

# NEWS RELEASE

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## CAST ANNOUNCED FOR GOODSPEED'S NEW VERSION OF RAGS

*A bold refocusing of the musical by Broadway legends Strouse, Schwartz, and Stein*

*with a revised book by David Thompson is set for The Goodspeed this fall*

EAST HADDAM, CONN August 31, 2017: Join Rebecca and David Hershkowitz as they journey to a “brand new world” in Goodspeed’s reinvented **Rags**. Original creators **Charles Strouse** and **Stephen Schwartz** have teamed up with **David Thompson**, who has adapted **Joseph Stein’s** book, to rework this timely and inspiring piece. Goodspeed explores the grit and determination of American immigrants through this joyous reimagining of a musical by some of Broadway’s biggest legends. *Rags* will run October 6 – December 10 at The Goodspeed in East Haddam, Conn [Official Press Opening will be October 25, 2017].

Welcome to the new world! Fresh from Ellis Island, a young mother and her son search for a new life and a sense of home as the 20th century beckons. The streets of Manhattan’s Lower East Side may not be paved with gold, but they echo with the music of opportunity, optimism and hope. A ravishing score by the songwriters of **Annie** and **Wicked** colors a sweeping saga of America’s immigrant past. Celebrate our rich roots in Goodspeed’s new adaptation of a neglected masterpiece of the musical theatre. *Rags* is made possible in part by support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Lucille Lortel Foundation, Eversource Energy, and Amica Insurance.

*Rags* features music by Charles Strouse, original book by Joseph Stein, lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, revised book by David Thompson and vocal arrangements are by **David Loud**. *Rags* will be Directed by **Rob Ruggiero**.

**Samantha Massell** will play Rebecca Hershkowitz. Ms. Massell recently performed the role of Hodel in the 2015 Tony nominated Broadway revival of **Fiddler on the Roof**. She performed in the Broadway production of **La Bohème** and the New York City Center ENCORES! productions of **Little Me** and **It’s a Bird, It’s a Plane ...It’s Superman**. Regionally she performed as Florika (Esmerelda U/S) in the La Jolla and Paper Mill Play House productions of **The Hunchback of Notre Dame**, and in The MUNY productions of **Aladdin**, **Into the Woods** and **Bye Bye Birdie**. David Hershkowitz will be played by Connecticut native **Christian Michael Camporin**, who was in the original Broadway productions of **Finding Neverland**, covering both the roles of Michael Llewelyn Davies and Jack Llewelyn Davies, and **Matilda The Musical** in the role of Eric.

Sal Russo will be played by **Sean MacLaughlin** who made his Broadway debut as Raoul in **The Phantom of the Opera**. **Sara Kapner** will be playing Bella Cohen. On stage, Ms. Kapner was most recently

seen performing in the MUNY's 2015 production of *Into the Woods*, but can also be seen in ***Twisted Sisters*** and ***The Murder Pact***, which are both currently running on Lifetime TV. Returning to the Goodspeed stage after playing Teyve in 2014's ***Fiddler on the Roof*** as well as performing in Goodspeed's ***A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*** (Pseudolus) and ***A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*** (Harry) is **Adam Heller** who will be playing Avram Cohen. Mr. Heller's most recent Broadway credits include Uncle Morty in the Original Broadway Production of ***It Shoulda Been You, Elf The Musical***, and ***Baby It's You!***

**Mitch Greenberg** returns to Goodspeed as Jack Blumberg having previously performed in ***Cutman the musical*** and ***You Never Know***. On Broadway, Mr. Greenberg was in the 2015 Revival of ***Fiddler on the Roof*** and the Broadway hit ***It Shoulda Been You***. The role of Anna Blumberg will be played by **Emily Zacharias** who made her Broadway debut in ***Chu Chem*** as Lotte. Ms. Zacharias was also in the original Broadway production of ***Jekyll & Hyde*** as Guinevere. Also returning to Goodspeed in the role of Rachel Brodsky will be **Lori Wilner** who previously performed the as Golde in Goodspeed's 2014 production of ***Fiddler on the Roof***. Additionally, Ms. Wilner played Grandma Tzeitel in the 2015 Broadway revival of ***Fiddler on the Roof***.

Returning to The Goodspeed stage having wowed audiences as Billy Crocker in the 2016 hit ***Anything Goes***, **David Harris** will perform the role of Max Bronfman. Earlier this year, Mr. Harris was seen in the role of Father in Barrington Stage's production of ***Ragtime*** and as Dan Goodman in TheaterWorks' acclaimed production of ***Next to Normal***. **Nathan Salstone** will be playing Ben Levitowitz. A recent graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, Mr. Salstone's one-man play ***All Anonymous*** featuring original music and lyrics premiered at The Carnegie Mellon School of Drama's 'Playground' in December 2016.

