



ONCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
DATE: February 6, 2019

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Jim Torres - 617.529.1670

PRESS DATE: Sunday, March 3 at 3PM or by request. RSVP [here](#):

PHOTOS: www.speakeasystage.com/Once-Photos

(BOSTON) – From March 1 - 30, 2019, SpeakEasy Stage Company will proudly present the Boston Regional Theatre Premiere of the Tony Award-winning musical **ONCE**.

Based on the 2007 Irish film written and directed by John Carney, **ONCE** employs an exceptional ensemble of actor-musicians to tell the story of an unlikely romance between a down-on-his-luck Dublin street musician and a determined Czech immigrant who inspires him to dream. Featuring a book by Enda Walsh, and music and lyrics by Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová, **ONCE** is a charming tale that reminds us of the importance of pursuing our dreams and the power music has to connect us all.

SpeakEasy General Manager Paul Melone will direct this production of **ONCE**. Winner of two Elliot Norton Awards for his direction of the musicals *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* (2013) and *Adding Machine: A Musical* (2010), Mr. Melone also directed the company's Boston premieres of *Carrie: The Musical*; *reasons to be pretty*; *The Little Dog Laughed*; *Fat Pig*; *The Moonlight Room*; *Our Lady of 121st Street*; and *The Shape of Things*.

Also on the artistic team are Steven Ladd Jones (music director) and Ilyse Robins (choreographer).

Nile Scott Hawver and Mackenzie Lesser-Roy will play the lead roles of Guy and Girl. Jacob Brandt, Billy Butler, Clara Cochran, Chris Coffey, Reagan Gardiner, Billy Meleady, Robert X. Newman, Marta Rymer, Stephen Shore, Jeff Song, Kathy St. George, and Ellie van Amerongen make-up the ensemble of actor-musicians.

The design team includes Eric Levenson (scenic); Rachel Padula-Shufelt (costumes); Karen Perlow (lighting); and Andrew Duncan Will (sound).

L. Arkansas Light is the Production Stage Manager. Lauren Burke is the Assistant Stage Manager.

ONCE will run for five weeks, from March 1 - 30, 2019, in the Roberts Studio Theatre in the Stanford Calderwood Pavilion at the Boston Center for the Arts, 527 Tremont St. in Boston's South End.

Ticket prices start at \$25, with discounts for students, seniors, and persons age 25 and under.

For tickets or more information, the public is invited to call the box office at **617.933.8600** or visit www.SpeakEasyStage.com .

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Show History

ONCE got its start with a workshop production at the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge, MA in April 2011. The show then transferred to the New York Theatre Workshop where it opened in December 2011. Steve Kazee and Cristin Milioti originated the roles of Guy and Girl for this Off-Broadway production, which was helmed by John Tiffany. This same team took the show to Broadway, where it opened on March 18, 2012, winning 8 Tony Awards including Best Musical. Since that time, audiences around the globe have had the opportunity to enjoy **ONCE**, which has played in Dublin, the West End, Australia, Seoul, South Korea, Toronto, and across the United States.

Artist Information

ENDA WALSH (Book) is an acclaimed playwright, screenwriter, and director. His recent work includes the play *Arlington* and the opera *The Second Violinist* which both premiered at the Galway International Arts Festival in 2016 and 2017 respectively. He also worked on the musical *Lazarus* with David Bowie, which opened at New York Theatre Workshop in December 2015. His work has been translated into many languages and has been performed internationally since 1996. In 2014, he received an Honorary Doctorate from Galway University.

