



2024 SEASON

PERFORMANCE GUIDE





WELCOME TO THE 2024 SEASON

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I liken creating a professional musical theatre production to cooking a multi-course, gourmet meal: Both require thoughtful menu planning, the careful sourcing of ingredients, skilled hands for its proper preparation and execution, and a mad scramble at the end of the cooking process to deliver each of the dishes at the right temperature, looking and tasting delicious! And just like cooking, we don't produce shows for the sake of producing them: We create them to feed people, to nourish souls. Welcome to our table!

Theatre is always best served with an understanding and appreciation of its ingredients. That's what inspired our Education and Community Engagement team to create this multifaceted guide. Each of the shows in our 2024 Broadway At Music Circus lineup are represented with insights into their production histories, story content, historical context and what inspired them. It is our hope that this guide both enhances your enjoyment of the show and later serves as a reminder of your time with us.

If you are like me, no meal is too large; I can always find room for another serving! I feel the same about musical theatre – the more, the better – whether it's seeing the same show for the twentieth time or experiencing something completely new. I hope your attendance at a show (or shows!) this summer has whet your appetite for more. We'll keep cooking them up and you, our welcome guest, are always invited.

Bon appetit! Enjoy the show!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Klier", with a long, sweeping underline.

SCOTT KLIER

PRESIDENT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

BROADWAY AT MUSIC CIRCUS THROUGH THE YEARS

- **1949** Actor St. John Terrell sets up a summer stock theatre under a giant round tent in Lambertville, New Jersey. Drawing inspiration from the layout of Greek amphitheatres and the summer fun of the circus, Terrell's idea is a success and more than 40 others pop up across the country in the next decade.
- **1951** With the support of arts patron and newspaper owner Eleanor McClatchy, producers Russell Lewis and Howard Young establish the Sacramento Music Circus by setting up a tent in the parking lot of the Sacramento Civic Repertory Theatre. It is the first professional theatre-in-the-round located to the west of the Mississippi River and the fourth in the country.
- **1953** Lewis and Young found the Sacramento Light Opera Association to continue producing shows in the area. Sacramento Music Circus continues to be a successful summer tradition, gaining a notable reputation in the theatre community.
- **1989** The Broadway Series is introduced as a winter companion to the summer shows, bringing national tours of Broadway musicals and plays to Sacramento every year.
- **2003** The Wells Fargo Pavilion (now called the UC Davis Health Pavilion) opens on the site of the original Sacramento Music Circus tent, providing a state-of-the-art, permanent, fully air-conditioned facility for all future shows.
- **2018** The company name changes to Broadway Sacramento, with the respective touring and summer seasons being named Broadway On Tour and **Broadway At Music Circus**.
- **2020** The 2020 and 2021 seasons were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **2024** **The 72nd Broadway At Music Circus season opens June 11 at the UC Davis Health Pavilion!**

BEFORE THE SHOW BEGINS, A FEW QUICK REMINDERS:

- Make sure you find your seat before the show starts! Actors will be entering through the aisles, so staying seated when the lights go down helps keep everyone safe. If you need to leave for any reason, the ushers in the hallway will let you know when it's okay to enter again.
- Please keep your cell phones silenced and put them away during the show. You are welcome to use them before or after, but the bright screens and noises are distracting for everyone else at the theatre. Using your phone to take pictures or video during the performance is also not allowed.
- If you're enjoying the show, make sure to laugh, cheer and applaud! The actors love hearing that you're having a good time. Please save side conversations until after the show, though. That can be distracting for the actors and the people around you.

nickelodeon
THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL

JUNE 25-30

- THE STORY -

In the undersea community of Bikini Bottom, every day is a great day for SpongeBob Squarepants and his friends. While SpongeBob is at work at the Krusty Krab, a massive earthquake rattles the town and the local news reports that the nearby volcano, Mount Humongous, is about to erupt and destroy Bikini Bottom. The evil Sheldon Plankton and his computer wife Karen use the townspeople's panic in order to draw business away from the Krusty Krab and into their restaurant the Chum Bucket, while aspiring musician Squidward begins organizing a concert to raise funds to protect Bikini Bottom. At the same time, SpongeBob's science-whiz friend Sandy has uncovered a scientific solution that will prevent the volcano from erupting.

Sandy tries to inform the town of her discovery, but the people of Bikini Bottom are doubtful of her science. Determined to save the town nonetheless, she sets off with SpongeBob and his best friend Patrick to fix the problem at Mount Humongous. With tensions rising, the trio must remember the power of friendship and believe in their unique abilities if they want to save Bikini Bottom from impending doom and make it the best day ever.

- THE CHARACTERS -

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: An eternally optimistic yellow sea sponge, full of youthful energy.

PATRICK STAR: A kind-hearted but clueless starfish who is best friends with SpongeBob.

