



American Repertory Theater
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Rehearsals Begin for the World Premiere Musical
WAITRESS
Book by Jessie Nelson
Music & Lyrics by Sara Bareilles
Based on the Motion Picture Written by Adrienne Shelly
Directed by Diane Paulus
Choreography by Chase Brock

Complete Casting Announced

Production runs at the Loeb Drama Center August 2 — September 27

Cambridge, Mass — The American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) at Harvard University, under the leadership of Artistic Director Diane Paulus, began rehearsals today for the world premiere musical **Waitress**. Based on the motion picture written by **Adrienne Shelly** the new musical has a book by **Jessie Nelson**, music and lyrics by **Sara Bareilles**, direction by **Diane Paulus**, and choreography by **Chase Brock**.

The complete cast includes **Jessie Mueller** as Jenna, **Jeanna de Waal** as Dawn, **Drew Gehling** as Dr. Pomatter, **Dakin Matthews** as Joe, **Keala Settle** as Becky, **Eric Anderson** as Cal, **Jeremy Morse** as Ogie, and **Joe Tippett** as Earl. Ensemble members are **Charity Angel Dawson**, **David Jennings**, **Corey Mach**, **Ragan Pharris**, **Cullen R. Titmas**, and **Stephanie Torns**. Set design is by **Scott Pask**, costumes by **Suttirat Larlarb**, lighting by **Ken Posner**, and sound by **Jonathan Deans**. Casting by Telsey & Company.

Jenna, a waitress and expert pie maker, is stuck in a small town and a loveless marriage. When a baking contest in a nearby county offers her a chance at escape, Jenna must weigh her commitments against a rare shot at freedom and recognition. Her customers, co-workers, and the town's handsome new doctor all offer her conflicting recipes for happiness — but Jenna must ultimately decide for herself. Featuring music and lyrics by Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter Sara Bareilles ("Brave," "Love Song") and directed by Diane Paulus (**Pippin**, **Finding Neverland**), this poignant and uplifting new musical celebrates talent hiding in the most unlikely places.

Performance dates are:

August 2, 4-8, 11-15, 18-22, 25-29, September 1-5, 8-12, 15-19, and 22-26 at 7:30PM

August 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 26, 29, 30, September 2, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 19, 20, 23, 26, and 27 at 2:00PM

Press Opening: From August 19; invitations will be sent out in late July

Location: Loeb Drama Center, 64 Brattle Street, Cambridge

Single Tickets from \$25 are now on sale.

Ticket Services: 617.547.8300, Tuesday – Sunday 12:00PM – 5:00PM or visit us on line at <http://americanrepertorytheater.org/waitress>

About the Principals:

Jessie Mueller won the 2014 Tony Award for her role as Carole King in *Beautiful, The Carole King Musical* and made her Broadway debut opposite Harry Connick Jr. in *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*. She was also seen on Broadway in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Drama Desk nomination), and *Nice Work If You Can Get It*. In her native Chicago, Mueller has won acclaim for starring roles in *She Loves Me*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Curtains* and *Carousel* (Joseph Jefferson Award), among other musicals.

Eric Anderson's recent work on Broadway includes *The Last Ship*, *Rocky*, *Soul Doctor*, *Kinky Boots*, and the Lincoln Center production of *South Pacific*, which was also telecast nationwide. He was nominated for a Drama Desk Award in 2013, won the inaugural Joel Hirschhorn Award awarded by the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle, two San Diego Critics Circle Craig Noel Awards and multiple Backstage West Garlands. He was seen on television in "The Good Wife," "Law & Order: CI" and "Alias."

Jeanna de Waal played the role of Mrs. Barrie in *Finding Neverland* at the A.R.T. last season. On Broadway was seen as Lauren in *Kinky Boots*, Heather in *American Idiot* and Chris Hargensen in *Carrie* off-Broadway. Her other credits include Glinda in the national tour of *Wicked*, *We Will Rock You* on the West End and Janet in *The Rocky Horror Show* at the Old Globe in San Diego. She can be heard on the cast album of *Carrie*.

Drew Gehling was previously seen at the A.R.T. in *Johnny Baseball*. He made his Broadway debut as Bob Gaudio in *Jersey Boys* and played Warren Smith in the Broadway revival of *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*. He appeared off-Broadway in the musicals *A Minister's Wife* and *Anne of Green Gables*.