GLEN HANSARD (Music & Lyrics) is an award-winning musician with a host of real-life songs and lilting vocals that reflect a passion for his diverse influences. Film: *The Commitments* and *Once*. Albums: *Didn't He Ramble*, *Rhythm and Repose*, *Strict Joy*, the soundtrack of *Once* (Academy Award for Best Original Song, 'Falling Slowly'; Olivier award for Outstanding Musical Contribution), *The Swell Season*, *The Cost*, *Burn the Maps*, *Set List*, *For the Birds*, *Dance the Devil*, *Fitzcarraldo* and *Another Love Song*. This spring, Glen will be touring Europe and the UK in support of his his latest solo album *This Wild Willing*

MARKÉTA IRGLOVÁ (Music & Lyrics) is an Academy Award-winning musician and actor born in the Czech Republic. Film: *Once*, *The Swell Season*, *Miluji Te Modre* (music). Albums: *Muna*, *Anar*, *The Swell Season*, the soundtrack of *Once* (Academy Award for Best Original Song, 'Falling Slowly', Olivier Award for Outstanding Musical Contribution), *Strict Joy*. Markéta is currently writing songs for her third solo album alongside various other musical projects for stage and screen. She and her husband and three children live in Iceland.

JOHN CARNEY (Motion Picture Writer and Director) is a Dublin-based writer-director who came to the world's attention following the box office hit and critically acclaimed musical feature film *Once*, which garnered multiple Independent Spirit, Sundance, and Raindance awards. Previously, John was a bassist in the Irish rock band The Frames, where he met Glen Hansard. His musical roots continue to be evident in John's work in such acclaimed films as *Begin Again* (2013) and *Sing Street* (2016).

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Artistic Team

PAUL MELONE (Director) has directed a roster of Boston premieres for SpeakEasy, including *Carrie: The Musical*; *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* [2013 Elliot Norton Award—Outstanding Director]; *reasons to be pretty*; *Adding Machine: A Musical* [2010 Elliot Norton Award—Outstanding Director]; *The Little Dog Laughed*; *Fat Pig*; *The Moonlight Room*; *Our Lady of 121st Street*; and *The Shape of Things*. Other local directing credits include: *Rent* (Suffolk University); *The Apple Tree* (The Boston Conservatory); *Curse of the Starving Class* (Apollinaire Theatre Company); and *Things Beyond Our Control* (Brandeis University). As SpeakEasy's General Manager and Production Manager, Paul has managed over 100 plays, musicals, concerts, cabarets, and special events for the company. Paul is a graduate of Boston University's Theatre Department.

ILYSE ROBBINS (Choreographer) returns to SpeakEasy having previously choreographed *Allegiance* and *The Scottsboro Boys*, the latter for which she won an IRNE Award for best choreography. A choreographer, director, actress, and educator, Ilyse works professionally around the country. She is also the Associate Artistic Director at Greater Boston Stage Company. Choreography credits include United Solo Festival NYC, GBSC, Hanover Theatre, Lyric Stage, New Rep, Underground Railway, Hope Rep, Fiddlehead, Wheelock Family Theatre, and many others. Ilyse received the 2014 Elliot Norton award for Excellence in Direction and numerous IRNE awards for choreography. She teaches at Brandeis University and coaches for Mohr Collaborative, Ovation Communication, and private clients. Ilyse holds a BS in Theater from Northwestern University and an Ed.M. from Harvard University. She is an Associate Member of SDC.

STEVEN LADD JONES (Music Director) SpeakEasy: debut! Previous music directing credits: *Dames at Sea* (Greater Boston Stage Company), and nine years of productions at Boston Conservatory at Berklee including *A Chorus Line*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Side Show*, *Spring Awakening*, *The Wild Party*, *Assassins*, and many more. Steven is an Associate Professor of Theater at Boston Conservatory at Berklee, where he teaches undergraduate and graduate musical theater courses. He recently created a fundraiser concert series in his Melrose home to raise money for social activism. Steven loves to run marathons and hopes to qualify for the Boston Marathon one day!

Actor Information

JACOB BRANDT* (Andrej) returns to SpeakEasy having previously appeared in *Caroline, or Change* in 2006. Jacob is an actor, composer, and director in New York, and has worked in various capacities with New York Theatre Workshop, Ars Nova, Soho Rep, The Flea, and many others. He has appeared as an actor on such regional stages as Weston Playhouse (*Once*, US Regional Premiere), Williamstown Theatre Festival, the Huntington, Company One, and Wheelock Family Theatre. Jacob's own actor-musician musical *1969: The Second Man* received its World Premiere at New York Theatre Workshop last year. He is a current member of The Civilians R&D Group, where he is developing a new musical about the history of the subway. Jacob attended Harvard, where he studied acting and playwriting.

