

Ella Herman

The Godspell Revival

Team 9

The Strategy

The strategy for bringing *Godspell* to the stage was based on current Broadway attitudes and similar successes. This Godspell revival features a creative team whose previous work is still running and is wildly successful. We wanted to bounce off their success and amplify it through our reimagined revival. The question then becomes: Why are we doing this revival now? As flashy rock musicals, such as *SIX* or *& Juliet*, and campy revivals, like *Romeo and Juliet*, begin to take the market by storm, we thought, why not capitalize on the rebellious attitude on Broadway right now? This Godspell revival is a Gen-Z, rebellious-infused gospel of hope to a disillusioned, digital generation. Godspell highlights themes of community, redemption, and spiritual awakening. The themes and message of this show are more important now than ever. In a fractured world, this revival offers connection and unity. We will succeed not only because of the immense star power and visionary direction, but also because of the connection and community that Godspell's universal message fosters. Logistics-wise, the unique nature of our show will create market and press buzz; we are a low-to-mid-budget show with high word-of-mouth potential.

To reach this point, we obviously had to acquire the rights to the show and then either ask Stephen Schwartz to revamp his iconic score with something more modern or hire someone (with his permission) to assist. Our strategy to return with a more punk-rock-inspired and

modern look than ever set us apart from the previous revival in 2012, especially since it was happening on a larger scale, which investors could trust. This is the perfect time in the market for a revival like this one, as it follows and reflects the success of *Hadestown*, *Cabaret*, and *Hamilton*, all of which feature intimate storytelling and cultural reinvention. Following this success, as previously mentioned, we are utilizing a creative team comprised of individuals from these productions, who were a driving force behind their success. In addition to this new, modern creative team, the revival will feature new ideas, including fresh humor and direction, innovative costumes, and an elevated score, which will give the music new life. We will also be audience interactive, similar to shows like *The Lion King*. Selected audience members will receive a special-edition guitar pick at their seats (in collaboration with Fender). During certain scenes, the cast will go into the audience, to these people as “Jesus’s followers”, making them part of the show. This interactive experience makes this show engaging, humorous, and fun. After assembling this team, putting in creative work, acquiring the rights, and refining the musical arrangements, this strategy is sure to garner traction for the *Godspell* revival.

In Chapter Eleven of John Peter Swain’s book, *The Broadway Musical: A Critical and Musical Survey*, the author discusses the “unorthodox success” (296) of *Godspell* when it first opened. Not only was it Stephen Schwartz’s big break, so to speak, but it was proof that people wanted a new take on a centuries-old story. The creative team was “dominated by amateurs” (296), proving once more that people wanted new creative minds with fresh ideas; so, who better to do this revival than the recent successes in the industry right now? “Dramatizing a religious experience can be immediately distinguished from setting a religious story” (Swain, 297). With Gen-Z in the habit of meming things, having dark humor, and the capacity to watch *Godspell* with a humorous lens, this revival was ready to get on stage.

We have chosen the Imperial as the home of our show. This iconic theater's longest-running show is *Les Miserables*, but was also home to many other iconic shows such as *Pippin* (another Stephen Schwartz musical), *Dreamgirls*, *Gypsy*, and *Billy Elliot*. These previous shows make this theater familiar yet iconic for regular theatergoers. Not only that, but shows like *Pippin* have a similar energy to this revival. The aesthetics within the theater of gold and red match our own, and the color scheme match will draw audiences into the classy theater. The theater aesthetics juxtapose the punk nature of the show, which is part of the charm of having it play here. Not only will the beauty of the theater draw in tourists and locals alike, but it is also in a prime location in Times Square, located on West 45th; its easy access and dazzling lights will be sure to attract people in for the show. The Imperial has a seating capacity of 1,457, and the potential gross from this (at 100% capacity) would be around \$2 million, with an average ticket price of \$180. We offer select prime seating that guarantees cast interaction and a guitar pick. This information would be mentioned as a "special package" at the point of purchase, without spoiling the fun of the interaction (Figure 1). We have 10 guitar picks spread throughout the prime seating area, 5 of which are reserved for special purchase, and 4 are located within the prime seating, but not all seats are guaranteed to receive a guitar pick. Additionally, 1 guaranteed pick seat is reserved per show for rush. Prices for this show range from \$59 to \$350 (Figure 2). Student rush tickets are discounted to \$30, while box office rush tickets are discounted to \$45. Partial-viewing tickets are available for \$50 to \$100. The "prime seating" with a chance to participate in the show via the guitar pick is seen in Figure 1. In red are the possible seats, at random, for a guitar pick, reset every show, and in pink are the suggested guaranteed seats for the interaction. This theater is particularly good for something like this, as it has long aisles, which

provide space for the cast to roam and have fun. The prime seating stops at Row H, due to the front mezzanine overhang, and we want this interaction to be seen by all.