Dakin Matthews played multiple roles in the A.R.T.'s production of *All the Way*. His Broadway credits include *The Best Man* (Senator Carlin), *A Man for All Seasons* (Cardinal Wolsey), *Henry IV* (Warwick/Glendower, Bayfield and Drama Desk Award). He appeared in *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well That Ends Well* at The Public Theater and *Freedomland* at Playwrights Horizons; Regional credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Old Globe, *Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vanya* at A.C.T., and *Shadowlands* and *Misalliance* at South Coast Repertory. He was seen in the films *Lincoln* and *True Grit* and on television in "Gilmore Girls," "Desperate Housewives," and "King of Queens."

Jeremy Morse was nominated for a Drama Desk Award for originating the role of Lo Cocodrilo in Joe Iconis's *Bloodsong of Love* off-Broadway at Ars Nova. Last year he starred as J. Pierrepont Finch in the Walnut Street Theatre's production of *How To Succeed...* and performed off-Broadway at the Duke Theatre in Prospect Theatre Company's *The Underclassman*.

Keala Settle originated the role of Norma in *Hands on a Hardbody* on Broadway, and was nominated for a Tony, a Drama Desk, and an Outer Critics Circle Award. Other Broadway credits include Mme. Thénadier in *Les Misérables* and Shirley in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*; she played Tracy in the national tour of *Hairspray* and Bloody Mary in the national tour of the Lincoln Center production of *South Pacific*.

Joe Tippett was recently seen in the Tony-nominated Broadway production of *Airline Highway*; other credits include *Familiar* at Yale Repertory Theatre, *Bull Durham* at the Alliance Theatre, and *Ashville* at the Rattlestick Playwrights Theater. He played the role of Cal in the television series "Boardwalk Empire."

About the Creative Team:

Jessie Nelson is an American screenwriter, director, and producer. She is best known for writing, directing, and producing *I Am Sam* with Sean Penn and Michelle Pfeiffer, which won the Stanley Kramer Award in the US and the Naguib Mahfouz Award at the Cairo International Film Festival. Her other films include *Corrina, Corrina* (writer, director, producer), *Stepmom* (writer), *The Story of Us* (writer, producer), *Because I Said So* (writer, producer), *Fred Claus* (writer, producer), *Let it Snow* (director, writer), and *Danny Collins* (producer), among others.

Sara Bareilles first achieved mainstream critical praise in 2007 with her widely successful hit, "Love Song" which reached #1 in 22 countries around the world from her debut album *LITTLE VOICE*. Since then, the Eureka, CA native has sold millions of albums worldwide and has gone on to receive 5 Grammy nominations throughout her career, including Song of the Year and Best Female Pop Vocal Performance for "Love Song." Bareilles' albums include *KALEIDOSCOPE HEART* (debuted at #1 on the Billboard top 200, including the hit single "King of Anything," which earned a Grammy nomination for Best Female Pop Vocal Performance and was certified platinum by the RIAA); *ONCE UPON ANOTHER TIME EP* (produced by singer/songwriter and fellow "Sing-Off" judge Ben Folds); *THE BLESSED UNREST* (debuted at #2 on the Billboard album chart and was nominated for two Grammy Awards including the coveted "Album of the Year" and "Best Pop Performance" for her hit single "Brave"). In 2011, Bareilles joined the judges' panel on the hit NBC show "The Sing-Off." Her upcoming book, *Sounds Like Me: My Life (So Far) In Song*, will be published in October by Simon & Schuster.