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BILLY BUTLER (Billy) is a Boston native excited to make his SpeakEasy debut. He is a performer, writer, and theatre-maker who has appeared at New England Light Opera, Greater Boston Stage Company, Seacoast Repertory, The Players' Ring, Barnstormers, New York Musical Theatre Festival, St Clement's Theatre, Abraxas Stage, and Interborough Theatre Company. Billy also wrote the music and lyrics for *Titus Andronicus Musicus* and *Ziegfeld's Midnight Frolic*; and the book, music, and lyrics for *Gay Bride of Frankenstein*; *Missing: Wynter*; *Bitter Pill*; and *The Brechttones*. Currently, Billy is the 2018/19 Artist-in-Residence for the Portsmouth Symphony Orchestra.

CLARA COCHRAN (Ivonka at certain performances) is delighted to make her SpeakEasy debut! Clara has performed in 10 youth theatre musicals in her hometown of Concord, Massachusetts, including roles as Gretl in *The Sound of Music* and July in *Annie*. Other favorite performances include *High School Musical* and *The Little Mermaid*. Clara is a student at Thoreau Elementary School. She enjoys singing in choir, jazz dance, and writing and illustrating stories. Clara thanks all of her teachers, friends and family for their support and encouragement.

CHRIS COFFEY (Svec) is so excited to make his SpeakEasy debut! New Jersey born-and-bred. Recently (in residence at Redhouse Arts Center): *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Puck) & *Into The Woods* (Jack) in Rep, *The Cherry Orchard* (Trofimov), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Claudio/Verges), & *Juliet* (Benvolio/Paris/Lady Cap [SALT Award: Ensemble of the Year]), and many more. Other favorites: *The Who's Tommy* (Tommy), *Reefer Madness* (Jack), *Godspell* (Jesus), & others. He is also a music and stage director with regional and festival credits. Manhattanville College & National Theater Institute alumnus. Love to Erin, his parents, and his puppies. www.chris-coffey.com

REAGAN GARDINER (Ivonka at certain performances) is thrilled to make her SpeakEasy debut in *Once*, her first professional show! She recently appeared at The Un-Common Theatre as Molly in *Annie*. She is a third grader in Cambridge, a Brownie in the Girl Scouts, and plays on her school's basketball team. Reagan would like to thank her family, friends, and teachers for all their love and support on this fantastic adventure.

NILE SCOTT HAWVER* (Guy) is thrilled to return to SpeakEasy, having previously appeared as Monty in *Violet* and Will in *Mothers and Sons*. Boston: Lyric Stage, Greater Boston Stage Company, New Repertory Theatre, Actors' Shakespeare Project, Central Square Theater, Huntington Theatre, Boston Theater Company, Boston Lyric Opera, Commonwealth Shakespeare. Regional: Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, Ocean State Theatre Company, and more. MFA: Acting; University of IL at Urbana-Champaign. BFA: Acting, University of RI. Love and thanks to Maggie and Flo St. Jean. Proud AEA member. Upcoming: *Million Dollar Quartet* at Greater Boston Stage Company. www.NileHawver.com; nilescottstudios.com .

MACKENZIE LESSER-ROY* (Girl) is thrilled to be back in Boston and making her SpeakEasy debut. Mackenzie played Girl in the '16-'17 national tour of *Once* and most recently played the lead role of Jovie in the national tour of *Elf*. She can be seen in several episodes of NBC's "Rise" and has worked with renowned directors such as Jerry Mitchell and Rebecca Taichman. She is a proud alum of The Boston Conservatory. Many thanks to Paul Melone, Paul Daigneault, and the cast and crew. Love to M&D. Follow her on Instagram [mlesserroy](https://www.instagram.com/mlesserroy).

