



## Two Strangers (Carry A Cake Across New York) Brings A Slice Of Classic Rom-Coms To Broadway

BY: Robert Jowaiszas, Community Editor/Reporter

Photo credits: Matthew Murphy



There was a time when romantic comedies didn't need much more than two people, a city, and conversation. Films like *When Harry Met Sally*, *Notting Hill*, and *You've Got Mail* built emotional arcs out of chance encounters, witty dialogue, and chemistry that unfolded slowly rather than loudly. That style feels less common now, yet still resonates when done well, which is where *Two Strangers (Carry a Cake Across New York)* lives on stage.

That idea connects to a personal memory. I first started watching those kinds of films almost by accident—my sister would have friends over, and I'd end up nearby during what was meant to be "girl time." Over time, I began to enjoy them.

*Two Strangers (Carry a Cake Across New York)* an eight-time Tony Award nominated production (2026), including Best Musical brings that romantic story telling to Broadway, centered on two characters, Robin and Dougal, navigating New York City.

Dougal arrives in New York for his father's wedding, and Robin is unexpectedly tasked with carrying a wedding cake across the city. What begins as a practical errand slowly turns into a shared journey through New York City, where chance encounters and conversation begin to shape their connection. Originally developed in the UK as *The Season*, written by Jim Barne and Kit Buchan, the show transferred to Broadway.

### Arrival in the Theater District



Walking through the Theater District before curtain, the city feels like part of the performance itself—marquees glowing, crowds shifting between venues, and that steady sense that every block leads somewhere about to begin. New York City has a way of building its own kind of anticipation at this hour.

A quick stop on 48th Street for a knish and a Diet Coke fit the Midtown rhythm of the night. But the soda had other plans on the walk uptown—suddenly spilling and soaking into my dress shirt. It turned into a brief, unplanned pause, jacket zipped up a little quicker than intended, before heading into the theatre and the rest of the evening.

Knowing this would be a delayed review, I still had to see *Two Strangers (Carry a Cake Across New York)* for myself.

Outside the Longacre Theatre, the growing crowd already hinted at the buzz surrounding the production following its Tony nominations earlier this week. Opened in 1913, the Longacre has long been known as one of Broadway's more intimate theaters, a venue where character-driven productions connect closely with audiences.

That atmosphere fits *Two Strangers* perfectly. What started as a word-of-mouth favorite has quickly become one of Broadway's hottest tickets, with awards attention only accelerating the momentum.

### Direction & Staging

The production is a deliberately intimate, lightly staged Broadway musical that prioritizes character over spectacle. Directed by Tim Jackson, the approach is restrained and focused.

The direction emphasizes pacing, tone, and emotional clarity rather than visual complexity. Scenes move with a natural rhythm that mirrors the characters' journey through New York City, keeping the story grounded and

conversational rather than stylized or heavily theatrical.

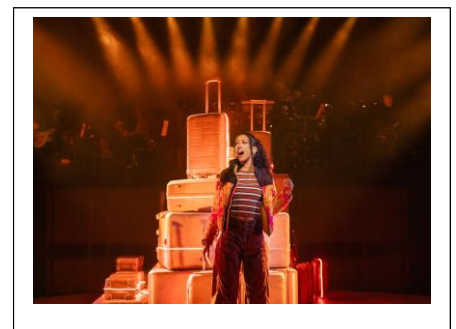


Staging is minimal but purposeful. Instead of fully built environments, the production relies on suggestion lighting shifts, simple scenic elements, and props such as suitcases and the wedding cake to move between New York City locations. This restraint supports the intimacy of the story, keeping attention on relationship and momentum rather than scenery. The simplicity feels intentional, reinforcing the rom-com structure of the piece.

### Performances

Christiani Pitts (*A Bronx Tale*, Broadway) serves as the emotional anchor of the production. Her performance brings warmth, humor, and emotional precision to Robin, creating a grounded character who feels real and lived-in rather than constructed.

She moves smoothly between humor and vulnerability, allowing emotional transitions to feel natural and unforced. That control of tone is one of her strongest qualities in a piece that constantly balances comedy and intimacy.



Her chemistry with her co-lead is central to the production. She plays off Dougal with strong timing and instinct, keeping their dynamic believable and engaging. In a two-character production, she becomes the stabilizing presence that holds the structure together.

Opposite her, Vincent Michael steps into the role of Dougal for this performance in place of Sam Tutty. He brings relaxed charisma and strong comic timing, quickly building chemistry with Pitts.



Vincent Michael at opening night  
Photo Credit: Valerie Terranova

Rather than feeling like a replacement, he fully inhabits the role within the existing framework, matching its tone and emotional rhythm while keeping the energy light and natural. His Dougal is charming, vulnerable, and wide-eyed, helping carry the story forward with ease.

His sincerity and comedic instincts balance well with Pitts' grounded realism. Together, they carry the heart of the production, supporting both the comedic rhythm and quieter emotional moments. Pitts remains the emotional anchor, while Michael brings lightness and optimism that keeps the story moving naturally.

#### **Audience Response & Stage Door**

Audience reaction inside the Longacre Theatre was strongly positive, with many describing the show as charming and heartfelt.

Amy from Yonkers said, "It was just lovely, cute and funny."

Denise from Brooklyn added, "Definitely a feel-good play, beautiful voices. The understudy (Vincent Michael) who played Dougal was hilarious."

Richard from Virginia joined in and said, "I had a really good time—definitely Tony worthy."

After the performance, more than 50 fans gathered outside the stage door. Both performers took time to sign Playbills, take photos, and speak with audience members.

While getting my Playbill signed, I congratulated Christiani Pitts on her Tony nomination, and she graciously replied, "Thank you," then paused to pose for a selfie with my friend.

A fan from the UK named Colin leaned over during the moment and gleefully told Christiani he came in from out of town and didn't expect to love it so much, adding simply, "You're beautiful, thanks!"

Vincent Michael also stopped for fans; when I told him he was hilarious and had a stellar performance, he smiled and said, "I wasn't even supposed to be here," with a wink.



Like the best rom-com stories, *Two Strangers* (Carry a Cake Across New York) isn't really about what happens, but what it leaves behind. Sitting about six rows from the stage at the Longacre Theatre, the intimacy of the space made it all feel even more immediate—the show even stayed with me on my train ride back home.