SANDY CHEEKS: A Texan squirrel who is a brilliant scientist.

SQUIDWARD TENTACLES: SpongeBob and Patrick's irritable neighbor, who dreams of being a star.

MR. KRABS: A money-loving crab who runs the Krusty Krab restaurant.

SHELDON J. PLANKTON: A scheming, ambitious one-celled organism.

PEARL KRABS: Mr. Krabs' emotional teenage daughter.

KAREN: Plankton's sarcastic computer wife.

THE MAYOR: A self-centered politician who is determined to hide the truth about Bikini Bottom.

BOOK BY
KYLE JARROW

ORIGINAL SONGS BY
YOLANDA ADAMS, STEVEN TYLER AND JOE PERRY OF AEROSMITH, SARA BAREILLES, JONATHAN COULTON, ALEX EBERT OF EDWARD SHARPE & THE MAGNETIC ZEROS, THE FLAMING LIPS, LADY A, CYNDI LAUPER, JOHN LEGEND, PANIC! AT THE DISCO, PLAIN WHITE T'S, THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS, T.I.

AND SONGS BY
DAVID BOWIE, TOM KENNY
& ANDY PALEY

ADDITIONAL LYRICS BY
JONATHAN COULTON

ADDITIONAL MUSIC BY
TOM KITT

MAKING THE MUSICAL

FROM SEA FLOOR TO CENTER STAGE

Long before SpongeBob SquarePants made his Broadway debut, he was an idea in the mind of Stephen Hillenburg in the mid-1980s. Hillenburg was a marine biologist who channeled his interest in animation into a comic called “The Intertidal Zone,” which he used to teach students about sea life with a group of characters that included Bob the Sponge. He left marine biology in 1989 to pursue a career in animation and it was while working at Nickelodeon that he had the idea to adapt “The Intertidal Zone” into an animated series. Hillenburg pitched a series titled “SpongeBob SquarePants,” which chronicled the adventures of the title character and his friends in the underwater city of Bikini Bottom. The show was an immediate success when it premiered in the summer of 1999 and is still airing today.



Stephen Hillenburg, the creator of “SpongeBob SquarePants”

About 10 years later, Nickelodeon wanted to bring SpongeBob to the stage and began inviting theatre directors to present ideas. One of those directors was Tina Landau, best known for her experimental Off-Broadway shows and her work with Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre Company. She was reluctant to take on a project of this size, but Hillenburg’s desire for a show with an “indie spirit” encouraged her to take a more creative approach. She won the job by proposing a version of SpongeBob that was filled with handmade props, everyday costumes and a quirky sense of humor. Scriptwriter Kyle Jarrow was drawn to Landau’s vision and the two began working on developing an original story.

A workshop at Vassar College in 2012 that included future Broadway stars Ethan Slater and Lilli Cooper helped the team develop the human characteristics and specific movements of SpongeBob and his animated friends so they would look believable onstage. The next

step was figuring out the music. Landau had noticed that the animated series featured a variety of musical styles, so she recruited a wide range of artists including Cyndi Lauper, Sara Bareilles and John Legend to write songs for the musical. Composer and musical director Tom Kitt helped ensure the songs maintained a unified sound.



Tina Landau - Marc J Franklin, 2017

In the summer of 2016, the cast and crew of **THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL** headed to Chicago for a pre-Broadway run. Landau and Jarrow watched almost every performance, taking extensive notes of what worked, what didn’t and what could be improved. When **THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL** arrived on Broadway at the Palace Theatre in December 2017, the creative team had made substantial changes to improve, enhance and heighten different components of the show. Their efforts paid off with positive reviews, enthusiastic audiences and 12 Tony Award nominations.



The company of **THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL** with Ethan Slater (center) in the title role - Joan Marcus, 2017

Following a short run on Broadway, **THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL** set its sights on the world. Nickelodeon aired a filmed version starring many members of the original Broadway cast and there were tours in the U.S., U.K. and Germany. The show is currently one of the most popular productions among regional, community and educational theatre groups, with hundreds of productions popping up around the world—including right here at **Broadway At Music Circus**, which is **THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL**’s first professional staging in the round!

DEEP-SEA DOPPELGÄNGERS

CHECK OUT SOME OF THE ACTUAL LAND AND SEA CREATURES THAT SPONGEBOB AND HIS FRIENDS ARE BASED ON. WHICH CHARACTER LOOKS THE MOST LIKE THEIR REAL-LIFE COUNTERPART?



SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS

SEA SPONGE

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Simple multicellular organisms with dense, porous skeletons that do not move or have internal organs.

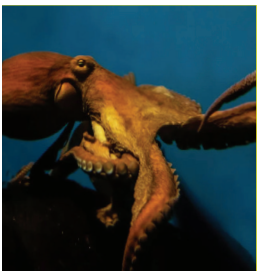


PATRICK STAR

SEA STAR

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Star-shaped invertebrates that use saltwater in their circulatory systems and can regrow their own limbs.