The members of the Quintet include **JD Daw** who recently performed the roles of Doctor Madden in TheaterWorks' production of ***Next to Normal***, Jacey in The Muny's production of ***The Music Man*** and Sir Dennis Galahad in North Shore Music Theatre's ***Spamalot***. Joining him will be **Ellie Fishman** whose credits include ***A Christmas Story*** at Paper Mill Playhouse and both ***Beauty and the Beast*** and ***My Fair Lady*** at The MUNY. **Danny Lindgren** returns to Goodspeed as a member of the Quintet having previously appeared on The Goodspeed stage as Clark Gable in ***Chasing Rainbows***, as Smokey in ***Damn Yankees*** and as Jake in ***The Most Happy Fella***. Some of Mr. Lindgren's favorite credits include Benny in ***Guy and Dolls*** and Will Parker in ***Oklahoma!*** both at Finger Lakes Music Theatre Festival and Nephew Fred in ***A Christmas Carol*** at The McCarter Theatre. **Sarah Solie** whose many Broadway credits include the original Broadway productions of ***Mary Poppins***, ***High Society***, ***Beauty and the Beast*** and ***Cats*** and **Jeff Williams** who made his Broadway debut in the 2000 revival of ***The Music Man*** and was most recently performed in the Off-Broadway production of ***Death for Five Voices*** round out the Quintet. The swings will be **Catalina Gaglioti**, (Goodspeed's Festival of New Musicals ***We Foxes*** ,Off-Broadway's ***Temple of the Souls*** ) and **Giovanni DiGabriele** (Second National Tour of ***Cinderella***). **Gordon Beck** will understudy the role of David Hershkowitz.

*Rags* will be directed **Rob Ruggiero** who has directed numerous Goodspeed productions including ***Carousel***, ***Camelot***, ***Show Boat***, ***1776*** and ***Fiddler on the Roof***. He has received numerous

awards and nominations for his regional work including multiple Connecticut Critics Circle Awards. Mr. Ruggiero conceived and directed the original musical revue ***Make Me a Song: The Music of William Finn***

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which garnered him nominations for both Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards. Mr. Ruggiero currently serves as the Producing Artistic Director at TheaterWorks in Hartford, where he conceived and directed the highly successful ***Ella***, a production that received Kevin Kline and Joseph Jefferson Awards and has since been produced at major regional theaters around the country.

Choreography will be by **Parker Esse** who returns to Goodspeed where his previous credits include ***Fiddler on the Roof***, ***A Wonderful Life***, ***The Most Happy Fella*** and ***Carousel***. Mr. Esse choreographed Sondheim and Marsalis' ***A Bed and A Chair: A New York Love Affair*** at New York City Center and Jazz at Lincoln Center. He is a three-time Helen Hayes nominee and 2010 winner for Best Choreography for Arena Stage's ***Oklahoma!*** Mr. Esse has served as Associate Choreographer for Broadway's ***Finian's Rainbow***, ***A Tale of Two Cities*** and multiple New York City Center Encores! productions.

Scenic design will be by **Michael Schweikardt** who has designed several shows at Goodspeed including ***Fiddler on the Roof***, ***The Most Happy Fella***, ***Carousel***, ***Show Boat***, and ***Big River***. He received a Broadway World Award for Best Scenic Design for ***Showboat*** as well as a Connecticut Critic's Circle Award for Best Scenic Design for ***Big River***. Mr. Schweikardt has designed the world premieres of ***Nobody Loves You*** and Duncan Sheik's ***Whisper House*** at The Old Globe as well as the Off-Broadway production of ***Bloodsong of Love*** at Ars Nova and several productions at TheaterWorks in Hartford. Other Off-Broadway credits include ***ReWrite*** (Urban Stages), ***The Black Suits*** (The Public Theater), ***Things to Ruin*** (Second Stage, The Zipper Factory), ***The Plant That Ate Dirty Socks*** (TheatreWorks USA) and ***Tryst*** (Irish Rep). Additionally, he has designed for theatres such as The MUNY, Papermill Playhouse, Long Wharf Theatre, Cleveland Playhouse and California Musical Theatre.

Costume design will be by Tony Award winner **Linda Cho** who returns to Goodspeed where she previously created the costumes for ***A Little Night Music***. Her designs can currently be seen in the Broadway production of ***Anastasia*** for which she was nominated for a Tony Award, Outer Critics' Circle Award and Drama Desk Award. Ms. Cho won the Antoinette Perry and Henry Hewes Design Award for her work on ***A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder***. Ms. Cho received the 2017 Ruth Morley Design Award from the League of Professional Theatre Women. Other credits include designing for places such the Theater for a New Audience, Second Stage, Manhattan Theater Club, NY Public Theater, Asia Society, Classic Stage Company, Hartford Stage, Long Wharf Theater, Westport Country Playhouse, Royal Shakespeare Company and Hong Kong Performing Arts Center.

