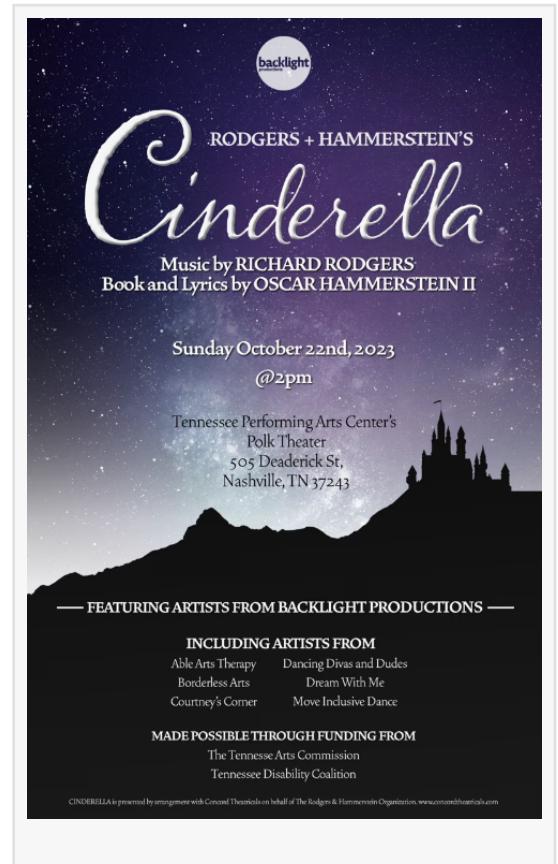


Broadway's Cinderella Laura Osnes Joins Backlight Productions for Special Performance at Nashville's TPAC on October 22

Broadway's original Cinderella lends her talents to this very special production featuring adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities

NASHVILLE, TN, USA, October 9, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Backlight Productions, a Nashville-area group that provides adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) the opportunity to participate in theater and arts programs, is celebrating their 10th year with a production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella at the 1,075-seat Polk Theater at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC) at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 22.

Singer and actor, Laura Osnes, also celebrates her 10-year anniversary since starring in the musical on Broadway, and will pass off the glass slippers to take on the role of the Fairy Godmother in Backlight's production. In addition to originating the role of Cinderella (for which she won a Drama Desk Award and was nominated for a Tony Award), her other Broadway credits include Sandy in Grease, Nellie Forbush in South Pacific, Hope Harcourt in Anything Goes, Julia Trojan in Bandstand, and Bonnie Parker in Bonnie and Clyde (which also earned her a Tony nomination).



“

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Laura Osnes

“I want to be the person in someone’s life who told them yes,” says Osnes. “To play the fairy godmother, who literally embodies that, who gives Cinderella the opportunity to go fulfill her dreams... I feel so honored. Shining the spotlight on these beautifully courageous artists is turning out to be one of my most meaningful roles yet. It's going to be a truly powerful night at the theater.”

Osnes and her husband, filmmaker Nathan Johnson, have

started a production company called Rebel Rocket Entertainment and are producing a documentary series following the journey from first rehearsal to the big performance. The series focuses on the personal journeys of the Backlight cast, aiming to highlight not only the extraordinary mission of this theater, but the resilience and bravery it takes to be an artist with IDD.

According to Backlight Productions Founder and Executive Director Melissa Smith, "Cinderella at TPAC is a true 'full circle' moment for us. A much smaller version of Cinderella was the first show we did 10 years ago. We performed for 40 people in the second story loft of a thrift store in Franklin. Over the past 10 years, our company has grown to 87 members, and we have expanded the classes and production opportunities for area IDD adults to include playwriting, comedy improv, a rock band, Glee Club, individual lessons, and a competition dance group."

Smith adds, "We are also excited to have members of six Nashville-area disability arts groups join us in this production. Each one of the groups will be featured in different musical numbers throughout the show. We are honored that they would join us for this special performance. All-in, we will have over 100 artists with disabilities performing in this show."

The other groups participating in Cinderella are: Able Arts, Borderless Arts, Courtney's Corner, Dancing Divas & Dudes, Dream With Me, and MOVE Inclusive.

The show will also feature several Nashville musical guest artists, including Gary Chapman, Stephen Salyers, Matt Jenkins, Jessica Willis Fisher, Taylor Epps, Erin McCracken, Miles Aubrey, Rosa Rodriguez, Greylee, Qwyn L'Esperance. Ming Aldrich-Gan, who worked with Osnes on the



Laura Osnes (Photo credit: Nathan Johnson)



Laura Osnes at rehearsal for Backlight Productions' "Cinderella" (Photo credit: Nathan Johnson)

Broadway musical Bandstand, will lead the House Band at TPAC.

Tickets for the show are available now at www.backlightproductions.org.

About Laura Osnes:

Osnes rose to stardom after winning NBC's reality TV competition Grease: You're The One That I Want, earning her the role of Sandy in the Broadway revival of Grease at the age of 21. She quickly became the go-to ingénue of the Great White Way, starring as Cinderella in Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella (Tony Award nomination)

Nellie Forbush in South Pacific, Hope Harcourt in Anything Goes, Julia Trojan in Bandstand, and Bonnie Parker in Bonnie & Clyde (Tony Award nomination).

Not limited to the stage, Osnes has charmed audiences across the nation in five Hallmark Channel original movies: Christmas In Tahoe (2021), Raise A Glass To Love (2021), One Royal Holiday (2020), A Homecoming For The Holidays (2019), and In The Key Of Love (2019). This holiday season, she will debut on the Great American Family network in, A Dash of Christmas. She has also been seen on television in Fosse/Verdon (F/X), Dynasty (CW), and Elementary (CBS), and lent her voice to characters in The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel (Amazon), Team Umizoomi (Nickelodeon), and ChipChilla (DailyWire).

Her crystal clear and powerful soprano voice regularly graces symphony halls and cabaret venues around the globe, including filmed performances with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Live from Lincoln Center (PBS), A Capitol Fourth (PBS), and The Kennedy Center Honors (CBS).

In addition to hearing her voice on several original Broadway cast recordings, Osnes has released two solo albums, Dream A Little Dream and If I Tell You, and made her songwriting debut with her new EP, On the Other Side. She has continued to write and release original music this past year, while starring in the world-premiere of Nashville's hit residency variety show, Shiners, at the Woolworth Theater.

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Laura Osnes with cast members of Backlight Productions' "Cinderella" (Photo credit: Nathan Johnson)

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