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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Skylight Music Theatre Announces Full Cast, Creative Team for Dennis DeYoung's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* May 20 – June 12, 2022**

**Milwaukee, Wis.** (May 3, 2022) — Skylight Music Theatre announced the full cast for the Wisconsin premiere of Dennis DeYoung's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, running May 20 through June 12, 2022. Performances take place in the beautiful Cabot Theatre at the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway, in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward. Skylight is Milwaukee's professional Equity music theatre company.

#### ***Cast Features Tony Award Nominee, 'American Idol' Finalist, and International Opera Performer***

The powerhouse cast of 21 performers stars Kevin Anderson as Frollo, Ben Gulley as Quasimodo, and Alanis Sophia as Esmerelda.

Anderson is known for his work on stage, screen, and TV. He received a Tony Award nomination for his portrayal of Biff in *Death of a Salesman* on Broadway (with Brian Dennehy) and starred opposite Patti LuPone in *Sunset Boulevard* (London's West End). Films include *Orphans* (with Albert Finney) and *Sleeping with the Enemy* (with Julia Roberts). He was a Golden Globe nominee for his role as Father Ray in ABC's *Nothing Sacred*.

Gulley has performed worldwide as an opera, pop, Broadway and jazz singer. Recent roles include Mario Cavaradossi in *Tosca* with Sarasota Opera, Tenor in *Das Lied von der Erde* with Brussels National Orchestra, and Dan in *Next to Normal* with Musical Theater Heritage.

Sophia is a bilingual recording artist, songwriter, and musician who has appeared on *Telemundo's 'La Voz Kids'* and in Season 19 of *ABC's American Idol* in 2021, ranking Top 16. She will make her theatrical debut in *Hunchback*.

#### ***'Hunchback' Features Music and Book by Dennis DeYoung of Styx Fame***

This epic and romantic tale of love, lust and obsession is penned by Dennis DeYoung, former lead singer and songwriter of the legendary rock band Styx. DeYoung created the soaring score that explores the beauty and tragedy of Victor Hugo's epic masterpiece. DeYoung also adapted Hugo's novel for the musical's script.

DeYoung is a founding member of the rock band Styx, which has sold 30 million records worldwide. He wrote and performed the *Billboard* number one hit "Babe," which topped the charts for two weeks, as well as other *Billboard* top ten hits including "Come Sail Away," "The Best of Times," and "Lady."

#### ***Skylight Artistic Director Michael Unger's Dream Project***

Skylight Music Theatre Artistic Director Michael Unger will direct the production. DeYoung is from the Chicago area, as is Unger. Unger recalls their chance meeting 28 years ago outside Steppenwolf Theatre, and later being invited to DeYoung's home studio to hear the entire score of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* sung by his childhood rock hero.

*Skylight Music Theatre Announces Full Cast, Creative Team for “The Hunchback of Notre Dame”*

“I have been chasing this show for 28 years – and that’s not an exaggeration,” said Unger. “Dennis is a magnificent melody maker (think “Babe,” “Lady,” “Grand Illusion,” “Come Sail Away,” and so many more), and his version of this classic novel is wonderfully faithful to Hugo’s original. Although Dennis has made many wise plot adjustments to up the drama and romance. It’s a phenomenal combination.”

Although known primarily as a rock musician, DeYoung’s interest in theater began when he explored “new theatrical ways to present a rock concert to make the experience more engaging and exciting for the audience,” he said. In 1983 the "Kilroy Was Here" Styx album and tour incorporated theater and film. In 1993 DeYoung was offered the role of Pontius Pilate in the 20th anniversary tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar* with Ted Neeley, Carl Anderson, and Irene Cara, for which DeYoung received a Joseph Jefferson nomination as best supporting actor.

“Over the years, I have been fortunate enough to have had some success in writing songs, but the ones I have written for *Hunchback* I love as much or more than any I’ve ever done,” said DeYoung, who is working with Skylight on a newly revised version of the musical.

DeYoung’s *Hunchback* was previously presented at Chicago’s Bailiwick Repertory Theatre where it won a 2008 Jeff Award for Best Midsize Musical. *Variety* called it “A thrilling stage extravaganza!” *Chicago Tribune* wrote that DeYoung’s “brooding power ballads” and “thrilling melody lines” created “infectious musical passion.”

Skylight’s production team includes Music Director Eric Svejcar, also originally from the Chicago area, a Brooklyn-based composer, pianist, and arranger who music directed Skylight’s recent production of *Ernest Shackleton Loves Me* and the staged concert reading of Paul Williams’ *Fortunate Sons*. On Broadway he conducted *Big River* and played first keyboard for *The Little Mermaid*.