Diane Paulus is the Artistic Director of the A.R.T. Her directing credits at the A.R.T. include Matthew Aucoin's world premiere opera ***Crossing, Finding Neverland*** (now playing on Broadway), ***Witness Uganda***, created by Matt Gould and Griffin Matthews, recipient of the 2012 Richard Rodgers Award for Musical Theater (opening off-Broadway November 2015 at 2ndStage Theatre as *Invisible Thread*); ***Pippin***, by Stephen Schwartz and Roger O. Hirson (2013 Tony Award-winner for Best Revival of a Musical, currently on a national tour); ***The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess***, adapted by Suzan Lori-Parks and Deidre Murray (2012 Tony Award-winner for Best Revival of a Musical); ***Prometheus Bound***, a new musical inspired by Aeschylus's tragedy, written by Tony Award-winner Steven Sater (*Spring Awakening*) with music composed by Grammy Award-winner Serj Tankian; Tod Machover's ***Death and the Powers: The Robots' Opera***, finalist for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music; ***The Donkey Show***, a disco adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; ***Best of Both Worlds***, a re-envisioning of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* with book and lyrics by Randy Weiner and music by Diedre Murray; ***Johnny Baseball***, a musical about the Red Sox created by Robert Reale, Willie Reale, and Richard Dresser. Her other recent work includes *Amaluna*, Cirque du Soleil's newest creation which had its world premiere in Montreal in April 2012 and is currently on tour in the US; The Public Theater's Tony Award-winning revival of *HAIR* on Broadway and London's West End. As an opera director, her credits include *The Magic Flute*, *Il mondo della luna*, *Don Giovanni*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, and the Monteverdi trilogy *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, and *Orfeo*. Diane is a Professor of the Practice in Theater in Harvard University's English Department. She was named one of *Boston Magazine*'s "50 Most Powerful Bostonians" in 2012 and was awarded the 2012 Founders Award for Excellence in Directing from the Drama League. Recently, Diane was selected as one of *Variety*'s "Trailblazing Women in Entertainment for 2014" and *Boston Magazine*'s "50 Thought Leaders of 2014" and was named one of the "50 Most Powerful Women in New York" by the *New York Daily News*, as well as *TIME Magazine*'s annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Chase Brock is a choreographer working in theater, modern dance, ballet, opera, television, and video games. Current projects include Disney's new stage adaptation of Alan Menken and Stephen Schwartz's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* for La Jolla Playhouse and Paper Mill Playhouse, and Duncan Sheik and Steven Sater's new musical *Alice By Heart*. Recent credits include Matt Sax and Eric Rosen's hip-hop musical *Venice* for The Public Theater, Sam Gold's hit revival of *The Cradle Will Rock* for Encores! Off-Center and Lear deBessonet and Todd Almond's *The Tempest* for The Public Theater in Central Park. He also choreographed Bartlett Sher's production of Gounod's opera *Roméo et Juliette* at the Salzburger Festspiele. Television

choreography includes "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver" for HBO, "Late Show with David Letterman" and "Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade." Video game choreography includes the bestselling video game Dance on Broadway for Nintendo Wii and PlayStation Move.

The **American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.)** at Harvard University is a leading force in the American theater, producing groundbreaking work in Cambridge and beyond. The A.R.T. was founded in 1980 by Robert Brustein, who served as Artistic Director until 2002, when Robert Woodruff succeeded him. Diane Paulus began her tenure as Artistic Director in 2008. Under her leadership, the A.R.T. seeks to expand the boundaries of theater by programming events that immerse audiences in transformative theatrical experiences.

Throughout its history, the A.R.T. has been honored with many distinguished awards, including the Tony Award for Best New Play for ***All the Way*** (2014); consecutive Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Musical for ***Pippin*** (2013) and ***The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*** (2012), both of which Paulus directed; a Pulitzer Prize for Marsha Norman's ***'Night, Mother*** (1983); a Jujamcyn Prize for outstanding contribution to the development of creative talent; the Tony Award for Best Regional Theater; and numerous Elliot Norton and IRNE Awards.

As the professional theater on the campus of Harvard University, the A.R.T. catalyzes discourse, interdisciplinary collaboration, and creative exchange among a wide range of academic departments, institutions, students, and faculty members, acting as a conduit between its community of artists and the university. A.R.T. artists also teach undergraduate courses in directing, dramatic literature, acting, voice, design, and dramaturgy. The A.R.T. Institute for Advanced Theater Training, which is run in partnership with the Moscow Art Theater School, offers graduate-level training in acting, dramaturgy, and voice.

Dedicated to making great theater accessible, the A.R.T. actively engages more than 5,000 community members and local students annually in project-based partnerships, workshops, conversations with artists, and other enrichment activities both at the theater and across the Greater Boston area. The A.R.T.'s club theater, OBERON, has become an incubator for local and emerging artists and has attracted national attention for its innovative programming and business models.

Through all of these initiatives, the A.R.T. is dedicated to producing world-class performances in which the audience is central to the theatrical experience.

For further information, visit **americanrepertorytheater.org**