

The 7th Annual *Florida Festival of New Musicals* at The Winter Park Playhouse Announces Winning Selections for June 2024

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Excitement is in the air as The Winter Park Playhouse announces the six winning selections for its 7th annual Florida Festival of New Musicals now scheduled for June 20-23, 2024.

The Festival, which showcases new musical theatre works, is one of very few in the nation and certainly the only one of its kind in the Southeast region.

The Festival has been created to advance and elevate the original American art form of musical theatre by fostering the development of new musicals and the artistic growth of writers and composers.

The 4-day event will showcase six new musical works and bring together writers and composers with patrons, press, producers and directors. A one-hour version of each selected musical will be fully read and sung concert-style, without staging, by varying casts of professional actors and musicians.

Audiences will have the unique and exciting opportunity to see musicals in the early stages of development and provide feedback about the new musical after the reading.

The Florida Festival of New Musicals will be held June 20-23, 2024 at The Winter Park Playhouse, 711 Orange Avenue Winter Park, FL 32789. Presenting sponsors for the event are Dr. Judith Marlowe and Mr. Gordon Blicht.

Tickets are currently on sale. Ticket price is \$10 per show and a 6-show "Festival Fun Pass" is \$50. To purchase tickets, get the Festival schedule and receive more information, visit online www.winterparkplayhouse.org or call the Box Office at 407-645-0145.

The six featured musicals will be:

Carolina Rising

Book, and Lyrics by Bryan Leys (New York, NY)

Music by Kevin Kuhn (New York, NY)

This kickin' new country western musical follows a woman's journey from local troublemaker to passionate activist, while balancing her feelings for two very different

men. Inspired by a true story, the hero, Crystal Ann McKay, won't be bowed or broken. She's a firebrand who learns that "Yankee don't mean enemy" and teaches that "country don't mean dumb."

Carolina Rising incorporates an original score featuring country, bluegrass, blues and gospel numbers.

Cheer Wars

Book and Lyrics by Gordon Leary (New York, NY)

Music by Karlan Judd (New York, NY)

Halle Bolingbroke is all but guaranteed to become the next captain of the New London Lady Leopard Varsity Cheer Squad. It's her senior year, she's been cheering all of her life, and her mom, Doretha, is both the former captain and current coach. Halle isn't feeling all that cheerful about her mother's brand of cheering, though, so she has taken a job at the local truckstop diner. Doretha will stop at nothing to maintain her cheer dynasty, but when her old rival, Nuella Percy, resurfaces with her cheerleading machine of a daughter, Charmain, the two women face off in a quest for captain hood, power, and cheer itself.

Cheer Wars is inspired by Shakespeare's *Henry IV, part 1* and the true story of Wanda Holloway.

Foodies

Book and Lyrics by Michael Kaplan (Morro Bay, CA)

Music by Michael Kaplan (Morro Bay, CA) and Jeff Mar (Cambria, CA)

A coming of middle-age musical comedy. A fussy eater who hates vegetables is mistaken for the guest of honor at a Food and Wine Festival. When he becomes infatuated with the woman running the festival weekend, he has to try and play the part of the honored guest as best as possible, despite the challenges involved.

In Emily's Words

Adapted from Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*

Book, Music and Lyrics by Jessy Tomsko (Astoria, NY)

This original musical tells the story of English novelist Emily Brontë as she writes her magnum opus: *Wuthering Heights*. Emily's imagination knew no bounds, and in spite of having seen very little in the world, she was able to craft a sweeping melodrama that has left a legacy nearly two hundred years after her death.

Julie Bunny Must Die!
(newly revised / remastered)

Book, Lyrics and Music by Ned Wilkinson (Winter Park, FL)

Cartoonist Adam Chase wants only to create and sell his independent comic book “Julie Bunny: International Spy” but his real life situations and his imaginary characters threaten to knock him off course. Will these stumbling blocks stop him from success? Will help arrive in time? This whimsical musical marries reality and fantasy, while exploring what it takes to bring art to life.

Promise You'll Shoot Me

Book by Michael Rogers (Montclair, NJ) and Bill Wandel (Howell, MI)

Music by Bill Wandel (Howell, MI)

The Kevorkians, a secret club of senior citizens living at the Four Seasons Retirement Home, have botched their attempt to dispatch one of their own. Failing in their promise to end each other’s suffering, the group is at their wit’s end when swashbuckling Eddy bursts onto the scene and situational comedy ensues. In the end, the Kervorkians navigate the curve balls of old age and by embracing hope, friendship and love, they learn that the golden years can really be golden.

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The Winter Park Playhouse is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and a professional theatre proudly affiliated with Actors' Equity Association and The National Alliance For Musical Theatre.