



Tick...Tick...NEWS! Broadway Updates with Heather Power

Hello CFPA community and friends! Welcome to the 11th edition of *Tick...Tick...NEWS!* This week we are reporting on the latest Broadway updates and news, along with a special review of some local theatre as a new segment I'm trying out! Happy reading and remember to click the links throughout the article for videos!

Usher - Usher! *A Strange Loop* To Close on Broadway

Ugh, we have got to stop with all of these rapid fire Broadway closing announcements as of late!! A few short days ago, it was announced on the show's official Twitter page that *A Strange Loop*, Michael R. Jackson's Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award Winning musical, will be closing its doors on January 15th. This show joins another slew of Broadway shows closing in the New Year, including *The Music Man* and *Beetlejuice*.

This announcement was especially shocking to me considering *A Strange Loop*'s Best Musical Tony win, among many others.

Upon its closure, *A Strange Loop* will become the third shortest running Best Musical winner in Broadway's history - just behind *Passion* and *Hallelujah, Baby!* - which is honestly super sad! This is an important musical and musically pleasing as well, so it sucks to have it close as early as it is. Hopefully the show sees an influx in ticket sales between now and its closure, because the cast and creatives deserve sold out crowds. I fear this is yet another victim of the economy of Broadway going down the gutter. Broadway, fix your problems please!





Kimberly Akimbo Begins Previews on Broadway



In more uplifting news, a new musical has begun performances on Broadway and it is a musical that demands your attention! *Kimberly Akimbo* began its previews at the Booth Theatre on October 12th, with an official opening date set for November 10th. The new musical, based on a play of the same name, tells the tale of high schooler Kimberly Akimbo, a preppy young girl who looks like a 72 year old woman due to an ageing disorder. That's the least of Kimberly's worries though as she navigates a world that constantly tries to dampen her infectious happiness. Sill, Kimberly tries to

find positivity in a world that shuns it.

The musical stars Tony Award winner Victoria Clark (*Cinderella*, *The Light in the Piazza*) as Kimberly, Bonnie Milligan (*Head Over Heels*) as Debra, Alli Mauzey (*Hello, Dolly!*, *Cry Baby*, *Wicked*) as Pattie, and Justin Cooley in his Broadway debut as Seth among others in the uber talented cast. I love watching Broadway newcomers make their dream debuts, so this is a particularly fun moment for Cooley in his first ever role! *Kimberly Akimbo* more so than not kicks off a new season on Broadway. With so much happening lately in the Broadway world it'll be interesting to see if this ray of sunshine show will stand the test of time and money with sharks in the water! Good luck to the cast and crew, and break a leg!



Hurry Hard! Local Theatre Review: *Second Shot*

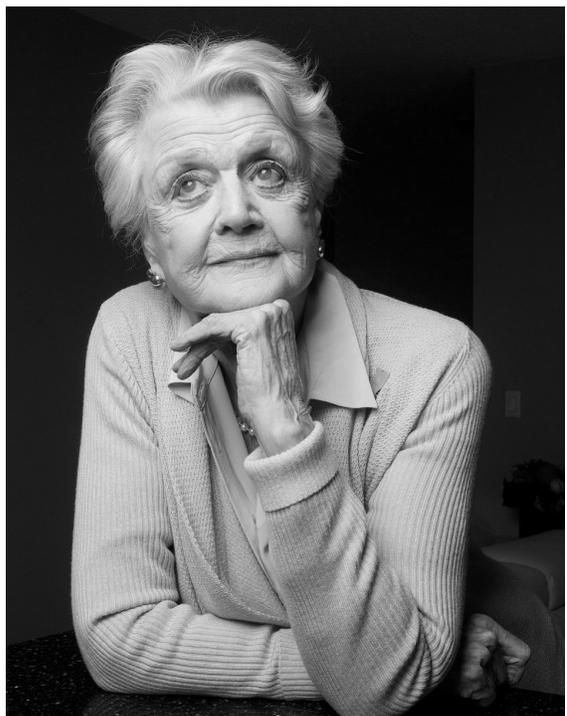
Last week Best Kind Productions' original musical *Second Shot* premiered at the Arts and Culture Centre. As a Best Kind alum (shoutout *Puffs!*), I felt compelled to write a bit on it. Myself and fellow CFPA fam Leah and Sophie made our way to the theatre to catch this show, and let me tell you, it was a real treat! This was a particularly fun treat for me as I got to watch the workshop production of this musical back in 2019, when it was still called *Hurry Hard*. It was super fun to see how this show has evolved in the three years since I last saw it!



