

A Bronx Tale: The Musical

Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. Previews start November 3; opens December 1.

A Bronx Tale, Chazz Palminteri's solo show loosely based on his upbringing in the Bronx, began its life back in 1989 when it premiered in LA. An Off-Broadway production followed, which prompted Robert De Niro to direct the 1993 movie starring Palminteri as the gangster Sonny, who took a young Calogero (Chazz's given name) under his wing. De Niro played Calogero's working-class father. In 2007, just as Tony Soprano ate his last meatball, Palminteri brought the solo show to Broadway. Now it's a musical directed by De Niro and four-time Tony winner Jerry Zaks, with music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Glenn Slater and a book by Palminteri.

The buzz: Some may think lines like "Now you can't leave," uttered by Sonny before a bar brawl, might be softened when set to "Disney King" Menken's music—but according to reviews from the musical's debut at the Paper Mill Playhouse this past spring, A Bronx Tale has kept its streetwise edge, tunes and all.

Cats (participating in NYC Broadway Week)

Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. Currently running.

Welcome back to the Jellicle Ball. Andrew Lloyd Webber's long-running—yet polarizing—musical based on poet T.S. Eliot's Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats returns to Broadway after a 16-year hiatus. The window into the secret lives of felines is likely to be an exciting nostalgia trip for thirtysomethings with memories of the furry, eccentrically named characters.

The buzz: British pop star and X-Factor winner Leona Lewis will take on the show's most famous role—Grizabella, the Glamour Cat—which won Broadway legend Betty Buckley a Tony Award in 1983. So You Think You Can Dance winner Ricky Ubeda will play the magical Mister Mistoffelees, and Hamilton choreographer Andy Blankenbuehler will update Gillian Lynne's near purrrfect dance steps.

The Cherry Orchard

American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. Previews start September 15; opens October 16.

Things will come full circle in more ways than one when Diane Lane returns to Broadway in Anton Chekhov's The Cherry Orchard. She last appeared on the Broadway stage as a silent peasant child in the 1977 production of this same play starring Raul Julia, Irene Worth and Meryl Streep. In this revival directed by Simon Godwin, she'll play the middle-aged, grieving aristocrat (typical Chekhov) Lyubov Andreyevna Ranevskaya, who—after sinking into debt—has come to watch as her family's beloved cherry orchard is sold to the highest bidder.

The buzz: Fresh off a Tony win for his provocative new play The Humans, young playwright Stephen Karam adapted Chekhov's last play. Chuck Cooper, Tavi Gevinson, John Glover, Joel Grey and Celia Keenan-Bolger highlight the cast.

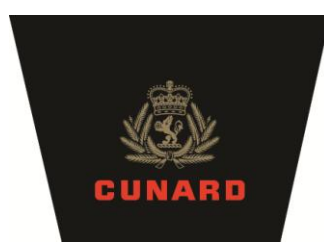
Cirque du Soleil Paramour (participating in NYC Broadway Week)

Lyric Theatre, 213 W. 42nd St. Currently running.

In Cirque du Soleil's first foray into musical theater, the Montreal-based experimental circus company weaves visually arresting stunts—like identical blonde twins walking a high wire—with a plot following a down-on-his-luck film producer looking for the star of his next big movie during the Golden Age of Hollywood. The original score incorporates styles including traditional show tunes, pop and swing.

The buzz: When it comes to Cirque du Soleil, you can always count on a highly stylized spectacle.

Dear Evan Hansen



Belasco Theatre, 111 W. 44th St. Performances start November 14.

Evan Hansen is anxious about everything—he can't even order delivery without having a near meltdown. He feels invisible until he is caught up in a big-time misunderstanding involving his classmate's suicide, which leads to him acting as a surrogate son to the grieving family, comforting the boy's sister (who happens to be his crush) and becoming an anti-bullying hero on social media. Though Evan's story begins with a lie, the new musical by the upcoming songwriting team of Benj Pasek and Justin Paul rings very true.

The buzz: Dear Evan Hansen has already developed a young cult following after its premiere at the Arena Stage in DC in 2015 and an Off-Broadway production at Second Stage this past spring. Pitch Perfect star Ben Platt, who plays Evan Hansen, will be the one to beat on the Tony ballot.