SQUIDWARD TENTACLES

GIANT PACIFIC OCTOPUS

.....

Reddish-brown cephalopods with large heads that typically grow larger and live longer than any other species of octopus.



MR. KRABS

RED ROCK CRAB

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Small, oval-shaped crustaceans with vibrant red shells and black-tipped claws, found on the western coast of North America.

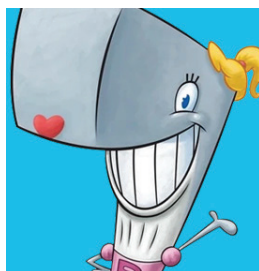


SHELDON J. PLANKTON

PLANKTONIC COPEPOD

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Tiny water-based zooplankton with teardrop-shaped bodies, large antennae, one large eye, and transparent exoskeletons.



PEARL KRABS

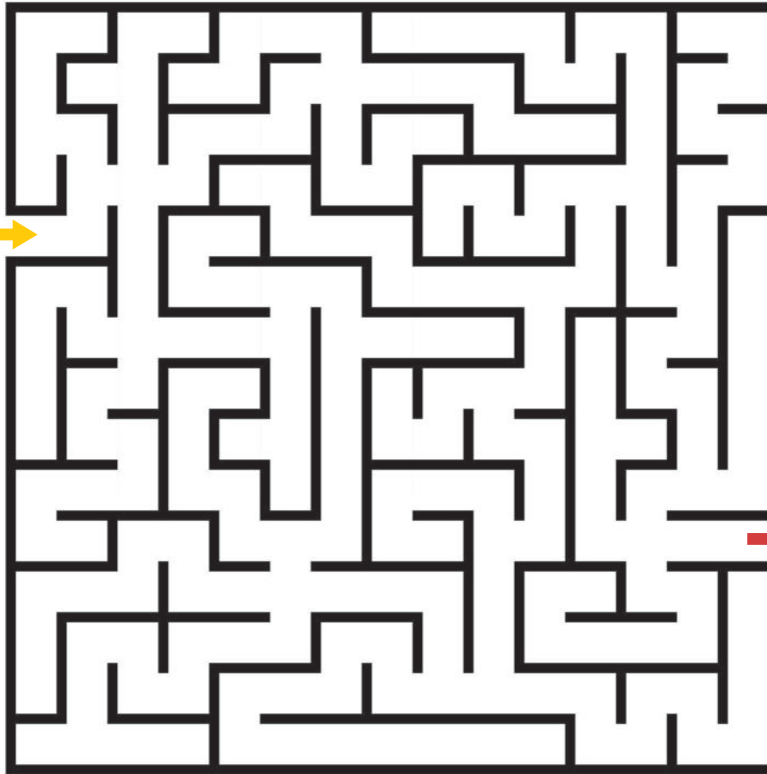
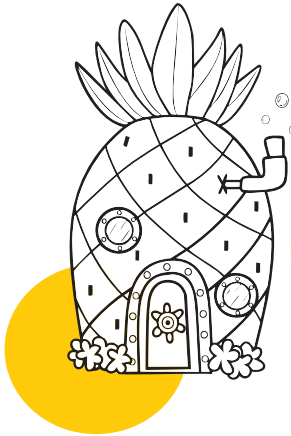
SPERM WHALE

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Giant aquatic mammals known for their large, round foreheads and their deep-sea diving abilities.

AQUATIC ADVENTURE

COMPLETE THE MAZE TO HELP SPONGEBOB GET FROM HIS HOUSE
TO MOUNT HUMONGOUS BEFORE IT ERUPTS!



THINK ABOUT IT

- **THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL** follows many different storylines as the various characters react to the crisis in Bikini Bottom. Which stories did you enjoy the most? Which one felt most realistic? How did they all play into the larger plot?
- SpongeBob learns to have confidence in himself and trust that his unique skills are what make him the hero Bikini Bottom needs. What abilities and traits make you stand out? How have those things helped you contribute to a group or team in a unique way?
- The people of Bikini Bottom don't trust Sandy and her science, even though it could save them, because she is not a sea creature. Why do you think people are often doubtful or afraid of others who are different from them?
- The actors in **THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL** are portraying cartoon characters, but they do not look exactly like their animated counterparts. How did the actors bring their characters to life through their choices?
- What other animated shows do you think could be adapted into interesting plays or musicals?



UC DAVIS HEALTH PAVILION

SPECIAL THANKS TO



This guide was developed by Mason Diab, Caleb Larrosa-Colombo and Jackie Vanderbeck. Special thanks to Griff Field, Matt Hessburg, Scott Klier, Dejan Zivkovic and YOU, audience members, for joining us at **Broadway At Music Circus** this summer!