*Hunchback* was originally scheduled to be produced at Skylight during 2020-2021 to mark Unger’s inaugural Skylight season but was postponed due to the pandemic.

Skylight Music Theatre has joined other Milwaukee performing arts organizations in lifting Covid-19 safety requirements.

*Wisconsin Premiere*

**Dennis DeYoung’s THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME**

**May 20 – June 12, 2022**

By Dennis DeYoung

Directed by Skylight Music Theatre Artistic Director Michael Unger

Adapted from the novel by Victor Hugo

*Recommended for ages 12 and up*

**THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME CREATIVE TEAM**

Director .....	Michael Unger***
Music Director .....	Eric Svejcar
Choreographer .....	Lisa Shriver***
Original Scenic Design .....	Adam Koch*
Costume Designer .....	Alyssa Ridder
Lighting Designer .....	Jamie Roderick*
Sound Designer .....	Chad Parsley
Production Stage Manager.....	Kate Ferdinandi**

\* The Scenic and Lighting designers are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829.

\*\* Appearing through an agreement between Skylight Music Theatre and Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

\*\*\* The Director and Choreographer are members of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

*Skylight Music Theatre Announces Full Cast, Creative Team for “The Hunchback of Notre Dame”*

**THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME CAST**

Frollo .....	Kevin Anderson**
Quasimodo .....	Ben Gulley
Esmeralda.....	Alanis Sophia
Mahiette.....	Janet Metz**
Phoebus.....	Joey Chelius
Clopin .....	Seth K. Hale
Gudule .....	André Sguerra
Ensemble.....	Jackey Boelkow, Christie Burgess, Cynthia Cobb**, Nathan Danzer, Emma Dias, Romesh Jayasundara, Layton Lal, Chad Larget, Nathan Marinan, Taye Martin, Mitchell Matyas, Jamie Lynn Mercado, Amanda Satchell, Stephanie Staszak

\*\* Appearing through an agreement between Skylight Music Theatre and Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

**CREATIVE TEAM BIOGRAPHIES**

**Dennis DeYoung** (Writer and Composer) is a founding member of the rock band Styx which has sold 30 million records worldwide. Dennis has penned eight top ten singles in America, including “Come Sail Away,” “Lady,” “Mr. Roboto,” “Desert Moon,” and “Show Me the Way.” He starred in the 20th anniversary tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar* for which he received a Joseph Jefferson nomination for best supporting actor. His *Hunchback* also won a Joseph Jefferson award for Best Midsize Musical in 2008.

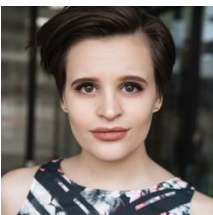
**Michael Unger** (Director) joined Skylight as Artistic Director in 2019. At Skylight he directed *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Being Earnest*, now streaming worldwide. Unger is Producing Artistic Director of NewArts in Newtown, CT; started in response to the Sandy Hook tragedy, where has directed 16 large-scale musicals involving over 650 local children. He directed benefit concerts honoring Susan Stroman, Andre DeShields, Maltby and Shire, as well as for the Sandy Hook, CT and Parkland, FL communities.

**Eric Svejcar** (Music Director) is a composer/pianist/arranger who music directed Skylight’s *Ernest Shackleton Loves Me*. Other credits include *Caligula: an Ancient Glam Epic*, *A ROCKIN’ Midsummer Night’s Dream*, (both directed by Michael Unger) and the musical podcast series *Loveville High*. On Broadway he conducted the Roundabout/Deaf West production of *Big River* and played first keyboard for *The Little Mermaid*.

**CAST BIOGRAPHIES**



**Kevin Anderson** (Frollo) won Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards and a Tony nomination as Biff in *Death of a Salesman*, a Golden Globe nomination for Father Ray in ABC’s *Nothing Sacred*, an Outer Critics Circle nomination for *Come Back Little Sheba*, Theatre World and Jeff Awards for *Orphans*. Notable roles include the original Joe Gillis opposite Patti LuPone in *Sunset Boulevard*, (West End), Phillip in the film *Orphans*, and Ben in *Sleeping with the Enemy* opposite Julia Roberts.



**Jackey Boelkow** (Ensemble) was last seen at Skylight in *The Full Monty*. She is a touring company member for Kohl’s Wild Theater and performed with the Prague Shakespeare Company in Prague, Czech Republic, where she played Margaret in the European premiere of *The Death of Kings: Seize the Crown* and Adrianna in *The Comedy of Errors*. Other credits: Outskirts Theatre Co.’s *Carrie* (Chris), and Sunset Playhouse’s *The Marvelous Wonderettes* (Suzy).



