

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

Chance Theater proudly presents the OC premiere of

Jane Austen's Emma: The Musical

This stage adaptation from the Tony-nominated composer of *Jane Eyre* expands Chance Theater's Holiday Literature Series November 23-December 23

October 31, 2018 ... Anaheim, California ... Chance Theater, Anaheim's official resident theater company, is delighted to introduce ***Jane Austen's Emma: The Musical*** to Orange County for the first time as part of our 2018 Holiday Literature Series! Book, lyrics, and music by Tony-nominated composer Paul Gordon, directed by Casey Long, and with music direction by Bill Strongin, ***Jane Austen's Emma: The Musical* will preview from November 23rd through November 30th; regular performances will begin December 1st and continue through December 23rd on the Cripe Stage at Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken theater arts Center.**

Jane Austen's enduring love story is brought to life as a romantic-comedy musical. The story revolves around Emma, a well-meaning, but disaster-prone matchmaker, who ignores her own romantic feelings while setting out to find a suitor for her friend Harriet. Her efforts go awry, of course, leading to comic complications. We invite you to fall in love again with one of Jane Austen's most adored characters, featuring an intelligent and buoyant score from Tony-nominated composer Paul Gordon (*Jane Eyre*)

"A winner! Audiences can't get enough" – *Wall Street Journal*

"A match made in musical theatre heaven" – *The Daily Herald*

Jane Austen's Emma: The Musical was first developed by TheatreWorks in 2006 and was in the NAMT Festival the same year. The world premiere was presented by TheatreWorks in 2007. Directed by Robert Kelley, the musical broke box office records for the theater. In 2008, the production premiered at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. In 2011, the musical had a successful run at The Old Globe in San Diego, directed by Tony-nominated director, Jeff Calhoun. In 2012, Stephen Wentmore and David Ira Goldstein helmed *Jane Austen's Emma: The Musical* for the Arizona Theatre Company.

Chance Theater has been presenting three shows in rotation as part of their "Holiday Literature Series" since 2007 -- *Anne of Green Gables*, *Little Women - The Broadway Musical*, and *The Secret Garden, The Musical*. The addition of *Jane Austen's Emma: The Musical* is due to the Chance wanting to expand the repertoire and offer our audiences more variety. "The whole conceit for the Holiday Literature Series came from wanting to offer OC audiences more than what would be considered the 'traditional' holiday faire," said Founding Artist Casey Long, who has directed each of the

offerings. “When we first produced *Anne of Green Gables* 11 years ago, we considered it a gamble to not produce one of the handful of stories that everyone tells in December. But it turned out to have the complete opposite effect. That is why this year we are adding a fourth show into the rotation. Our audience desire for more alternative stories during the holidays demanded it.”

MEET THE TEAM

Paul Gordon (Book, Lyrics, & Music) is a composer, lyricist and librettist. He co-wrote the Broadway musical *Jane Eyre*, nominated for Five Tony Awards including Best Musical and Best Score. He won the 2015 Jeff Award for his score and libretto to *Sense and Sensibility*. He was also awarded the 2011 Ovation award for his music and lyrics to *Daddy Long Legs* and won the 2008 Bay Area Critics Circle Award for his book to the musical *Emma*, which had its world premier at TheatreWorks Palo Alto and has played all across the country including Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and The Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. *Daddy Long Legs*, written with John Caird, premiered at The Rubicon Theatre Company in the Fall of 2009, and has had productions all around the world. It opened Off-Broadway at the Davenport Theatre in the fall of 2015 where it was nominated for numerous awards. *Analog and Vinyl* premiered at The Weston Playhouse in Summer of 2014 after debuting at the 2013 NAMT Festival. *Sense and Sensibility*, commissioned by Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, had its world premiere in the spring of 2015 and played the Old Globe theater in June of 2016. *Being Earnest*, written with Jay Gruska, premiered at TheatreWorks Palo Alto in April of 2013. *Little Miss Scrooge*, written with John Caird and Sam Caird, continues to be developed for Broadway. In his former life, Paul was a pop songwriter who wrote several number one songs and has been awarded multiple Gold and Platinum Records and 12 ASCAP awards.