Lighting design will be by **John Lasiter** who has designed Goodspeed's productions of ***Fiddler on the Roof***, ***The Most Happy Fella***, ***Show Boat***, ***Carousel*** among others. Other Connecticut credits include, designs for Long Wharf Theater, Hartford Stage and TheaterWorks. On Broadway, Mr. Lasiter designed ***High***, and Off-Broadway, he designed ***Make Me a Song: The Music of William Finn***.

Sound design will be by **Jay Hilton** who has designed countless productions at both The Terris Theatre and The Goodspeed. His work has also been heard on Broadway, National Tours and regional theatres from coast to coast. He also serves as Goodspeed's audio supervisor.

Wig and Hair design will be by **Mark Adam Rampmeyer** whose work can be seen in Goodspeeds current production of ***Oklahoma!***. Other Goodspeed credits include ***Thoroughly Modern***

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**Millie**; *Anything Goes*; ***Bye Bye Birdie*** and *Chasing Rainbows*, as well as ***La Cage aux Folles***, ***Good News!***, ***42nd Street*** and *Big River* to name a few. On Broadway, he designed ***West Side Story***, ***Lysistrata Jones*** and ***The Farnsworth Invention***.

The Music Director will be **Michael O’Flaherty** who is in his 26<sup>th</sup> season as Goodspeed’s Resident Music Director. His Broadway credits include *By Jeeves* and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. O’Flaherty has written music and lyrics for *A Connecticut Christmas Carol* which will be produced at The Terris Theatre this fall. Orchestrations will be provided by **Dan DeLange** who has created the orchestrations for over 40 Goodspeed productions. His orchestrations for *Show Boat* have been nominated for the Best Revival Musical Oliver Award in London. Vocal Arrangements will be by David Loud who returns to Goodspeed having previously provided arrangements for ***Red, Hot and Blue*** and served as Music Director for ***Band Geeks!*** at The Terris Theatre. Mr. Loud’s Broadway credits include vocal and dance arrangements for ***Sondheim on Sondheim***, vocal arrangements for ***Curtains***, ***The Boys from Syracuse***, and ***Steel Pier***. In addition, he has been credited as Conductor, Music Director and Music Supervisor for numerous Broadway productions. David Loud has created musical arrangements for **Audra McDonald**, **Barbara Cook**, **Betty Buckley**, **Andrea McArdle**, **Norm Lewis**, **Bernadette Peters**, **Paolo Szot** among others.

Casting for *Rags* is by **Paul Hardt** of Stewart/Whitley Casting.

*Rags* will run October 6 – December 10, 2017 [Official Press Opening October 25] Curtain times are Wednesday at 2:00p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Thursday at 7:30 p.m. (with select performances at 2:00 p.m.), Friday at 8:00 p.m., Saturday at 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. (with select performances at 6:30 p.m.).

Tickets are available through the Box Office (**860.873.8668**), open seven days a week, or online at **goodspeed.org**. For show highlights, exclusive photos, special events and more, visit us at **goodspeed.org** and follow us on [Facebook](#), Twitter [@goodspeedmusicl](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

Under the leadership of Executive Director Michael Gennaro, Goodspeed Musicals is dedicated to the preservation, development and advancement of musical theatre. Goodspeed produces three musicals each season at The Goodspeed in East Haddam, Conn., and additional productions at The Terris Theatre in Chester, Conn., which was opened in 1984 for the development of new musicals. The first regional theatre to receive two Tony Awards (for outstanding achievement), Goodspeed also maintains The Scherer Library of Musical Theatre and The Max Showalter Center for Education in Musical Theatre. Goodspeed gratefully acknowledges the support of United Airlines, the official airline of Goodspeed Musicals; official audio sponsor Sennheiser; and official auto sponsor Hoffman Audi. Goodspeed is also grateful for the support of the Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts.

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## GOODSPEED MUSICALS

### *Rags* FACT SHEET

**Production:** *Rags*

**Music by:** Charles Strouse

**Book by:** Joseph Stein

**Lyrics by:** Stephen Schwartz

**Revised book by:** David Thompson

  

**Theatre:** The Goodspeed  
6 Main Street, East Haddam, Connecticut

  

**Director:** Rob Ruggiero

**Choreographer:** Parker Esse

**Scenic Designer:** Michael Schweikardt

**Costumer Designer:** Linda Cho

**Lighting Designer:** John Lasiter

**Sound Designer:** Jay Hilton

**Wig & Hair Designer:** Mark Adam Rampmeyer

**Orchestrations:** Dan DeLange

**Vocal Arrangements:** David Loud

**Music Director:** Michael O’Flaherty

  