Ideally, we would begin previews after Easter. This allows us to be in previews for 2 weeks and open in time for Tony’s consideration. For timeline's sake: previews would begin April 5th, 2026, the day after Easter, and opening night would be on April 22nd, which is also Earth Day! These dates are not only in line with Easter but make this season ideal because it is the end of school, the beginning of good weather, and summer tourists, and the show is fresh in critics' minds.

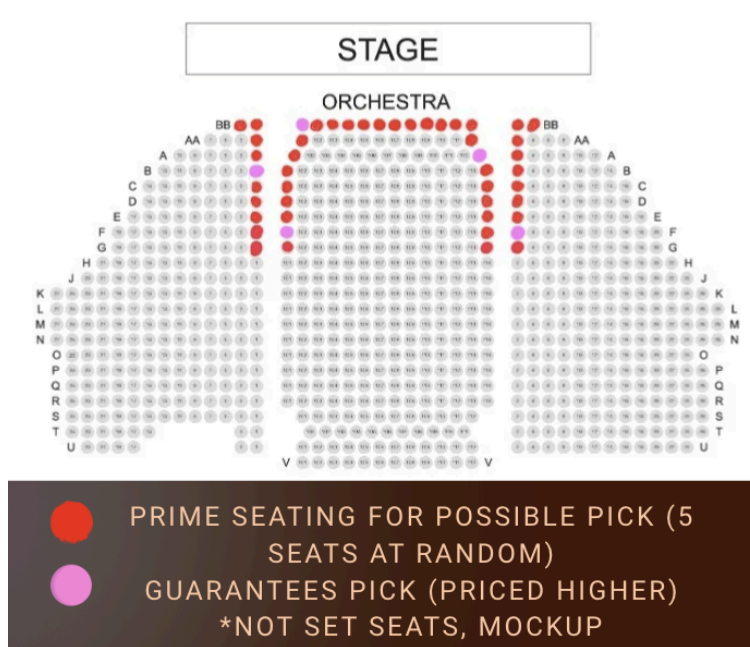


Figure 1

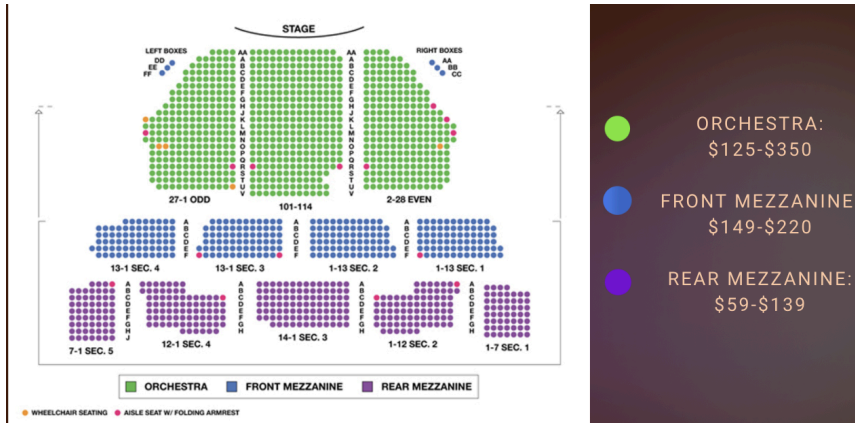


Figure 2

Works Cited:

“Imperial Theatre (1923) New York, NY.” *Playbill*,
m.playbill.com/venue/imperial-theatre-vault-0000000201.

Swain, John Peter. *The Broadway Musical: A Critical and Musical Survey*. The Scarecrow Press, 2002.

“This Month, the Imperial Theatre Turns 100.” *Playbill*,
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