BILLY MELEADY* (Da) returns to SpeakEasy having previously appeared in *The Seafarer* [Elliot Norton Award—Best Ensemble] and *A Man of No Importance* (co-production: Sógán). He has been absent from Boston stages for a number of years and is delighted to return and very pleased to be working with SpeakEasy once again. Billy was a "resident Irish actor" with the Sógán Theatre Company at the BCA for many years and received both Elliot Norton and IRNE awards for his work with Sógán as well as New Repertory Theatre and Boston Playwrights Theatre. He last appeared onstage with The Irish Rep (NYC) in the East Coast premiere of *The Belle of Belfast* as Father Behan (a role he reprised from the world premiere with Ensemble Studio Theatre/LA for which he received an LA Ovation Award nomination for Featured Actor). Thanks to Paul, Paul, the cast and all at SpeakEasy Stage Company!

ROBERT X. NEWMAN (Emcee) is pleased to make his SpeakEasy debut in a show that helped inspire him to become a performer. Born in Juneau, Alaska, Robert has been listening to and playing folk music from the age of four, when he got his first violin. He would like to thank his first music teacher, Lisa Miles, as well as his parents, Tony and Linda, for helping him find the passion (and courage) to play music onstage. Robert is currently a senior at The Boston Conservatory where he is finishing a BFA in Musical Theater.

MARTA RYMER (Reza) is delighted to make her SpeakEasy debut. She is a Boston native who received her preparatory violin training at Longy School of Music and New England Conservatory. She is also an alumna of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy. Recent theatrical appearances include: *West Side Story* (Fiddlehead Theatre); *A Tale of Two Cities* (York Theatre); *Manuel vs. the Statue of Liberty* (Gallery Players); *The New Electric Ballroom* (ACKtors Table); and *Wild Women of Planet Wongo* (Parkside Lounge). Marta spends a portion of each summer at the Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music in Nelson, NH. Love to Ben, Mom, and Tony.
www.MartaRymer.com

STEPHEN SHORE (Eamon) is thrilled to make his SpeakEasy debut! Select NY Credits: *Getting Married* (Project Shaw); *Smoke* (T. Schreiber Theatre); and *Romeo & Juliet* (Barefoot Shakes). Select regional credits: *Treasure Island* (Fulton); *Oklahoma!* (Roxy Regional); *Million Dollar Quartet* (Encore Musical); *Taming of the Shrew* (TX Shakes); *Cymbeline* (VA Shakes); *Of Mice and Men* (Cardinal Stage); *The Legend of Jim Cullen* (Heartwood Regional); and *Much Ado About Nothing* (GA Shakes). Proud graduate of the UNC School of the Arts (BFA). Stephen would like to thank his Mom, Nana, and Gracie for all their love and support. For Dad.
www.StephenShore.com

JEFF SONG* (Bank Manager) makes his SpeakEasy debut with *Once*. Regional acting credits include work with Fresh Ink Theatre, Boston Playwrights' Theatre, Wheelock Family Theatre, Company One, American Repertory Theater, and the WBUR storytelling podcast Circle Round. Credits as Composer/Music Director/Musician include *Vietgone* (Studio Theatre) and *The White Snake* (Baltimore Center Stage). Jeff is also a music and songwriting consultant for Imagination Stage. He has appeared at numerous music festivals, and on over a dozen recordings. In addition, his original music has been featured on radio, TV, and at the Children's Museum of Manhattan. As bassist for Ute Lemper, Jeff performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival, Istanbul Jazz Festival, L'Opéra de Vichy, and Palermo Festival Di Verdura. A New England Foundation for the Arts grant recipient, Jeff holds an MM from the New England Conservatory of Music.

