

ANNOUNCEMENT

'Paradise Square,' produced by Garth Drabinsky, announces Broadway run

By **Caitlin Huston** - 1 day ago



The company of 'Paradise Square' at Berkeley Rep. (Photo: Kevin Berne)

"Paradise Square," a new musical about race relations in New York during the 1860s, has announced a Broadway run at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre this winter.

The musical, produced by Garth Drabinsky, will star Joaquina Kalukango ("Slave Play") in a run starting Feb. 22, 2022 and an opening night on March 20. The musical will come to Broadway after a five-week engagement starting this November at Chicago's James M. Nederlander Theatre.

The production marks Drabinsky's return to Broadway following his 2009 conviction on charges of fraud and forgery, and his subsequent prison sentence. The charges arose from Drabinsky's time leading production company Livent, which produced "Ragtime" and "Kiss of the Spider Woman" on Broadway and several large musicals in Canada including "The Phantom of the Opera" and "Sunset Boulevard."

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The story takes place in the Five Points neighborhood of New York in 1863, at which time Irish immigrants, free Black Americans and those who had escaped slavery co-existed together. The production credits the mixture of communities in Five Points with the creation of tap dance.

Additional cast members include Chilina Kennedy (“Beautiful”), John Dossett (“Pippin”), Sidney DuPont (“Beautiful”), A.J. Shively (“Bright Star”), Nathaniel Stampley (“The Color Purple”), Gabrielle McClinton (“Pippin”), Jacob Fishel (“Fiddler on the Roof”) and Kevin Dennis.

“Paradise Square” features songs by composer Stephen Foster, who lived in the Five Points neighborhood of the Lower East Side during the musical’s time period, as well as original songs by musical theater writers Jason Howland, Nathan Tysen, Masi Asare and Larry Kirwan, lead singer of the rock band Black 47. Kirwan’s original musical “Hard Times” provided the basis for “Paradise Square.”

The world premiere of “Paradise Square” was produced at Berkeley Repertory Theatre in January 2019.

The musical is directed by Moises Kaufman, director of “The Laramie Project,” and features choreography by Bill T. Jones and a book by Christina Anderson, Marcus Gardley, Craig Lucas and Kirwan.

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