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NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10036
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THE MORNING LINE

DATE: Tuesday, January 6, 2015

FROM: Emily Meagher, Michelle Farabaugh

PAGES: 13, *including this page*

JANUARY 6, 2015

Arts, Briefly

Broadway Receipts Break Record

Coming off a hugely profitable run of performances during Christmas week, Broadway musicals and plays did even better last week over the New Year holiday, grossing the highest amount ever — \$42.8 million — for a week's worth of performances, according to data released on Monday by the Broadway League. "Wicked" set a record for an eight-performance week for any Broadway show, grossing \$2,740,642, while "The Lion King" — the top-grossing Broadway show for 2014 — set a record at its theater, the Minskoff, with a gross of \$2,514,994. The producers of the new musical "Aladdin" and the play revivals of "It's Only a Play" and "The Elephant Man" also announced box-office records at their theaters, thanks to last week's grosses.

Several musicals ended their Broadway runs last weekend on a high note, none more than "Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella," which grossed \$1,873,246 for nine performances — the highest weekly amount in the show's history. "Once," the 2012 Tony Award winner for best musical, wrapped up its run with a terrific \$967,968, while "Pippin" — which won the 2013 Tony for best musical revival — finished strong with \$907,253. The musical revival of "Side Show," a fast flop in spite of good reviews, ended its 10-week run, grossing \$810,486 — by far the most it has made.

Among plays, "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time" stood out as a major hit, considering that it is a new work with no celebrity actors in the cast; the show, which earned stellar reviews, grossed \$1,089,779. Its producers announced on Monday that they were now selling tickets through Labor Day weekend, signaling a bullish outlook. Overall Broadway attendance also reached a record weekly high of 346,913, compared to 253,730 for the New Year holiday week last season.

PATRICK HEALY

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The New York Times



ArtsBeat The Culture at Large

January 5, 2015

‘Cabaret’ to Close March 29, and Emma Stone Extends Her Run

By Lori Holcomb-Holland

The lights at the Kit Kat Club will dim for good this spring, but at least one of the beautiful people is sticking around slightly longer than expected. Producers are set to announce on Monday that the Roundabout Theater’s production of “Cabaret” at Studio 54 will close March 29, a little more than a year after it opened for an initial 24-week engagement. Additionally, [Emma Stone](#) will continue [her role as Sally Bowles](#) through Feb. 15, extending her run by two weeks.

The closing date corresponds with Alan Cumming’s commitment to the role as M.C. The Cumming-Stone combination has brought in the best ticket sales since the show opened March 21, breaking the million-dollar mark for the first time over Christmas. Since Ms. Stone took over the role from Michelle Williams in November, audience capacity has averaged more than 95 percent. Ms. Stone’s replacement is expected to be announced within the next few weeks.

Total Daily Circulation – 1,897,890
Total Sunday Circulation – 2,391,986
Monthly Online Readership – 30,000,000

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SINCE 1982
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January 8, 2015

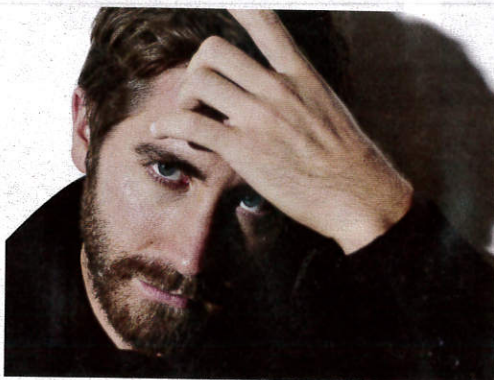
On Broadway

Check out more theater news at cityguideny.com/theater

CONSTELLATIONS: A Collision of Romance, Physics, Bees and Theatre

BY GRIFFIN MILLER

In *Constellations*, British playwright's Nick Payne's first work to reach Broadway, the cards are stacked and restacked in quantitatively engaging formations. Take for example the characters. Just two. He's a beekeeper; she's a quantum physicist — an intriguing yin/yang love story if ever there was one. Add to this the trajectory of Payne's script that "defies the boundaries of the world we think we know — delving into the infinite possibilities of their relationship and raising questions about the difference between choice and destiny."



Jake Gyllenhaal makes his Broadway debut in *Constellations*

If this is starting to sound a little heady, rest assured the 80-minute show is rich with humor and human insight. Plus there's *Constellations*, buoyantly theatrical scene-scape: a visual cacophony of balloons, some lit from within, that illuminate the imagination as much as they do the stage.

The production marks the reuniting of Payne with leading man **Jake Gyllenhaal** and director **Michael Longhurst**, who collaborated on the U.S. premiere of Payne's *If There Is I Haven't*

Found It Yet. Playing opposite Gyllenhaal is British actress **Ruth Wilson**, the final count being a quartet of Broadway debuts.

According to Longhurst, who also directed the highly acclaimed London production of *Constellations*, "The backstop of the play is that we are all part of a tiny universe made up of parallel universes where everything is happening both simultaneously and differently."

