



Schmigadoon! Brings Golden Age Broadway back With A Wink

(I Went and quite never left the town)

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I grew up in a house where musicals and baseball were somehow always competing for volume. My grandmother adored classic Broadway and old movie musicals, the kind where nobody just talks, they sing everything and when I stayed over, the TV volume always seemed to creep a little higher during those big numbers. From the other room, my grandfather would inevitably call out to turn it down, usually because he was trying to catch the Yankees game on his transistor radio. That was the balance, show tunes in one room, Mel Allen's play-by-play in the other.

Somewhere along the way, I ended up right the middle of that. As I got older, Broadway became one of my favorite things to do, so I don't take it lightly when I get the chance to sit in a theater and take it all in, and even better, to write about it after.

Sitting just four rows from the stage for Schmigadoon!, I wasn't just watching it, I felt like I got pulled right into it. For two hours and thirty minutes, I was just as trapped in that town as the characters were.

It takes a certain kind of musical magic, and a lot of good humor, to pull off a musical like Schmigadoon!. A spoofy Broadway-style show set in a town where everyone sings and dances their feelings, in the spirit of a Golden Age musical like Brigadoon. And yes... they absolutely know what they're doing with that joke.

Based on the Apple TV+ series and executive produced by Lorne Michaels, the stage version is created by Cinco Paul and Ken Daurio. It follows modern-day New York couple Josh Skinner and Melissa Gimble, played by Alex Brightman and Sara Chase, who go on a couples retreat to reconnect, and somehow end up trapped in Schmigadoon, where the only way out is true love, whether you're ready for it or not.



Cast of Schmigadoon

What I noticed right away is how much this show is always moving. Director and Tony Award winning choreographer Christopher Gattelli never lets it sit still, the show is in motion. The set doesn't feel built so much as assembled in front of you, with the ensemble shifting pieces into place. It has a 3-D storybook feel, like the town is being imagined in real time, and it works best when it fully leans into classic Broadway language, tipping its hat to shows like Oklahoma! and The Music Man.

The musical numbers drive the night. The opening "Schmigadoon!" tells you right away what kind of ride you're in for, big, bright, and over the top in the best way. "Corn Puddin'" lands as a crowd favorite, full of energy and laughs. "Tribulation," performed by Ana Gasteyer, is one of the sharpest comic moments of the night. Numbers like "Suddenly" and "You Can't Tame Me" keep that balance between parody and character, leading into a full-company Broadway finale.

The costumes help sell the world, bright, old-school Golden Age Broadway style, like something out of a Technicolor musical. Everything feels slightly heightened and just a little too perfect, fitting for a town that isn't quite real. The orchestra gives the show its backbone, with a full Broadway sound that feels warm, steady, and always pushing the action forward.

The dance numbers are "off the charts" especially a classroom step-dancing sequence that drew real roars from the audience. One of those moments where everything clicks and you can feel the whole room lean in.



Cast of Schmigadoon

At the center, Alex Brightman and Sara Chase hold everything together. Brightman plays Josh Skinner as the skeptical outsider, using sharp physical comedy and precise reactions without overplaying it. He stays grounded, which keeps the humor from tipping too far into parody. Chase gives Melissa the emotional core, gradually opening up to the strange logic of Schmigadoon while keeping her arc believable and warm. Together, they create the balance the show depends on – one resisting the fantasy, the other gradually stepping into it.



Sara Chase (standing in pink)
Alex Brightman (sitting in plaid)

Ana Gasteyer brings authority and bite to Mildred Layton, with a sharp comedic edge. Ann Harada, as Florence Menlove, finds humor in smaller, quieter moments that land easily. McKenzie Kurtz's Betsy feels fully at home in this world — sincere, vocally strong, with a bright ingénue energy. Max Clayton, as Danny Bailey, delivers charm and polish as a classic leading man, while Isabelle McCalla's Emma Tate brings sincerity, warmth, and emotional nuance that deepens the story.

Ayaan Diop, in a Broadway debut at just 9 years old, is an immediate crowd favorite at times a scene stealer playing Carson with natural charm and an easy connection to the audience.



Alex Brightman & Ayaan Diop

Brad Oscar plays Mayor Menlove with controlled, image-conscious humor, letting the cracks show at just the right moments. Ivan Hernandez leans into the familiar “handsome doctor” role as Doc Lopez with a calm, sincere presence. Maulik Pancholy is quietly funny as Reverend Layton, using subtle reactions and light humor. Around them, the ensemble keeps the world in constant motion, shifting between townspeople and featured moments so the stage never loses energy.



Cast of Schmigadoon!

What ties it all together is the chemistry across the cast — that sense that everyone is listening, reacting, and building off each other in real time, which is exactly what keeps the world of Schmigadoon! feeling alive.

Choreography, costumes, stage design, music, and performances all work together — keeping you smiling and in on the joke inside the packed Nederlander Theatre. The audience laughed, cheered, and applauded throughout, and by the end, there was a well-deserved standing ovation.

Even after leaving the Nederlander Theatre, stepping into a busy Friday night in Times Square, rushing to catch the next Metro-North train home, it didn't quite let go — like I never fully escaped the town of Schmigadoon! at all.