Second Shot is a BKP original with music by Kiersten Noel and a book by Tim Matson - with the married duo also creating the lyrics together. I gotta say, the music in this show is incredibly catchy. Whether you're a fan of Wyatt the canteen worker's showstopping "Poutine For My Queen" (sung incredibly by Nick Mandville, who played the role back in 2019 as well), the moving ballad "Hole in My Happiness", or the intense Act I finale number "Fighting for Survival", there is a song for absolutely everyone to enjoy or relate to in this production. Personally one of my favourite numbers in the show is "Her Or Me" (performed in the 2019 workshop by Jeff Simms and the 2022 premiere by John Williams), curler Max's reflective ballad on returning to the rink to curl against, and possibly win against, his ex-girlfriend Cassie, whom he may or may not still have feelings for. I say possibly, because the audience gets to choose who wins the curling match in *Second Shot*! Back in 2019 Cassie won on my night of viewing, but this time around Max got to win, and I loved getting to see an ending I never got to see 3 years ago. My sentiments on this show really haven't changed much since 2019 - I love it and I think it's worth everyone checking out! If you missed out on this show during its run at the ACC you REALLY missed out, bys!



Remembering Dame Angela Lansbury (1925-2022)



It is difficult to describe the legacy of an iconic musical theatre performer such as Angela Lansbury. She was an iconic actress across film and television, stage and screen, and she unfortunately left us this past week. Angela Lansbury had an extensive career across multiple media platforms. She is perhaps best known to mainstream media consumers as Jessica Fletcher in the hit mystery series *Murder, She Wrote* and as the voice behind [Mrs. Potts](#) in Disney's original *Beauty and the Beast* film. She also played many a role in the movies of my childhood and the childhoods of kids everywhere, including *Nanny McPhee* and *Mary Poppins Returns*.

This being a musical theatre newsletter, I wanted to pay a tribute to some of Dame Lansbury's most memorable roles on the Broadway stage. Lansbury was a frequent collaborator of Stephen Sondheim's, much in the same vein as Bernadette Peters and Patti LuPone, having starred in a variety of original and revival productions of his musicals. One of her most famous Broadway roles was that of the bubbly yet bold [Mrs. Lovett](#) in Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, which she starred in opposite Len Cariou in 1979. She also starred in original runs and revivals of Sondheim shows such as *Anyone Can Whistle* (as Cora Hoover Hooper, original), *Gypsy* ([as Rose, revival](#)), and *A Little Night Music* (as Miss Armfeldt, revival). Lansbury won an incredibly impressive SIX Tony Awards throughout her extensive career on the stage, including two for the aforementioned *Sweeney Todd* and *Gypsy*, one for *Mame*, one for *Dear World*, and one for *Blithe Spirit*. The sixth and final Tony she was awarded came just last year, when she received the Lifetime Achievement Tony award in acknowledgement of her stage career and legacy. Thank you for all of the joy and talent you brought into this world, Angela.