He goes on to note that this is something theoretical physicists came up with to create the concept of extra dimensions. "Nick taps into all this in a very economical way," he continues. "The script really moves from humor to heartbreak in all these worlds where these two characters have just themselves. It's a dance in which they are angling and re-angling themselves."

A dance that Longhurst is totally into choreographing, especially since the dancers are Gyllenhaal and Wilson. "Jake is such an emotional and intelligent actor — and he's incredibly funny," says Longhurst, who appreciates the fact that a noted film actor is adept at "working a full house." As for Wilson, until now she and Longhurst have had more of a nostalgic relationship than a professional one. "We went to university together [in Nottinghamshire, England], and since then I've watched her work. She's amazing."

Constellations is currently playing at Manhattan Theatre Club's Samuel J. Friedman Theatre, 261 W. 47th Street. To reserve tickets visit manhattantheatreclub.com

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WHY I LOVE...

the Upper West Side

NATIVE NEW YORKER **TONY DANZA** IS BACK ON BROADWAY, THE ORIGINAL SOURCE OF HIS ACTING INSPIRATION

Tony Danza has a cure-all for alleviating a scratchy throat before a performance, and it sounds like a sorcerer's potion. Mix the jellied insides of an aloe vera plant with brandy, honey and a teaspoon of butter. Melt it down until it becomes a syrup and then drink—carefully. “When I was doing *The Producers*, my throat was bothering me, and my Russian manicurist told me to try this,” says Danza. “The only problem is that there is so much brandy in it. I just take nips.”

Danza returns to Broadway this winter, starring in the stage adaptation of the 1992 movie *Honeymoon in Vegas*. The musical opens at the Nederlander Theatre in Times Square Jan. 15 after a critically acclaimed pre-Broadway run in New Jersey. “I got *The New York Times* review I’ve been chasing for 40 years, and now I’ve got to live up to that,” he says. “God forbid *The Times* says it was better in Jersey. That would kill me.” Danza plays Tommy Korman, a slick Vegas gambler who falls for a bride-to-be. “He is the bad guy, and I have to make him likable,” he says.

Danza has performed onstage throughout his prolific career,



which began with the hit TV show *Taxi* in 1978 and continued with *Who's The Boss?*. His high school drama teacher introduced him to Broadway by taking him to see *West Side Story*. “I was a kid from Brooklyn going, ‘Holy crap, what’s this?’” says Danza. “I wanted to sing and dance onstage.”

He soon played Luther Billis in his school’s production of *South Pacific*. “I got laughs, and that was really the first time that I got laughs,” he remembers. “It hooked me on musical comedy.” With the exception of a brief foray into boxing, Danza has been acting ever since.

On days off, Danza likes to hang out in his Upper West Side neighborhood. He begins local recommendations with the first names of the proprietors and says to tell Roslyn at her jewelry shop that he sent you.

This winter, as Danza sips his steaming-hot cup of medicine, he’ll judge the success of *Honeymoon in Vegas* by an even higher standard than another stirring *New York Times* review. “When actors come to see a show, it is one thing for them to think something is great,” he says. “But when another actor comes and is jealous, that is how you know it’s good.”

—Matt McCue

★ THE BEST PLACES TO ... ★

Have a cocktail
CAFÉ TALLULAH

“It’s really the only hopping bar (between 60th and 80th streets) on the Upper West Side,” Danza says of the lively French bistro.
240 Columbus Ave.;
212-209-1055;
cafetallah.com



Find a gem
ROSLYN

“They have a lot of antique pieces,” says Danza, who also appreciates the wry humor of shopowner Roslyn Grant. “She is a riot.”
276 Columbus Ave.;
212-496-5050;
roslynjewelryny.com

Pick up stationery
PAPYRUS

Who knew Danza was a man of letters? “I’m writing one right now to Joe Torre about his brother (Frank, who recently died at 82),” he says.
209 Columbus Ave.;
212-362-2386;
papyrusonline.com

While away an afternoon
HARRY'S BURRITOS

“Because of the height of the buildings along Columbus Avenue, this is the only place where you can sit outside and get sunlight all day,” says Danza. “And the food ain’t bad.”
241 Columbus Ave.;
212-580-9494;
harrysburritos.com

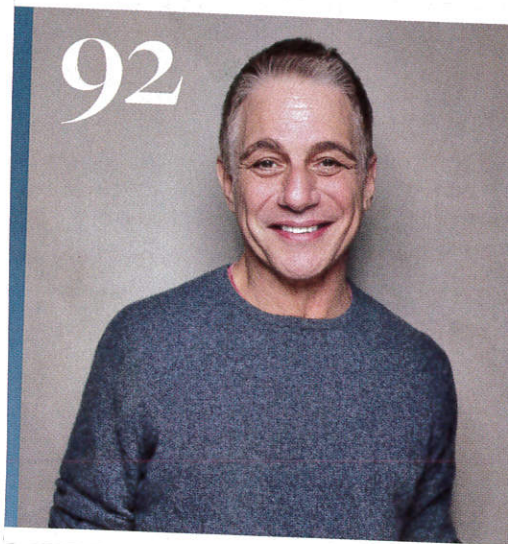
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January + February 2015

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Why I Love...
the Upper
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Actor Tony Danza.



