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"CIVIL WAR VOICES" SIGNS ON BROADWAY VETS GRAVES, HOPE, TRAFTON,

Written by VAUGHN
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"Civil War Voices" an Off Broadway musical remembrance by James R. Harris will be performed at the June Havoc Theatre at the Abingdon Complex, 312 West 36th Street. Featuring the songs of the period with arrangements by Mark Hayes, it is directed by Dennis Courtney. The musical director is Laura Bergquist with Austin Hartman on violin.

The multi-talented cast of *Civil War Voices* includes Broadway veterans Danielle Lee Graves (*Rent*), Stephen Hope (*Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Scarlett Pimpernel*), Stephen Trafton (*Les Miserables* revival) and Catherine Fries Vaughn (*Do Black Patent Shoes Really Reflect Up?*); plus familiar off-Broadway faces Dani Marcus (*The Adventures of Hershele Ostropolyer* with The National Yiddish Theatre), Michael Sample (*Unbeatable*, *Immortal Journey*), Arthur Marks (*SIDD*, *The Screams of Kitty Genovese*), Michael Markham (*Mother Courage and Her Children* and *Macbeth* at the Delacorte Theatre) and Carly Zien (*Kaspar Hauser*, *Cato*, *Infiltrage 2*).

The *Civil War Vocies* set design is by Emmy Award winner Kevin Lee Allen with costumes by Janell Berte. Alma Villegas, Bob Ost / Wildly Productive Productions and Rough and Ready LLC in association with the Midtown International Theatre Festival are presenting the musical. (90 mins)

Civil War Voices tells the compelling and passionate true stories of five individuals who lived through the conflict, using their actual words that were left behind in diaries, letters, and other writings. Joe Harris was a cotton planter from Alabama with a conflicted conscious. The discovery of his Civil War diary inspired the play. Elizabeth Keckley was born a slave, bought her freedom, and became Mary Todd Lincoln's closest friend and personal assistant in the White House. Theo and Harriet Perry were a young, married couple from Texas, who were separated by the war. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain was a college professor from Maine, who enlisted to fight for the Union. Through the lives and words of these individuals, the struggles, hardships and sacrifices of Americans become understandable and real as the Civil War progresses.

All new arrangements of traditional melodies advance the narrative and sharpen the emotional impact of the stories. The extraordinary music of the period reveals the emotions behind the conflict. The show contains some of the greatest songs of the period such as 'Battle Hymn of the Republic', 'Amazing Grace', and 'Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child', to name a few. Jim Harris (Writer) is a trial lawyer by profession, but his avocation and great love is musical theater. He has performed in some 50 musical productions and is also an accomplished singer. Several years ago, Jim discovered the existence of a diary kept by his great-great uncle during the Civil War. After giving several speeches about the diary, he began combining other true stories of the war with original, unique arrangements of the stirring music of the period.

Dennis Courtney (Director) staged a re-envisioned production of *Fiddler on the Roof* in Tel Aviv as the official production for the 60th Anniversary of Israel, for which he won the 2009 Israeli National Theatre Award. He has also won numerous awards as the director/choreographer of over 150 stage productions including *Peter Pan* (Cathy Rigby), *Can Can* (Leslie Uggams), the regional premieres of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, the world premiere productions of *Ethel Waters: His Eye Is On The Sparrow*, and many original music revues. He has conceived and staged many special events, awards and cruise ship shows, working with such performers as Bette Midler, Celine Dion, Quincy Jones, Warren Beatty, Carol Channing, John Raitt, Bacon Brothers, David Hasselhoff, Peter Marshall and Helen Reddy. On television, he directed the 5th season opener of TV's "*Perfect Strangers*".

Mark Hayes (Vocal and Instrumental Arrangements) is an award winning concert pianist, composer, and arranger of choral, piano and orchestral music. With over 750 published works to his credit. He has recorded numerous solo piano albums and tours internationally as a concert artist and clinician. Mark is a frequent conductor at Carnegie Hall.

Laura Bergquist (Music Director) four National Tours of *The King and I*, *Titanic*, *Miss Saigon*, *Camelot*, *Music Man*. She is a frequent guest conductor in regional theaters and a clinician in universities and churches in addition to her work as a vocal coach in New York. As an ASCAP Awards recipient for composition, her catalogue includes more than 60 works. Regional work as Musical Director and Conductor includes Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Theatreworks, Rubicon Theatre, Lyric Theater of Oklahoma, Music Theatre of Wichita, Atlanta's Theatre of the Stars as well as the New York Stage and Film Festival, Julliard, NYMF and NAMT. Recent projects include Emma at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park by Paul Gordon and the current World Premiere of Daddy Long Legs by John Caird and Paul Gordon.

Performances of *Civil War Voices* at Abingdon Theatre Arts Complex are: Saturday 7/24 @ 2:45pm; Sunday 7/25 @ 7:00pm; Monday 7/26 @ 8:00pm; Wednesday 7/28 @ 6:00pm; Friday 7/30 @ 5:45pm and Sunday 8/1 @ 5:15pm. Tickets are \$18. Call Ovation Tix (866) 811-4111.

[General info and ticket info for CIVIL WAR VOICES](#)

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