**Christie Burgess** (Ensemble). At Skylight she played Pam Lukowski in *The Full Monty*, “Peep Bo” in *Hot Mikado* and appeared in Skylight’s 2020 *Songbook* and *KidsWrites* tours and the 2020 *Skylight Sings: A Holiday Special*. Other area roles include: Fantine in *Les Misérables*, Demeter in *CATS*, Cinderella in *Into the Woods*, Rona in *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and Hope in *Urinetown*.



**Joey Chelius** (Phoebus) was last seen at Skylight as Malcolm MacGregor in *The Full Monty*, RJ in the virtual staged concert reading of Paul Williams’ musical *Fortunate Sons*, and Jack Worthing in the virtual musical, *Being Earnest*. He is a 2018 BFA graduate in Acting at University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point.



**Cynthia Cobb** (Ensemble) Credits at Skylight Music Theatre include *Porgy and Bess*, *Violet*, *Crowns*, *Gershwin and Friends*, *Ain’t Misbehavin’*, *Smokey Joe’s Café*, *Tintypes*, *Blues in the Night*, and *The All Night Strut*. Other favorites: *Carousel* at Candlelight Dinner Playhouse, *Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up* at Drury Lane Theatre, *Elmer Gantry* at Marriott Theatre at Lincolnshire, *Cowgirls* at Northlight Theatre, and *Showboat* at Gateway Playhouse.



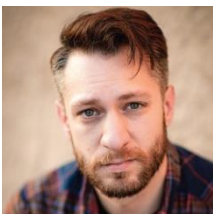
**Nathan Danzer** (Ensemble) was last seen at Skylight in *The Full Monty*. Past roles include Giovanni in *The Glance* and Kilroy in *Camino Real* at Off the Wall. He appeared as Dr. Bullard in *Lobotomy the Musical* at The Alchemist, John in *The Importance of Being Earnest* at Summerstage, and Van in *Dog Sees God* at Splinter Group.



**Emma Dias** (Ensemble) is a sophomore at Marquette University and was a part of Madison’s Jerry ensemble sponsored through the Overture center for three years. She has multiple film, commercial and music theatre credits with a number of companies. Favorite roles include Ella, Cinderella, Ensemble, Carrie, and Josefina in *American Girl Revue* at Children’s Theater of Madison.



**Ben Gulley** (Quasimodo) From opera to Broadway, jazz to pop, recent performances include debuts as Mario Cavaradossi in *Tosca* with Sarasota Opera, Tenor in *Das Lied von der Erde* with Brussels National Orchestra, Tenor in *Beethoven’s Symphony 9* with Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, award-winning turn as Dan in *Next to Normal* with Musical Theater Heritage and as Stromboli in Disney’s *Geppetto & Son* with The Coterie Theater. He starred as Pedro in *Tiefland* at Sarasota Opera in 2018, which was directed by *Hunchback’s* director, Michael Unger.



**Seth K. Hale** (Clopin) Recent roles include Orin Scrivello in *Little Shop of Horrors* at Skylight, Theseus/Oberon in Optimist Theatre’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream: The Lovers’ Tale*, Byron in *Not Today* with Forge Theater, Sholem Asch in *Indecent* with Music Theatre of Madison, and Kenny in *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* at Next Act.





**Romesh Jayasundara** (Ensemble) makes his debut at Skylight Music Theatre. He played Chip Tolentino in *Spelling Bee* with All In Productions, Mary Sunshine in *Chicago* with Greendale Community Theatre, Leading Player in *Pippin* in collaboration with Lake Country Playhouse and UW-Waukesha, Mark/Ben in *Love/Sick* with UW-Waukesha, and Ben in *American Idiot* with Milwaukee Rock Theatre. He is a student at UW-Milwaukee pursuing his BFA in Musical Theatre.



**Layton Lal** (Ensemble) is in seventh grade at Whitefish Bay Middle School. He performed at First Stage as Pig Pen in *Charlie Brown Christmas* (2021) and in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* (2018). He studies voice, piano, hip-hop, art, and magic. He received medals for solo ensemble at the Wisconsin School Music Association in 2021 and 2022 and a merit scholarship to study musical theater at the Interlochen Center for the Arts camp in Michigan this summer.