The Encounter

John Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. Previews start September 20; opens September 29.

In this one-man play by British actor Simon McBurney, it's more about what you hear than what you see. McBurney asks the audience to put on a supplied set of headphones and then tells the story of his own encounter with Petru Popescu's novel *The Encounter: Amazon Beaming*, which recalls American photographer Loren McIntyre's experiences with the Mayoruna tribe of the Amazon rainforest. Crunching tape ribbon, crashing water bottle and McBurney's own daughter's voice are among the rich aural details that immerse the audience in the action.

The buzz: *The Encounter* premiered at the Edinburgh International Festival and will be unlike anything ever seen on Broadway. The headphones help listeners feel McIntyre's isolation as he leaves his culture and identity behind in the Amazon.

Falsettos

Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. Previews start September 29; opens October 27.

In 1992 William Finn and James Lapine's musical *Falsettos*—the combination of their two related Off-Broadway shows, *The March of the Falsettos* and *Falsettoland*—was revolutionary. The operatic musical follows the story of Marvin, who leaves his wife Trina for his male lover Whizzer—but still tries to keep his family as together as possible for his young son, Jason.

The buzz: *Girls and Book of Mormon* star Andrew Rannells returns to the Broadway stage to play Whizzer, while theatrical dream team Christian Borle and Stephanie J. Block take on the roles of Marvin and Trina. Lapine directed the 1992 production and will do so again.

The Front Page

Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. Previews start September 20; opens October 20.

"The son of a bitch stole my watch!" That memorable last line comes from the oft-revived, Hollywood-ized 1928 comedy *The Front Page*, written by Chicago reporters Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur. Writing about what they knew best, the authors capture the glory days of the newspaper business, with a cast of hungry reporters sitting around a newsroom, chain-smoking cigarettes, playing poker and waiting for a hot story to come in—which, in this play, one quite literally does.

The buzz: This production, directed by multiple-Tony winner Jack O'Brien, is jam packed with heavy hitters. Nathan Lane and *Mad Men*'s John Slattery face off as the newspaper's manipulative managing editor Walter Burns and star reporter Hildy Johnson, respectively. John Goodman, Holland Taylor, Dylan Baker, Robert Morse and Sherie Rene Scott round out the veteran cast.

Heisenberg



Samuel J. Friedman Theatre, 261 W. 47th St.

Previews start September 20; opens October 13.

This two-hander starring Mary-Louise Parker and Denis Arndt features Parker as a quirky fortysomething who turns a seventysomething Irish butcher's life upside down when she gives him a spontaneous kiss on the neck in a London train station. This surprising love story—named after the physicist responsible for the uncertainty principle—is by Simon Stephens, who won a Tony for adapting *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* for the stage.

The buzz: Parker has made a career out of portraying normal-seeming characters who are in fact teetering on the edge. When *Heisenberg* premiered at MTC's Off-Broadway space in 2015 she was heralded for bringing that same combination of courage and fragility to her character, Georgie. Arndt has also received ample praise for his performance.

Holiday Inn, The New Irving Berlin Musical (participating in NYC Broadway Week)

Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. Previews start September 1; opens October 6.

Tap dancing and Irving Berlin are just about guaranteed to put a smile on your face, so this updated stage version of the 1942 movie—which featured now iconic holiday-themed Berlin tunes like “White Christmas” and “Easter Parade,” starred Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire—could be a hit decades after the source material's debut.

The buzz: The stage version of *Holiday Inn*—which was redone to eliminate extremely offensive scenes like a minstrel number celebrating Abraham Lincoln and add well-known Berlin songs like “Cheek to Cheek,” and “Steppin’ Out with My Baby”—premiered at the Goodspeed Opera House in 2014 to solid reviews. Since then, the cast has been overhauled to include the *Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* standout Bryce Pinkham as Jim (the Bing Crosby role) and *High School Musical* star Corbin Bleu, who will attempt to fill Fred Astaire's huge tap shoes as Ted.

In Transit

Circle in the Square Theatre, 235 W. 50th St. Previews start November 10; opens December 11.