Casey Long (Director) is proud to be a Chance Resident Artist and co-founder. Casey is a graduate of the Leadership Anaheim program, Annenberg Foundation’s Alchemy training, and the Fieldstone Foundation Leadership program. Prior Chance Theater directing credits include *Anne of Green Gables* (at Chance and Heritage Forum), *Little Women - The Broadway Musical* (at Chance and La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts), and *The Secret Garden, the Musical*. Recent Chance acting credits include the OC premiere of Theresa Rebeck’s *Seminar*, Samuel Hunter’s *A Bright New Boise*, and Sarah Ruhl’s *Passion Play*.

In addition to Casey Long, the production team for ***Jane Austen’s Emma: The Musical*** includes music director Bill Strongin (*The Secret Garden, The Musical*), production designer Masako Tobaru (*Big Fish*), costume designer Bruce Goodrich (*Tribes*), sound designer Ryan Brodtkin (*Big Fish*), projection designer Kristin Campbell (*Elevada*), stage manager Jordan Jones, dialect coach Wyn Moreno (*Violet*), and dramaturg Laurie Smits Staude (*in a word*).

The cast includes Chance Theater Resident Artist Sherry Domerego (*The Secret Garden*), as well as returning artists Mandy Foster (*Big Fish*), Jeff Lowe (*Big Fish*), Glenn Koppel (*Little Women - The Broadway Musical*), Shannon Page (*James and The Giant Peach*), Megan McCarthy (*Fancy Nancy, The Musical*), and Robin Walton (*Hairspray*). Zoya Martin, Coleton Ray, Carlene O’Neill, Gavin Cole, Kristofer Buxton, and Lulu Mack are making their Chance debut with this production.

The Executive Producers for this production is The Family of Mary Kay Fyda-Mar. Bette & Wylie Aitken are the Season Producers and for the entire 2018 schedule.

To schedule press interviews, request photos, schedule press comps or for any additional information, please contact Casey Long at (714) 900-3284 or by e-mail at casey@chancetheater.com.

ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

Proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, CHANCE THEATER recently received a National Theatre Company grant from American Theatre Wing. The Chance has won six Ovation Awards, including two for Best Production of a Musical – Intimate Theater for its West Coast premiere of *Triassic Park – The Musical* and Southern California premiere of *Jerry Springer – The Opera*, as well as four LADCC Awards, including the Polly Warfield Award for Outstanding Season. The Anaheim City Council named Chance Theater “the official resident theater company of Anaheim”, and Arts Orange County has twice named the Chance as “Outstanding Arts Organization”. Known for using bold and personal storytelling to promote dialogue and connection within the Southern California theatrical landscape, the Chance is committed to contributing to a more compassionate, connected and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group, Network of Ensemble Theaters, and the LA Stage Alliance, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: JANE AUSTEN’S EMMA: THE MUSICAL

Jane Austen’s enduring love story is brought to life as a romantic-comedy musical. The story revolves around Emma, a well-meaning, but disaster-prone matchmaker, who ignores her own romantic feelings while setting out to find a suitor for her friend Harriet. Her efforts go awry, of course, leading to comic complications. We invite you to fall in love again with one of Jane Austen’s most adored characters, featuring an intelligent and buoyant score from Tony-nominated composer Paul Gordon (*Jane Eyre*).

WHEN:

Preview Performances:

November 23-30, 2018

Fridays at 3pm and 8pm; Saturday at 8pm; Sunday at 7pm

Regular Performances

December 1 - 23, 2018

Thursdays at 7:30pm; Fridays at 8pm; Saturdays at 3pm and 8pm; Sundays at 3pm

Special performances on Wednesday, December 5 at 7:30pm

REVIEWERS and OTHER PRESS are encouraged to attend:

Opening Performance on Saturday, December 1st at 8pm

WHERE: Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the Cripe Stage
5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807

TICKETS: \$31.00 - \$45.00. Call (888) 455-4212 or visit www.ChanceTheater.com.
Discounts available for children (ages 4-12), seniors, students and military.

###