

9 July 2021

FULL CAST ANNOUNCED FOR *CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY* PREMIERE QUEENSLAND SEASON

Following auditions by more than 300 hopeful artists in Brisbane and around the country (via video calls), the full cast of this September's Queensland premiere season of Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was unveiled today coinciding with World Chocolate Day (7 July).

Further "sweet" news also revealed an extra week has been added to the season falling within the September school holidays. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* will now run from **2 to 26 September 2021** with new seats on sale today.

After a comprehensive search, 15 artists were thrilled to receive a 'Golden Ticket', joining 22 cast members of the multi-Helpmann Award nominated musical returning from the Sydney and Melbourne seasons.

The full company comprises 10 Queenslanders playing lead and ensemble roles.

Three Queensland boys will finally have the chance to redeem *their* Golden Tickets, having been cast in the role of Charlie in the scheduled QPAC 2020 season that had to be cancelled due to COVID-19.

The role of **Charlie Bucket** will be played **Phineas Knickerbocker** (12 Mackenzie), **Cooper Matthews**, (12 Paddington) and **Flynn Nowlan**, (13 Nerang). **Edgar Stirling** (12) will also play Charlie, reprising the role from the Melbourne season of the production.

In this stage adaptation of the much-loved Roald Dahl classic, Charlie lives with his mother and his four grandparents in a little wooden house near a great town and is the final child to find a Golden Ticket to tour the Wonka Chocolate Factory.

Willy Wonka, the most amazing, fantastic, extraordinary chocolate maker the world has ever seen, will be played by **Stephen Anderson**, who is delighted to be re-joining the cast of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* having previously played Mr Salt in premiere Sydney and Melbourne seasons. Stephen's most recent theatre roles included playing Father Alex in *Mamma Mia!* and he was an original cast member of the Australian and New Zealand tour of *Matilda the Musical* playing Sergei (understudying Miss Trunchbull and Mr Wormwood). His many theatre credits include: *Falsettos* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company); *Man of La Mancha* (Squabbalogic); *The Light in the Piazza* (NIDA); and *A Year with Frog and Toad* (Ensemble Theatre); as well as working extensively with Tall Stories and CDP Theatre Producers, including the original Australian productions of *The Gruffalo*, *The Gruffalo's Child* and *Room on the Broom*. In 2014 he was nominated for a Sydney Theatre Award: Judith Johnson Award for Best Performance by an Actor in a Musical for his role in *Falsettos*.

Ninety-and-a-half-year-old **Grandpa Joe**, an enthusiastic storyteller and eternal optimist, is to be played by acclaimed actor, **Robert Grubb**, who will be well known to audiences from his extensive work within Australian theatre, film and television. Robert was most recently seen in *Billy Elliot* as *George*, the boxing coach. He has delighted audiences in *My Fair Lady* as Alfred Doolittle for Opera Australia, for which he received a Helpmann nomination, played the title role in Ken Hill's *The Phantom of the Opera* and captured everyone's heart as Pop in *We Will Rock You*, which earned him a Helpmann Award for Best Male Actor in a Supporting Role. Robert's many film credits include *Waiting at the Royal*, *Paradise Road*, *Phar Lap*, Peter Weir's *Gallipoli* and *My Brilliant Career*, for which he received the industry's award for Best Supporting Actor. Robert also has a long list of TV credits to his name including Dr Geoff Standish in *The Flying Doctors*, most recently Detective Graves in *Neighbours* and is still warmly remembered as Barry Boston in *Seachange*.

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Reprising the role of **Mrs Bucket**, a kind, caring mother and a woman of few words, will be musical theatre star, **Lucy Maunder**, who was nominated for Best Supporting Actress in a Musical at the Helpmann Awards for this role. Recent previous roles for Lucy include playing songwriter Cynthia Weil in *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, prior to that starring in *Matilda: The Musical* and as Lara in *Dr Zhivago* and Rizzo in *Grease*.

Other lead roles in this captivating musical include the four other children who find a Golden Ticket to visit Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory and their accompanying parent. The role of **Augustus Gloop** will be played by **Jaxon Graham Wilson** who originates from Ipswich, with **Mrs Gloop** played by **Octavia Barron Martin**. **Karina Russell** and **Simon Russell** are **Veruca Salt** and **Mr Salt**, **Tarisai Vushe** plays **Violet Beauregard** with **Madison McKoy** as **Mr Beauregard**, and **Taylor Scanlan** and **Johanna Allen** are **Mike Teavee** and his Mother, **Mrs Teavee**.

Completing the talented cast are **Sheridan Anderson**, **Lily Boulderstone**, **Hayden Baum**, **Jared Bryan**, **Emily Casey**, **Lauren Cheok**, **Euan Doidge**, **Todd Goddard**, **Madison Green**, **Jillian Green**, **David Hammond**, **James Haxby**, **Sasha Lian-Diniz**, **Kassie Martin**, **Katie McKee**, **Ana Mitsikas**, **Josh Mulheran**, **Adam Noviello**, **Glen Oliver**, **Bronson Pfeiler**, **Jackson Reedman** and **Celina Yuen**.

QPAC and producers John Frost for Crossroads Live, Warner Bros Theatre Ventures, Langley Park Productions and Neal Street Productions are delighted with the calibre of the cast secured to play roles in the first-ever Queensland season of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

"We are thrilled to have three such talented local boys playing the role of Charlie, to be joined by one of our fabulous Melbourne Charlies. The role of Charlie is huge – he's rarely off stage for the whole show – so it's great to have four young artists ready to portray this much-loved titular character," said John Frost (on behalf of the show's producers).

"In addition, our search has found an amazing group of accomplished triple threat artists, many who live in or have connections with Queensland, to perform alongside our sensational returning cast members in lead and ensemble roles.

"This full cast announcement is an exciting milestone. It brings us one step closer to sharing this beloved story that has captured hearts, firstly with Roald Dahl's bewitching tale, then with the 1971 Gene Wilder film. Now this fabulous cast is set to enchant Brisbane audiences, young and old, as they bring the magic of this nostalgic story to life on stage."

Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* features songs from the original film including *Pure Imagination*, *The Candy Man* and *I've Got a Golden Ticket* alongside a toe-tapping and ear-tickling new score from the songwriters of *Hairspray*.

Don't miss the chance to step inside a world of pure imagination and experience the wonders of Wonka like never before. Get ready for the Oompa-Loompas' incredible inventions, the great glass elevator and more in this everlasting showstopper.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory plays in QPAC's Lyric Theatre from **2 to 26 September 2021**. Tickets at qpac.com.au or phone 136-246.

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MEDIA RELEASE

**“★★★★★ Solid Gold
Daily Telegraph**

A joyous musical, a magical show
The AU Review

A chocolate box of tricks and special effects
Stage Whispers

Season Details

QPAC in association with John Frost for Crossroads Live, Warner Bros Theatre Ventures, Langley Park Productions and Neal Street Productions presents:

Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

WHEN: 2 –26 September 2021
WHERE: Lyric Theatre, QPAC, Queensland Cultural Centre, South Bank, Brisbane
TICKETS: qpac.com.au/event/charlie_chocolate_factory_21/
BOOKINGS: qpac.com.au or phone 136-246

Please go to the [QPAC Media Centre](#) for images.

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