Frozen co-composer Kristen Anderson-Lopez (and fellow writers James-Allen Ford, Russ Kaplan and Sara Wordsworth), *Pitch Perfect* music director Deke Sharon and Tony-winning director and choreographer Kathleen Marshall worked together on this a cappella show about a typical day on the New York City subway. The musical's cast of true New York characters make a crammed subway car look like an inspiring, hilarious place to be (and, hey, sometimes it can be).

The buzz: Anderson-Lopez needs an Emmy and a Tony to join her husband, Robert Lopez, with whom she co-wrote the Oscar- and Grammy-winning score of *Frozen*, as one of the world's few EGOTs (that's a winner of an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar and a Tony). She may get one notch closer with her Broadway debut.

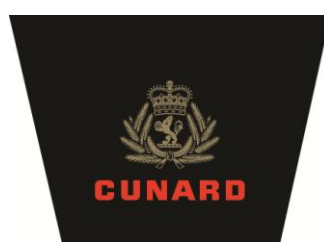
Les Liaisons Dangereuses

Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. Previews start October 8; opens October 30.

Christopher Hampton's adaptation of the 1782 French novel of the same name is about the art and ruin of seduction, as told through a dangerous—but very entertaining—game between two star-crossed aristocratic libertines as the French Revolution looms on the horizon.

The buzz: Janet McTeer's scintillating performance as the Marquise de Merteuil is the reason this production is transferring to New York from London's Donmar Warehouse less than 10 years after the play's last Broadway revival in 2008. Tony winner Liev Schreiber takes on the role of Valmont; Donmar Warehouse artistic director Josie Rourke directs.

Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812



Imperial Theatre, 249 W. 45th St. Previews start October 18; opens November 14.

Like *Hamilton* has, Dave Malloy's "electro-pop" opera will expand the ideas of what Broadway can be. Based on a 70-page sliver of *War and Peace*, *Natasha* began as a production in experimental dinner theater, telling the story of a naive society girl who ruins her reputation when she falls for a sexy scoundrel over bottles of Russian vodka and bowls of borscht. It was produced in a site-specific tent built at the edge of the Meatpacking District, and created a world that combined fur muffs and aristocratic ideals with leather-clad accordion players and strobe lights. It worked. Trust us.

The buzz: Billboard-charting singer-songwriter Josh Groban will make his Broadway debut as the well-meaning narrator Pierre, and newcomer Denée Benton will play Natasha.

Oh, Hello on Broadway

Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. Previews start September 23; opens October 10.

This is not a prank. Gil Faizon and George St. Geegland, the crotchety septuagenarian alter egos of Comedy Central stars Nick Kroll and John Mulaney (respectively), are coming to Broadway. The loose plot deals with the choices the longtime roommates have to make—do they sell out to NY1?—when the monthly rent on their Upper West Side apartment rises from \$75 to \$4,000. Alex Timbers (*Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, *The Pee-wee Herman Show*) directs.

The buzz: The characters gained popularity on *Kroll Show*, when they delivered overstuffed tuna sandwiches as part of their aptly named prank show "Too Much Tuna." New York Times reviewer Ben Brantley was on board after seeing the Off-Broadway premiere at the Cherry Lane Theater last year, writing, "The roster of cool theater has now been swelled by the uncoolest dudes on the planet."

The Present

Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. Previews start December 17; opens January 8.

Every time Cate Blanchett has stepped onto a New York stage—whether it was as Blanche DuBois in *A Streetcar Named Desire* or Hedda in *Hedda Gabler* at BAM or as Claire in *The Maids* at City Center—it has been the must-see show of the season. Still, the Oscar-winner has never set foot on Broadway until now. This fall she will play the widow Anna Petrovna, who is in love with a Russian Don Juan named Mikhail, in her husband Andrew Upton's new adaptation of Chekhov's *Platonov*. The play, which takes place during Petrovna's vodka-soaked 40th birthday party, was discovered 20 years after Chekhov's death.

The buzz: The chemistry between Blanchett's Anna and Australian film star Richard Roxburgh's Mikhail is red hot, and will no doubt cause a kind of hysteria among the New York theater crowd.