**Principals:** Samantha Massell (Rebecca Hershkowitz)  
Christian Michael Camporin (David Hershkowitz)  
Sean MacLaughlin (Sal Russo)  
Sara Kapner (Bella Cohen)  
Adam Heller (Avram Cohen)  
Mitch Greenberg (Jack Blumberg)  
Emily Zacharias (Anna Blumberg)  
Nathan Salstone (Ben Levitowitz)  
David Harris (Max Bronfman)  
Lori Wilner (Rachel Brodsky)

  

**Quintet:** JD Daw  
Ellie Fishman  
Danny Lindgren  
Sarah Solie  
Jeff Williams

  

**Swings:** Giovanni DiGabrielle  
Catalina Gaglioti

  

**Understudy:** Gordon Beck

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**Description:** Welcome to the new world! Fresh from Ellis Island, a young mother and her son search for a new life and a sense of home as the 20th century beckons. The streets of Manhattan's Lower East Side may not be paved with gold, but they echo with the music of opportunity, optimism and hope. A ravishing score by the songwriters of *Annie* and *Wicked* colors a sweeping saga of America's immigrant past. Celebrate our rich roots in Goodspeed's new adaptation of a neglected masterpiece of the musical theatre.

**Dates:** October 6 – December 10, 2017

**Performances:** Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Thursday at 7:30 p.m., (with select performances at 2:00 p.m.), Friday at 8:00 p.m., Saturday at 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. (with select performances at 6:30 p.m.).

THANKSGIVING WEEK PERFORMANCES:

11/20: 2 & 7:30pm; 11/24: 2 & 8pm; 11/25: 3 & 8pm; 11/26: 2 & 6:30pm

**Tickets:** Start at \$29.00. All prices subject to change based on availability.

Goodspeed Box Office (860.873.8668) or online at [goodspeed.org](http://goodspeed.org)

### **Special Events:**

**Friday Dinner Theatre Package:** Includes dinner at the Gelston House (located next door to The Goodspeed) and a ticket to the 8pm performance. Only \$89!

**Sunday Sips Ticket & Drink Special:** Sunday, October 8, 6:30p.m. Includes a ticket to the show and a specialty cocktail in a souvenir cup. \$51 per person.

**Kids Nights:** October 11 & 12. 7:30p.m.; October 13, 8p.m. Each adult who buys a regular priced ticket for the specialty dates may purchase a \$15 ticket for a child ages 10-18. Meet the cast for autographs after the Friday, October 13 performance.

**Meet the Cast:** November 2, 16 & 30. 7:30p.m. FREE! A lively discussion with the cast after the specified Thursday evening performances.

**Lady Katherine Lunch Cruise:** Wednesday, October 11. Enjoy fall foliage along the beautiful Connecticut River! Add a leisurely cruise and sumptuous buffet aboard the Lady Katherine to your theatre ticket for just \$43. Pair an 11a.m. lunch cruise with the 2p.m. performance. The ship departs from and returns to the dock at The Goodspeed in East Haddam.

**Thanksgiving Food Drive: 2-for-1 Tickets:** Monday, November 20. 2:00p.m. & 7:30p.m. Buy one ticket, get one free for select seats for the 2:00p.m. or 7:30p.m. performances with a generous non-perishable food donation to benefit the East Haddam Food Bank. Additionally, Goodspeed will be collecting donations at all performances during Thanksgiving week, November 20-26.

**40 Below Tickets:** Patrons ages 21-40 can enjoy \$25 tickets for any evening performance between October 6 and October 22. Available in advance by visiting or calling The Goodspeed Box Office. Must present ID at pick-up. Not available for Season Tickets. This program is generously funded by *The Burry Fredrik Foundation*.

**Open Caption Performance:** Friday, December 1. 8:00p.m. Open-captioning is a service that displays the text of a show simultaneously with the performance without the use of any special equipment by the patron. The words are displayed on a 4-foot by 1-foot LCD screen located near the edge of the stage and are thus "open" to anyone within view. We recommend you book your tickets with a Box Office representative to ensure that you are seated in an area with the best view of the display. Please call 860.873.8668. Partial support for open captioning provided by Theatre Development Fund.

**Student Rush:** \$15 tickets available for any evening performance, beginning at 10am on the day of the show. Must present student ID at pick-up.

**Dinner Discounts:** Reserve tickets for a Wednesday, Thursday, or Sunday evening performance and enjoy special dinner offers at local restaurants.

ALL OFFERS ARE FOR SELECT SEATS AND ARE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY

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and Instagram: [goodspeedmusicals](#)

**[Headshots and show art available upon request: [elisa.hale@goodspeed.org](mailto:elisa.hale@goodspeed.org) ]**  
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