GEORGE MASON’S SCHOOL OF THEATER AND SCHOOL OF MUSIC
TO PRESENT D.C.-AREA PREMIERE
OF THE NEWLY ADAPTED VERSION OF THE MUSICAL

RAGS

WITH BOOK BY JOSEPH STEIN, LYRICS BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ, MUSIC BY CHARLES STROUSE,
ADAPTED BY DAVID THOMPSON AND DIRECTED BY RICK DAVIS

AT THE CENTER FOR THE ARTS
OCTOBER 31 – NOVEMBER 3, 2019

(FAIRFAX, VA)—George Mason University’s School of Theater and School of Music will collaborate this fall to present the newest adaptation of the American musical Rags, a heart-warming story of loss and hope surrounding a group of Jewish immigrants as they arrive to start a new life in America at the turn of the 20th century. The D.C.-area premiere of the new version of Rags will run October 31 to November 3, 2019 in the Center for the Arts Concert Hall (4373 Mason Pond Dr., Fairfax, VA).

With book by Joseph Stein (Fiddler on the Roof), music by Charles Strouse (Bye, Bye Birdie), lyrics by Stephen Schwartz (Wicked), and a newly revised book by David Thompson, Mason’s production will be directed by the Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts Rick Davis and features musical direction by Joe Walsh and choreography by Ahmad Maaty.

“It’s not every university that gets the chance to work on a major musical during its developmental process,” shares Davis. “This script is between stages, so to speak, having been successful in professional productions this past year. Our artists and D.C.-area audiences will be a part of that evolution, and we're working with the New York-based creative team to ensure opportunities for them to interact with our students and see what we're doing with the show.”

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Said to be born out of the numerous requests Stein received to create a follow up to *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Rags* earned five Tony Award nominations during its original 1986 Broadway run, including for Best Book, Best Score and Best Musical. This version, which has been undergoing revisions by Thompson along with Strouse and Schwartz, received recent developmental runs at the Goodspeed Opera House; Hope Mill Theater in Manchester, UK; as well as a concert performance at Central Presbyterian Church in New York City featuring a star-studded cast of Broadway veterans.

Mason’s production will feature a cast and orchestra of Mason students, and will also include several musicians onstage performing along with the actors. **Full cast and creative team will be announced at a later date.**

Tickets go on sale August 1 at [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

**Production Information:**

*Rags*
Book by Joseph Stein, Revised by David Thompson  
Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz  
Music by Charles Strouse  
Directed by Rick Davis  
Music Direction by Joe Walsh

Thursday, October 31 at 8:00 p.m.  
Friday, November 1 at 8:00 p.m.  
Saturday, November 2 at 2:00 and 8:00 p.m.  
Sunday, November 3 at 4:00 p.m.

Composed by the creators of *Wicked, Godspell, Annie, Bye Bye Birdie* and other American classics, *Rags* is a heart-warming and powerful tale showcasing the grit and optimism of immigrants arriving in Ellis Island at the turn of the 20th century. Mason’s School of Theater has a rare opportunity to work with the award-winning creative team on this new adaptation of a hidden musical gem. Be among the first to hear *Rags*’ newly revised libretto in this D.C.-area premiere, and take in the ravishing score and sweeping saga of American’s immigrant past blending with new American values.

**Tickets to Rags** are $30 for adults and $15 for students, staff, seniors and groups. These are available in person at the Center for the Arts’ Ticket Office (open Tuesday to Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.), by phone at 703-993-2787, or online at [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

**George Mason University’s College of Visual and Performing Arts** provides an academic environment in which the arts are explored as individual disciplines and interdisciplinary forms

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that strengthen one another. The college prepares students for careers as creators, performers, teachers, scholars, arts leaders, and arts entrepreneurs. Understanding that an education in the arts is deepened by regular contact with the work of distinguished visiting artists, the Center for the Arts, the professional presentation and production arm of the college, welcomes a variety of professional and world-renowned artists, musicians and actors to its stage. Students have the opportunity to perform, create and exhibit their work in a wide variety of public venues including a 2,000-seat Concert Hall. The college is home to the Schools of Music, Dance, Art and Theater, as well as the Computer Game Design, Arts Management, and Film and Video Studies programs. [https://cvpa.gmu.edu](https://cvpa.gmu.edu)

**About George Mason University**

George Mason University is Virginia’s largest public research university. Located near Washington, D.C., Mason enrolls 37,000 students from 130 countries and all 50 states. Mason has grown rapidly over the past half-century and is recognized for its innovation and entrepreneurship, remarkable diversity and commitment to accessibility.

For more information, please visit:

George Mason University’s Center for the Arts

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