The Try Guys Try Broadway! Keith Debuts in *Beetlejuice*

I want to end the articles of this edition with some fun news in both the theatre and the Youtube world! If any readers are not familiar with this group of Youtubers and business owners, “The Try Guys” are a group of men and their amazing staff who create content on Youtube for millions of viewers. The guys who make up the group (and the creators of the company!) are Eugene Lee Yang, Zach Kornfeld, and Keith Habersberger. This past week, The Try Guys uploaded a set of two videos titled “[the try guys audition for a Broadway musical](#)” and “[the try guys perform on Broadway for the first time](#)”. If you’d like to check out The Try Guys’ videos, click the blue links in the article! In those



videos, Keith, Zach, and their friend Kwesi James competed in a series of musical theatre auditions to win the opportunity to be featured in a walk-on role in Broadway’s *Beetlejuice* for one night only! **Spoiler Alert**, but Keith was chosen by the audition committee to make his Broadway debut as Carl the Furniture Mover. Viewers got to

watch clips of the rehearsal process and backstage sneak peeks as Keith had conversations with and received tips from *Beetlejuice* stars Alex Brightman, Kerry Butler, & Leslie Kritzer before making his debut. At the end of the show, they even had Keith bow and take center stage with *Beetlejuice* and Lydia for the curtain drop! This was a dream come true for Keith, who is already an avid performer and member of the music comedy trio Lewberger. As he choked up in happy tears, he remarked that the experience was a once in a lifetime opportunity. Congratulations, Keith!





Star of the Week: Alex Newell

The Gleeks of the CFPA community will definitely be familiar with this edition's **Star of the Week!** Alex Newell is a gender non-conforming actor and performer on both stage and screen. Most prominently he was featured on the hit FOX TV series *Glee* as Unique Adams, a showstopping diva who refused to conform to the social norm, much like Newell himself. Newell actually won his role on *Glee* by competing on *The Glee Project* reality competition, coming in second place. They have also had roles in shows such as *Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist* alongside Jane Levy and Skylar Astin, and the *Zoey's Extraordinary Christmas* Christmas special!



On stage, Alex made a huge splash in the revival of *Once On This Island* as Asaka, the Mother of Earth (and a loose interpretation of a Haitian Vodou mythical spirit!). This was Newell's Broadway debut, but you would never be able to tell! They also played the Narrator in a concert production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*. Next up, Alex Newell will be starring in a brand new musical coming to Broadway in the 2023 season, *Shucked*, alongside John Behlmann and Taylor Trensch. As written on Broadway.com, *Shucked* is a story about proving that sometimes tearing down a few walls, rather than growing them, is the only way to preserve our way of life. I myself am looking forward to Alex gracing the Broadway stage with their presence!

Remember to check out the "Tick...Tick...NEWS!" playlists on Spotify!:

CFPA & Tick Tick News Present: Star of the Week

CFPA & Tick Tick News: Song of the Week!



Songs of the Week: It's All Happening & What The Heck I Gotta Do

Welcome to our final composer spotlight (for now!) in *Tick...Tick...NEWS!* As our final spotlight I've chosen to spotlight a man who really needs no introduction: Lin-Manuel Miranda! Miranda has provided the music and lyrics for a variety of shows, most famously the ridiculously popular Tony Award Best Musical winners *Hamilton* and *In the Heights* and Disney films *Moana* and *Encanto*. Since those shows are already so popular, I'll be showcasing two of Lin's other shows as the **Songs of the Week!**



The first song comes from *Bring It On: The Musical*, a show Lin-Manuel provided the music and lyrics for in collaboration with Tom Kitt and Amanda Green. The musical is an adaptation of the movie of the same name, all about rival cheerleading squads competing in huge championships! This is "It's All Happening" from *Bring It On: The Musical*. Music by Tom Kitt & Lin-Manuel Miranda, lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda & Amanda Green, with performances by Adrienne Warren, Taylor Louderman, Nick Womack, and the ensemble cast of

Bring It On: <https://youtu.be/mfUYG6SX60I>

The second SOTW is from a much smaller musical, but in popularity and length! *21 Chump Street* is a 14-min musical that tells the true story of an undercover cop and the boy whose heart she stole. This is *What the Heck I Gotta Do*, with music and lyrics by Lin Manuel Miranda and performances by Anthony Ramos and the ensemble of *21 Chump Street*: <https://youtu.be/UvK00CMqG-g>