KATHY ST. GEORGE* (Baruska). SpeakEasy: *Violet*; *Significant Other*; *Xanadu*; *Johnny Guitar*; *Ruthless!*; and *The Divine Sister* [Elliot Norton Award]. Broadway credits: two productions of *Fiddler on the Roof*, including the Tony Award-winning revival at the Gershwin Theatre, directed by Jerome Robbins. Off Broadway: *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* and six national tours. Local credits include: *Peter Pan*, *9 to 5* (North Shore Music Theatre); *Mame*, *Dear Miss Garland*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Greater Boston Stage Company); *Gypsy*, *Follies*, *Light Up The Sky* (Lyric Stage Company); *Showboat* (Fiddlehead); *Closer Than Ever*, *Das Barbecu* [IRNE Award] (New Repertory Theatre); *And Now... Miss Judy Garland* [IRNE Award], *Menopause The Musical*, and more. BS, M.Ed. – Salem State. www.kathystgeorge.com

ELLIE VAN AMERONGEN (Ex-Girlfriend) is incredibly excited to be back at SpeakEasy. She was previously seen in *Fun Home* as Medium Alison and in *Men on Boats* as Seneca Howland. Ellie graduated from The Boston Conservatory at Berklee in May where she studied Musical Theater with an emphasis in songwriting. You can find her music on [SoundCloud](https://www.soundcloud.com/ellievam) or on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/ellievam). Ellie would like to thank her family, her teachers, and her girlfriend for their endless support. Check out her website [here](http://ellievam.com)

For tickets or more information on **ONCE**, the public can call the Boston Theatre Scene Box Office at 617.933.8600 or visit www.SpeakEasyStage.com.

Press inquiries should be directed to **Marketing & Communications Director Jim Torres**:
Office: 617.482.3279 Cell: 617.529.1670 Email: JimTorres@SpeakEasyStage.com

STAGE COMPANY SpeakEasy

STAGING BOSTON PREMIERES

Calendar Listing Information

ONCE

Book by Enda Walsh, Music and Lyrics by Glen Hansard & Markéta Irglová
Based on the motion picture written by John Carney

Presented by: SpeakEasy Stage Company, the Calderwood Pavilion Resident Theatre Company at the Boston Center for the Arts; Paul Daigneault, Producing Artistic Director

Based on the 2007 Irish film written and directed by John Carney, **ONCE** employs an exceptional ensemble of actor/musicians to tell the story of an unlikely romance between a down-on-his-luck Dublin street musician and a determined Czech immigrant who inspires him to dream. Featuring a book by Enda Walsh, and music and lyrics by Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová, **ONCE** is a charming tale that reminds everyone of the importance of pursuing one's dreams and the power of music to connect us all.

Cast: Nile Scott Hawver (Guy) Mackenzie Lesser-Roy (Girl),
Ensemble: Jacob Brandt, Billy Butler, Claire Cochran, Chris Coffey,
Reagan Gardiner, Billy Meleady, Robert X. Newman, Marta Rymer, Stephen Shore,
Jeff Song, Kathy St. George, Ellie van Amerongen

Artistic Team Director: Paul Melone
Music Director: Steven Ladd Jones
Choreographer: Ilyse Robbins

Design Team: Scenic: Eric Levenson
Costumes: Rachel Padula-Shufelt
Lighting: Karen Perlow
Sound: Andrew Duncan Will

Production Stage Manager: L. Arkansas Light
Assistant Stage Manager: Lauren Burke

Performing at: The Roberts Studio Theatre
in the Stanford Calderwood Pavilion at the Boston Center for the Arts,
527 Tremont Street in Boston's South End

Performance Schedule: March 1-30, 2019
Wed. & Thurs. at 7:30PM; Fri. at 8PM; Sat. at 4 & 8PM; Sun. at 3PM.
Additional performance Thursday, March. 28 at 2PM.

Estimated Run Time: 2 hours 25 minutes, including one 10 minute intermission

Ticket Prices: Tickets start at \$25. Seniors: \$5 off at all times except gallery seats.
Age 25 and under: \$25 at all times.

Student Rush: \$15 with valid college ID, in person at the box-office only,
two hours before curtain, subject to availability. Limit – one rush ticket per valid ID.

Box Office: 617.933.8600; www.SpeakEasyStage.com

Press Contact Only: Jim Torres – 617.529.1670 (cell – not for publication)

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