



Winter 11-3-2015

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Recommended Citation

Phelps, Emily, "New Musical GIANT to Feature Kasprzak Choreography" (2015). *News and Events*. 2754.

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New Musical *GIANT* to Feature Kasprzak Choreography

Nov. 3, 2015

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University's **School of Theatre Arts** will present *GIANT* Nov. 17-22 in the first production of the musical after its New York City premiere.

Based on the classic novel by Pulitzer Prize-winner Edna Ferber, *GIANT* spans four decades in the life of a Texas cattleman, his Virginia bride, their family, friends and enemies. After premiering Off-Broadway in 2012, *GIANT* was nominated for nine Drama Desk Awards including those for Outstanding Musical, Lyrics, Music, Book and Orchestrations. The music and lyrics were written by Michael John LaChiusa, and orchestrations were done by Bruce Coughlin and Larry Hochman.

Illinois Wesleyan's production features the choreography of alumnus and professional dancer **Evan Kasprzak** '10. Kasprzak originated the role of "Elmer" in the Tony Award-winning *Newsies the Musical* on Broadway. He placed third in season five of the Fox program *So You Think You Can Dance*. For *GIANT*, Kasprzak noted the show spans several decades and various musical and dance styles, ranging from a Texas two-step through swing music to traditional dances from Mexico. "This is really fun as a choreographer, because it gives you a lot to play with," he said.

Associate Professor of Theatre Arts Scott Susong, who is also the head of the music theatre program, is directing *GIANT*. Curtain time is 8 p.m. each evening Nov. 17-21, with a 2 p.m. matinee on Nov. 22 at the Jerome Mirza Theatre at McPherson Hall, 2 Ames Plaza, Bloomington. Tickets are \$14 Friday and Saturday, \$12 for the other performances and are available in the McPherson Hall Box Office at (309) 556-3232.



Guest choreographer Evan Kasprzak '10 (left) rehearses a scene from *GIANT* with Kennv Tran

By Emily Phelps '19