

ARTS & LEISURE

GRYMES HILL

'Hello, Dolly!' graces Wagner College's stage

Catch NYC's original millionaire matchmaker in this classic musical

By Rob Bailey

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Forget Patti Stanger. The "Millionaire Matchmaker" has nothing on the original New York City love connection: Dolly Gallagher Levi.

Wagner College Theatre (WCT) launched its 2014-15 season Wednesday with one of America's great musicals: "Hello, Dolly!"

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the musical's Broadway premiere, Wagner's production is directed and choreographed by Norb Joerger (WCT's "Little Women"), with musical direction by James Higgins (WCT's "The Drowsy Chaperone").

The plot: Cantankerous half-a-millionaire Horace Vandergelder hires matchmaker Dolly Levi to find him a wife, circa the 1880s.

Dolly soon hatches a plan to woo and win Vandergelder's

hand herself, while simultaneously arranging romantic prospects for his niece, his clerks and two of Manhattan's most eligible shop girls.

Based on Thornton Wilder's 1955 comedy "The Matchmaker," this enduring musical features a book by Michael Stewart, music and lyrics by Jerry Herman.

It is packed with memorable songs including "Put On Your Sunday Clothes," "Before the Parade Passes By," "It Only Takes a Moment," and the title song.

WTC cast

Wagner College Theatre's production boasts a cast of 26 and features Allie Luecke as Dolly Gallagher Levi; Jordan Bunshaft as Horace Vandergelder; Joe O'Malley as Cornelius Hackl and Jonathan Quigley as Barnaby.

Also among the cast are:



Danielle James as Irene Molloy; VyVy Tran as Minnie Fay; Alec Reiss as Ambrose Kemper; Daniela Sottile as Ermengarde; and Melissa Silano as Ernestina.

About 'Hello, Dolly'

Winner of 10 Tony Awards, "Hello, Dolly!" was one of the longest-running musicals of

the 1960s.

Starring Carol Channing and produced by David Merrick with direction and choreography by Gower Champion, the show opened at Broadway's St. James Theatre Jan. 16, 1964, launching a record-breaking 6-and-a-half-year run.

The show was one of the first

musicals to use star casting to help keep the show running — Ginger Rogers, Betty Grable, Martha Raye, Phyllis Diller, Pearl Bailey, and Ethel Merman.

Gene Kelly directed the 1969 film starring Barbra Streisand and Walter Matthau that was nominated for seven Academy Awards.

"Hello, Dolly!" brings to life the tale of Dolly Levi (Alice Luecke), a matchmaker hired to find the cantankerous half-a-millionaire Horace Vandergelder (Jordan Bunshaft) a wife.

(COURTESY OF KAREN O'DONNELL PHOTOGRAPHY)

'HELLO, DOLLY'

When: Performances are Oct. 8 through 11 at 8 p.m., with a matinee Oct. 11 at 2 p.m.; added Sunday matinee, Oct. 12, at 2 p.m.

Where: Main Stage, Wagner College, One Campus Rd.

Box office hours: Monday through Friday, noon to 4 p.m.

Tickets: Single tickets are on sale now, with prices ranging for children, senior and adult tickets. Wagner College students attend free with current ID.

More info: 718-390-3259 or boxoffice@wagner.edu.