



**CASTING COMPLETE FOR “FLYING TOWARD THE SUN,”
NEW MUSICAL BY NEIL BERG & BILL NABEL
AT PENGUIN REP THEATRE IN STONY POINT**



STONY POINT, NY – August 7, 2026 – With the addition of **Michael Notardonato** in the role of Gary Campbell, casting is complete for the upcoming world premiere production of *Flying Toward the Sun*, a musical about asylum seekers with book by **Bill Nabel**, music by **Neil Berg**, lyrics by Berg and Nabel, musical staging by **Ian Coulter-Buford**, and direction by Penguin founding Artistic Director **Joe Brancato** at **Penguin Rep Theatre** in Stony Point (Rockland County), New York, Executive Director **Andrew M. Horn** announced today.

Flying Toward the Sun begins performances Friday, August 14 and runs through Sunday, September 6.

Mr. Notardonato appeared on Broadway in *A Wonderful World* and originated the role of Dino Del Canto in the Off-Broadway premiere of *Romeo & Bernadette*. He joins the previously announced cast: **Carolyn Burch** (Syracuse Stage, Rocky Mountain Repertory Theatre: *Frozen*), **Ian Coulter-Buford** (2025 Broadway World Off-Broadway Award winner, Carbonell Award nominee), **Joy Del Valle** (Goodspeed Opera House: *Fiddler on the Roof*; LA Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago: *West Side Story*), **Jonny Lee Jr.** (Geffen: *Rise to the Top*; Signature: *Pacific Overtures*; Utah Shakespeare Festival: *Gold Mountain*), **Cheryl Stern** (Broadway: *La Cage Aux Folles*, *The Women* (Roundabout); Off-Broadway: *A Letter To Harvey Milk* (co-author), *Fiorello* (*Encores!*), and **Robert Zelaya** (Broadway first National Tour: *Kinky Boots*, *Once on this Island*).

Mr. Brancato calls *Flying Toward the Sun* “a rousing new musical full of heart and soul” by Penguin favorite Neil Berg, whose musical *The Sabbath Girl* (co-written with **Cary Gitter**) had its world premiere at Penguin before moving Off-Broadway to 59E59 Theaters in 2024.

In *Flying Toward the Sun*, it’s 2015 and Gary Campbell plans on saving the world. But it’s only his first day on the job as an immigrant official and he confronts heartbreak – and hope – as he listens to the challenges and dreams of those looking to forge new lives in the U.S. ... and then must decide their fate.

Director Brancato’s credits include Cary Gitter’s *Gene & Gilda* (Penguin/George Street Playhouse/59E59); the Neil Berg-Gitter musical *The Sabbath Girl* (Penguin/59E59); **Michael McKeever**’s *Daniel’s Husband*, which transferred from Penguin to Primary Stages at the Cherry Lane Theatre and then onto its commercial production at the Westside Theatre/Upstairs; **Erasmus Fenn**’s *Drop Dead Perfect* at Theatre at St. Clements (NY Times Critic’s Pick); *The Devil’s Music: The Life & Blues of Bessie Smith* (Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, Off-B’way Alliance, and Audelco Award nominee); *Freed* (Audelco Award nominee); *Tryst* (Outer Critics nomination for Best Play) at the Promenade and at Irish Rep; and *Cobb* (Drama Desk winner).

Bill Nabel (Bookwriter/Co-Lyricist) is an American Academy of Arts and Letters Richard Rodgers Prize finalist for his musical *Take Me America*. As an actor, he appeared on Broadway for the entire run of Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast* and performed in the original casts of *A Chorus Line*, *Sweeney Todd* and *42nd Street*.

Neil Berg (Composer/Co-Lyricist) is the composer/co-lyricist, along with Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning playwright **Robert Schenkkan**, of *The 12*, which was directed by **John Doyle** at Goodspeed Opera House. He also composed the music and co-wrote the lyrics (with Cary Gitter) for *How My Grandparents Fell in Love*, which was presented by New Jersey Rep at 59E59 Theaters earlier this year. His credits also include *Grumpy Old Men: The Musical*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and the upcoming musical version of *My Cousin Vinny*, based on the iconic movie, with book and lyrics by **Dale Launer**.

Wendy Bobbitt Cavett (Broadway: *Come From Away*, *Hamilton*, *Mamma Mia!*) is musical supervisor and arranger; **Matthew Stephens** is musical director; and **William Bastiason** is musical transcriber.

The production is designed by **Christopher Swader** and **Justin Swader** (set), **Risa Ando** (costumes), **Christopher Wong** (lighting), **Max Silverman** (sound), **Ein Kim** (projections), and **Dana Weintraub** (props). **Mirah Kozodoy** is associate sound designer and **Maya Imani** is assistant choreographer.

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Michael Palmer is production stage manager and **Isaac Goldbaum** is assistant stage manager.

Performances of *Flying Toward the Sun* are scheduled at Penguin Rep Theatre, a repurposed hay barn, located at 7 Crickettown Road. “The converted barn, circa 1880, has never been more inviting” (*The New York Times*). Says Mr. Horn, “It’s theatre so close you can feel it, with comfortable upholstered seats and no seat more than 30 feet from the stage.” The theatre is air conditioned, handicapped accessible, and has plenty of free parking.

Shows will take place: Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m., Friday matinee at 2:00 p.m. (August 14 only), Friday evenings at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 3:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Tickets are priced at \$60 (\$53 if ordered before August 5). Discounts are available for groups of 10 or more and young people (30 and under).

Cheap Thrills Night is Friday, August 14 at 7:30 p.m. when tickets are \$30, half the regular price.

There will be cake and coffee with the cast following the official opening on Sunday, August 16. Following the show on Friday, August 28 will be a discussion among the artists and audience.

New this season is the introduction of ***Sweet Treats Friday*** – August 21 – when audience members are invited to arrive early and enjoy complimentary desserts before the show.

To order tickets or for further information, visit Penguin Rep’s website at WWW.PENGUINREP.ORG or call 845-786-2873.



Michael Notardonato in the role of Gary Campbell,