverse community."

A full lineup for *Kimmel Center's Broadway on Independence* is below. **Cast members from the touring shows will sing selected musical performances.** For more information on the 2018/19 Broadway Philadelphia season, please visit kimmelcenter.org.

KIMMEL CENTER'S BROADWAY ON INDEPENDENCE

Independence Hall Mainstage

July 2, 2018, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

FREE

The free concert will feature selected music from the following shows:

LOVE NEVER DIES

The ultimate love story continues in *Love Never Dies*, Andrew Lloyd Webber's spellbinding sequel to *The Phantom of the Opera*. It is 10 years after his disappearance from the Paris Opera House and The Phantom has escaped to a new life in New York where he lives amongst the screaming joy rides and freak shows of Coney Island. In this new, electrically-charged world, he has finally found a place for his music to soar, but he has never stopped yearning for his one true love and musical protégée, Christine Daaé.

(Playing at the Academy of Music through October 2 – 7, 2018)

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF

Audiences across North America are toasting a new production of *Fiddler on the Roof*! Rich with musical hits you know and love, including "Tradition," "Sunrise, Sunset," "If I Were A Rich Man," "Matchmaker, Matchmaker," and "To Life (L'Chaim!)," *Fiddler on the Roof* is the heartwarming story of fathers and daughters, husbands and wives, and life, love, and laughter. To love! To life!

(Playing at the Academy of Music October 23 – 28, 2018)

ROALD DAHL'S CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

Roald Dahl's amazing tale is now Philadelphia's golden ticket! *Charlie & The Chocolate Factory* is the perfect recipe for a delectable treat: songs from the original film, including "Pure Imagination," "The Candy Man," and "I've Got a Golden Ticket," alongside a toe-tapping and ear-tickling new score from the songwriters of *Hairspray*. Get ready for Oompa-Loompas, incredible inventions, the great glass elevator, and more, more, more at this everlasting showstopper!

(Playing at the Academy of Music through November 6 – 18, 2018)

DR. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS! THE MUSICAL

Discover the magic of Dr. Seuss' classic holiday tale as it comes to life on stage. Featuring the hit songs "You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch" and "Welcome Christmas," The Grinch discovers there's more to Christmas than he bargained for in this heartwarming holiday classic. Max the Dog narrates as the mean and scheming Grinch, whose heart is "two sizes too small," decides to steal Christmas away from the holiday-loving Whos.

(Playing at the Merriam Theater through December 18 – 30, 2018)

BEAUTIFUL – THE CAROLE KING MUSICAL

The Carole King Musical tells the inspiring true story of King's remarkable rise to stardom, from being part of a hit songwriting team with her husband Gerry Goffin, to her relationship with fellow writers and best friends Cynthia Weil and Barry Mann, to becoming one of the most successful solo acts in popular music history. Along the way, she made more than beautiful music, she wrote the soundtrack to a generation.

(Playing at the Academy of Music through January 8 – 20, 2019)

RENT

The Pulitzer Prize and Tony® Award-winning masterpiece returns to the stage in a vibrant 20th anniversary touring production. A re-imagining of Puccini's *La Bohème*, *RENT* follows an unforgettable year in the lives of seven artists struggling to follow their dreams without selling out. With its inspiring message of joy and hope in the face of fear, this timeless celebration of friendship and creativity reminds us to measure our lives with the only thing that truly matters—love.

(Playing at the Merriam Theater through March 5 – 10, 2019)

MISS SAIGON

Experience the acclaimed new production of the legendary musical *Miss Saigon*, from the creators of *Les Misérables*. In the last days of the Vietnam War, 17-year-old Kim is forced to work in a bar run by a notorious character known as the Engineer. There she meets and falls in love with an American G.I. named Chris, but they are torn apart by the fall of Saigon. For 3 years, Kim goes on an epic journey of survival to find her way back to Chris, who has no idea he's fathered a son.

(Playing at the Academy of Music through March 19 – 31, 2019)

ANASTASIA

The romantic and adventure-filled new musical *Anastasia* will transport you from the twilight of the Russian Empire to the euphoria of Paris in the 1920s, as a brave young woman sets out on a journey to discover the mystery of her past. Pursued by a ruthless Soviet officer determined to silence her, Anya enlists the aid of a dashing conman and a lovable ex-aristocrat. Together, they embark on an epic adventure to help her find home, love, and family.

(Playing at the Academy of Music through April 9 – 14, 2019)

CATS

Audiences and critics alike are rediscovering this beloved musical with breathtaking music, including one of the most treasured songs in musical theatre — "Memory." Winner of seven Tony® Awards including Best Musical, *CATS* tells the story of one magical night when an extraordinary tribe of cats gathers for its annual ball to rejoice and decide which cat will be reborn.

(Playing at the Forrest Theatre through June 18 – 30, 2019)

***HAMILTON* ***

HAMILTON is the story of America's Founding Father Alexander Hamilton, an immigrant from the West Indies who became George Washington's right-hand man during the Revolutionary War and was the new nation's first Treasury Secretary. Featuring a score that blends hip-hop, jazz, blues, rap, R&B, and Broadway, *HAMILTON* is the story of America then, as told by America now.

*Students from the Kimmel Center's ShowStoppers after-school musical theater program will be on hand for special performances of "Hamiltunes," selections from the highly anticipated ***HAMILTON***.

(Playing at the Forrest Theatre through August 27 – November 17, 2019)

Tickets

This is a free event. Tickets are not required to attend.

About Welcome America, Inc.

Welcome America, Inc. is a 501c3, non-profit organization in public-private partnership with the City of Philadelphia. Welcome America, Inc.'s mission is to promote American history, education and Philadelphia. The organization seeks to enhance the resident and visitor experience through citywide events that provide an economic boost to the local economy. Moving forward, Welcome America, Inc. will produce and assist in the growth of select city events year-round that can increase awareness of Philadelphia as an event destination.

Founded in 1993, Welcome America, Inc. celebrates its 26th year in 2018. Welcome America, Inc. produces the annual *Wawa Welcome America* festival, the nation's premier July 4th celebration in the birthplace of our nation. Philadelphia's July 4th festival – *Wawa Welcome America* – is a multi-day citywide festival with 50 FREE events including one of America's most inclusive free Independence Day concerts, multiple world-class fireworks displays, outdoor movie screenings, free museum days, community events and more.

Wawa Welcome America is presented by Title Partner, Wawa, Inc. and presenting Broadband Communications Partner Comcast NBCUniversal with NBC10 and Telemundo62 as the local broadcast partners. With additional support by the City of Philadelphia, Live Nation, Philadelphia International Airport and Visit Philadelphia.

The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, the Kimmel Center's mission is to operate a world-class performing arts center that engages and serves a broad audience through diverse programming, arts education, and community outreach. The Kimmel Center Campus is comprised of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (Verizon Hall, Perelman Theater, SEI Innovation Studio, and the Merck Arts Education Center), the Academy of Music (owned by the Philadelphia Orchestra Association), and the Merriam Theater. The Kimmel Center is also home to eight Resident Companies: The Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, The Pennsylvania Ballet, The Philly POPS, PHILADANCO, The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Curtis Institute of Music. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts is the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is the season sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2017-2018 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit kimmelcenter.org.

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