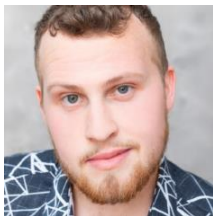
**Chad Larget** (Ensemble) was seen at Skylight in *Fortunate Sons*, *Oklahoma!*, *Most Happy Fella*, *A Little Night Music*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Marriage of Figaro* and *Pirates of Penzance*. Recent Milwaukee area credits include Sewer Man in *Dear World* with Boulevard Theatre, Jay Austin in *Only We Know Best*, with Milwaukee Metropolitan Voices, the Bank Chairman in *Mary Poppins* and Kodaly in *She Loves Me*, both at Sunset Playhouse.



**Nathan Marinan** (Ensemble). At Skylight he played Dave Bukatinsky in *The Full Monty*, Lady Augusta Bracknell in *Being Earnest*, Billy Boy Bill in *Urinetown*, Bamatabois/Joly in *Les Misérables*, and Princeton/Rod Understudy in *Avenue Q*. Other Milwaukee roles include *The Fabulous Lipitones*, *Carnival*, *Scrooge in Rouge*, *Earnest in Love*, *Mothers and Sons*, and *The Normal Heart*.



**Taye Martin** (Ensemble) recently graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point and is making his Skylight Music Theatre debut. He recently performed in *The Full Monty* and *Bye Bye Birdie* at the Palace Theatre. Other recent shows include *Seussical* and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*.



**Mitchell Matyas** (Ensemble) is making his debut at Skylight Music Theatre. Select credits include ensemble/understudy Don in the national tour of *Kinky Boots* and at Ogunquit Playhouse, Jean-Michel in *La Cage Aux Folles* at Numerica PAC, and Laurie in *Little Women* at Gateway by the Bay. He is a Wisconsin native and graduate of Marymount Manhattan College.



**Jamie Lynn Mercado** (Ensemble) was seen at Skylight as Beth Willet in the staged concert reading of Paul Williams musical *Fortunate Sons*; the 2020 *KidsWrites: Me, Myself, & I*; and in the ensemble of *Newsies*. Other credits include *Dad’s Season Tickets* at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, *Tongue ‘N Cheek* at Northern Sky Theater, *Matilda* at First Stage and *Songs for a New World* at All In Productions.



**Janet Metz** (Mahiette) Broadway: *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Marie Christine*, *On the Town*, *Fiddler on the Roof*. Off-Broadway: *Stars of David*, *Bingo* (Drama League Nomination), *Falsettoland*, *I Love You, You're Perfect...*, *Big*, *Hurrah at Last*, *Lucky Stiff*, *I Love NY*. At Sklylight, *The Full Monty*. Tours: *Joseph...* (Narrator opposite Donny Osmond), *The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber* (with Michael Crawford), *Stop the World...* (with Anthony Newley), *Music of the Night* (with Colm Wilkinson). Premieres: *Harmony* (DramaLogue Award), *Fame*, *The Spitfire Grill*.



**Amanda Satchell** (Ensemble) played Claire Willet in the virtual staged concert reading of Paul Williams’ musical *Fortunate Sons*. A graduate of the University of Michigan's Musical Theatre program, she has performed in regional theaters including Paper Mill Playhouse as well as in New York at Joe's Pub and Carnegie Hall.



**André Sguerra** (Gudule) is a theatre graduate from Northwestern University. Credits include Laertes in *Hamlet* with SIST, Tybalt in *Juliet and Her Romeo* with Turn to Flesh Productions, Bear in *Old Turtle and the Broken Truth* with Rebel Playhouse and Arthur (puppeteer) in *After the Blast* with Lincoln Center Theatre LCT3.



**Alanis Sophia** (Esmeralda) is a bilingual recording artist, songwriter, and musician. At 11 years old, she ranked second place on the first season of *Telemundo's 'La Voz Kids.'* She became the first Latin ambassador representing Florida’s tourism in partnership with *Visit Florida*. She participated in Season 19 of *ABC's American Idol*, ranking Top 16.



**Stephanie Staszak** (Ensemble) was most recently seen at Sklylight as Susan in *The Full Monty*, Abby in the staged reading of *Fortunate Sons*, Gwendolyn in the virtual filming of *Being Earnest* and as Ensemble/Understudy in *Oklahoma!* and *Newsies*. Staszak has performed with Milwaukee Opera Theatre, All In Productions and In Tandem.

**PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

Performances of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* are Friday, May 20 through Sunday, June 12, 2022 in the beautiful Cabot Theatre at the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway in the Historic Third Ward of Milwaukee.

