

PARAMOUNT THEATRE  
Paramount Productions  
Fiddler on the Roof  
June 23-25, 2017

In the life-affirming Broadway musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, the invading Russian authority forces the Jewish inhabitants of a small Russian village to leave the only home they have ever known. At the end of the musical's second act, a simple and powerful exchange happens between one of the villagers and the beloved local Rabbi:

MOTEL: Rabbi, we have been waiting for the Messiah all our lives. Wouldn't now be a good time for Him to come?

RABBI: I guess we will have to wait someplace else.

Although the musical takes place in 1905 in Imperial Russia's Pale of Settlement, its exploration of tradition, of love crossing boundaries, and of the plight of the refugee continues to resonate today.

When Paramount Productions mounts its revival staging of the musical this June, the theatre hopes to elevate the show's timeless traditions, and re-energize them for a new and modern audience.

*Fiddler on the Roof*, one of the most frequently staged American musicals, tells the story of one family, headed by a strong-willed but loving father. Tevye, a poor milkman, struggles to hold on to Jewish tradition while listening to the wishes of his daughters who are quickly growing up and challenging him in the ways of love and of the world.

Paramount Theatre Artistic Director Barry Smoot will direct the production, with the assistance of a professional production staff that is embracing this unique challenge. Smoot explains:

"We want to pare the show down to its emotional and thematic base. We plan to stage *Fiddler on the Roof* much more intimately than is normally seen. We are also working to re-think the show's production design and find ways to make the visuals of the production serve the intimate nature of the staging. In doing this, we hope to find a fresh perspective on the story's characters and their strong relationships with family, community, and God."

Smoot used a similar approach with the theatre's 2015 production of *Les Miserables*, which was celebrated for its intimate, abstract staging that utilized an extension of the stage into the seats of the auditorium. He continued:

“Taking on the challenge of a classic piece of theatre is exciting. You are tasked with creating an atmosphere that is both familiar and thought-provoking to audiences. We hope to see *Fiddler on the Roof* with new eyes.”

Charlie Hukill, longtime McMurry University Theatre Department professor, will create the show’s scenic design. Hukill’s previous work for the Paramount includes his organic and atmospheric design for their 2014 production of the Frank Wildhorn musical *Bonnie & Clyde*.

Hollywood veteran Richard Transki will create the costumes for the production, continuing a long-standing relationship with Paramount Productions. His previous work includes *Into the Woods*, *Les Miserables*, *Bonnie & Clyde*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Parade*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, and *The Producers*.

The director will also serve as the choreographer for the production, with assistance from recent Abilene Christian University Theatre graduate Christian Zehr, whose credits for Paramount Productions include *Into the Woods* and most recently *The Robber Bridegroom* at THE MILL Wine Bar & Event Center.

*Fiddler on the Roof* will be presented on the landmark Paramount Stage June 23-25, 2017. Reserved seat tickets for the show are priced at \$25, \$20, \$15, and \$12 depending on location. For tickets visit <http://paramount-abilene.thundertix.com>.