**CALENDAR**

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>MAY</b>			20 7:30PM	21 7:30PM	22 2:00PM
	25 2:00/7:30PM	26 7:30PM	27 7:30PM	28 2:00/7:30PM	29 2:00PM
EB 31 6:30PM					
TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>JUNE</b>	1 7:30PM	2 7:30PM	3 7:30PM	4 2:00/7:30PM	5 2:00PM
	8 2:00/7:30PM	9 7:30PM	10 7:30PM	11 2:00/7:30PM	12 2:00PM

 Skylight Insights 
  EB Early Bird (Tues. May 31, 6:30 PM) 
  American Sign Language (Thurs. June 9, 7:30 PM)

**BOX OFFICE**

Single tickets and subscriptions are on sale. Subscribers get the best seats at the best prices. Purchase at the Broadway Theatre Center Box Office. Call (414) 291-7800 or visit 158 N. Broadway, Monday – Saturday, from noon - 6 p.m. or email [tickets@skylightmusictheatre.org](mailto:tickets@skylightmusictheatre.org).

- **Please let the Box Office know if accessible seating is needed, or if patrons will have a wheelchair or walker.**
- Box Office hours are Mon. – Sat. Noon - 6 p.m. The Box Office window is also open two hours prior to performances.
- Group discounts are available for parties of 10 or more by calling (414) 291-7800
- If you have ADA needs, please contact the Box Office (414) 291-7800 or [tickets@skylightmusictheatre.org](mailto:tickets@skylightmusictheatre.org).
- Skylight offers a risk-free guarantee to exchange, credit, or refund tickets for any canceled performances.
- For more information visit [www.skylightmusictheatre.org](http://www.skylightmusictheatre.org) or email [info@skylightmusictheatre.org](mailto:info@skylightmusictheatre.org)

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

**Skylight Insights.** In-depth discussions with Artistic Director, Michael Unger and special guests take place one hour before Wednesday and Sunday performances.

**ASL Performance.** *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* will be interpreted in American Sign Language (ASL) on June 9, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. To purchase tickets for this performance, email [tickets@skylightmusictheatre.org](mailto:tickets@skylightmusictheatre.org) or call Skylight Music Theatre's Box Office at (414) 291-7800. Mention ASL performance for seating in the appropriate section. *Support for ASL performance provided by UPAF Connect.*

**For more information** visit [www.skylightmusictheatre.org](http://www.skylightmusictheatre.org), email [info@skylightmusictheatre.org](mailto:info@skylightmusictheatre.org) or call the Box Office at (414) 291-7800.

**SKYLIGHT BAR & BISTRO**

The Skylight Bar & Bistro is open two hours prior to showtime and features a pre-theatre menu by Sabrosa. Conveniently located on the second floor of the Broadway Theatre Center, reservations are available online [here](#) or at <https://sabrosa.cafe>.

**PARKING**

Purchase \$5 parking vouchers from the Broadway Theatre Center Box office for use in the Historic Third Ward parking garage at 212 N. Milwaukee Street (one block east and one block north). Vouchers are valid between 5 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. for evening performances. Matinee vouchers are valid 12-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Not valid for Wednesday matinees. Voucher sales stop 30 minutes before showtime. **Advance purchase recommended so that vouchers can be mailed with tickets. No refunds.**

Meter parking is available on the street (free after 6 p.m. and on Sundays).

**HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

Skylight Music Theatre has joined other Milwaukee performing arts organizations in lifting Covid-19 safety protocols. Currently Skylight does not require proof of vaccination or negative Covid tests and masks will be optional. For up-to-date information, please visit [www.skylightmusictheatre.org/health](http://www.skylightmusictheatre.org/health).

**ABOUT SKYLIGHT MUSIC THEATRE**

*Skylight Music Theatre is a proud Cornerstone Member of the United Performing Arts Fund.*

Founded in 1959, Skylight is Milwaukee’s professional Equity music theatre company and the largest employer of Wisconsin actors in the State. Skylight produces the full spectrum of music theatre ranging from blockbuster Broadway musicals to reimagined operas, and from exciting world premieres to contemporary off-Broadway hits. Skylight’s mainstage home is the Cabot Theatre in the Broadway Theatre Center, which was built by Skylight in Milwaukee’s Historic Third Ward in 1992. Considered to be one of Milwaukee’s most beautiful theatres, the Cabot Theatre is based on the design of an 18<sup>th</sup> century French opera house. With just 350 seats it offers audiences great views of the action onstage. Skylight Music Theatre marks its 62nd season in 2021-2022.

**For media use:** Please access the *Hunchback* press kit for photos, logos, etc. [Click here](#)