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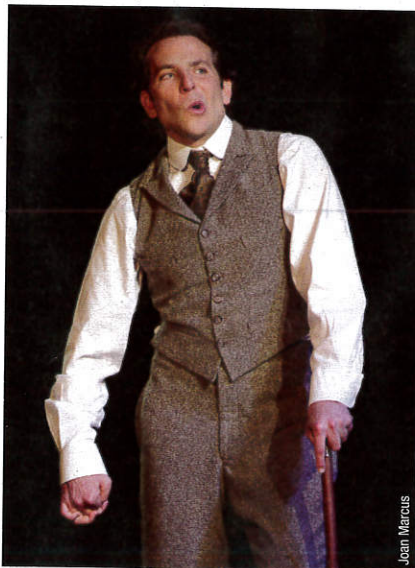
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January 8, 2015

The [Elephant] Man of the Hour: Bradley Cooper

BY GRIFFIN MILLER

Bradley Cooper's physical reveal on the stage of Broadway's Booth Theatre is not a bells and whistles event. It arrives organically bathed in soft lighting so as not to encourage wild screams and applause from Cooper acolytes -- although I suppose outbursts are not out of the question depending on audience demographics. He does, nonetheless, come wrapped in pop-culture paradox: a contemporary sex symbol wearing nothing but vintage boxer shorts standing



Matinee idol Bradley Cooper transforms into John Merrick, "The Elephant Man"

statue-like before us, tan, personal trainer buff... undeniably arresting as John Merrick, "The Elephant Man".

Severely deformed. Beaten and degraded from the age of 16. Moved from workhouse to sideshow attraction in the latter 1800s, Merrick's shocking reality comes into focus via photographs projected behind Cooper in heartbreaking succession as the actor contorts into a dramatic

semblance of the Victorian outcast that inspired playwright Bernard Pomerance to bring his story to theatrical light in 1977. And the author made it clear that no prosthetic makeup was to be used in transforming the actor to Merrick.

The current production marks the play's third Broadway outing -- each famous for beautiful male stars inhabiting the title role: rock legend David Bowie in 1980; two-time Tony-winning actor Billy Crudup in 2002; and now, People Magazine heartthrob/Oscar nominee Cooper.

And Cooper does not disappoint. *The Silver Linings Playbook* actor commits to the challenging role in which he is called upon not only to maintain severely uncomfortable physicality -- deformed hand; contorted body radiating into a leg and foot; impaired walk -- but it is he who is responsible for delivering the play's most humorous lines. And, perhaps most satisfyingly, he, along with his flawless fellow cast members, delivers a performance free of cloying sentimentality.

Alessandro Nivola plays Dr. Frederick Treves, the young surgeon who rescues Merrick from the freak show circuit and sets him up in a clean, stress-free "home" in the London Hospital, Whitechapel. [In real life, Merrick resided there from 1886 until his death three years later]. The production marks a Nivola-Cooper reunion, as the two costarred in *American Hustle* in 2013.

Nivola offers a nuanced take on the

Cooper delivers a performance free of cloying sentimentality.

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compassion, pragmatism and Victorian mores that go into his role. His scenes with Cooper are really quite lovely.

The show's other key character, Mrs. Kendal, is played by Emmy winner/Oscar nominee Patricia Clarkson, known most recently for her recurring role as Tammy One on *Parks and Recreation*. Treves enlists Mrs. Kendal to introduce Merrick to feminine gentility – a quality he has been denied due to his frightening physicality.

She ups the ante by offering to introduce him into upper class British society. Her growing compassion and affection – equal to that of Treves – eventually leads to a dangerously climactic moment that, once done, cannot be undone.

Also in the company are Tony nomi-

nees Anthony Heald (Ross; Bishop How) and Kathryn Meisle (Miss Sandwich; Princess Alexandra) and Henry Stram, who plays hospital administrator Carr Gomm. The compact cast is designed so that the actors assume multiple roles – every one well defined and wonderfully executed.

As directed by Tony nominee Scott Ellis (who is also the creative mastermind behind the currently-running comedy revival of *You Can't Take It With You*), *The Elephant Man* cuts together a brittle, yet brave Pygmalion tale with humanity.

In the end, I defy anyone fortunate enough to have seen this remarkable production to leave the theatre without quoting the oft-repeated line: "I am very pleased to have made your acquaintance, Mr. Merrick."

The Elephant Man is playing at Broadway's Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. For reservations call 212-239-6200 or visit elephantmanonbroadway.com

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THIS WEEK'S TOP EXHIBITS, PERFORMANCES & MORE see p. 18

NYC'S ORIGINAL

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CITY GUIDE

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BRADLEY COOPER
PATRICIA CLARKSON
ALESSANDRO NIVOLA

THE ELEPHANT MAN

HALF MAN HALF ELEPHANT

Live On Broadway

ONLY
5
WEEKS
LEFT

BY
Bernard Pomerance

DIRECTED BY
Scott Ellis

ElephantManBroadway.com

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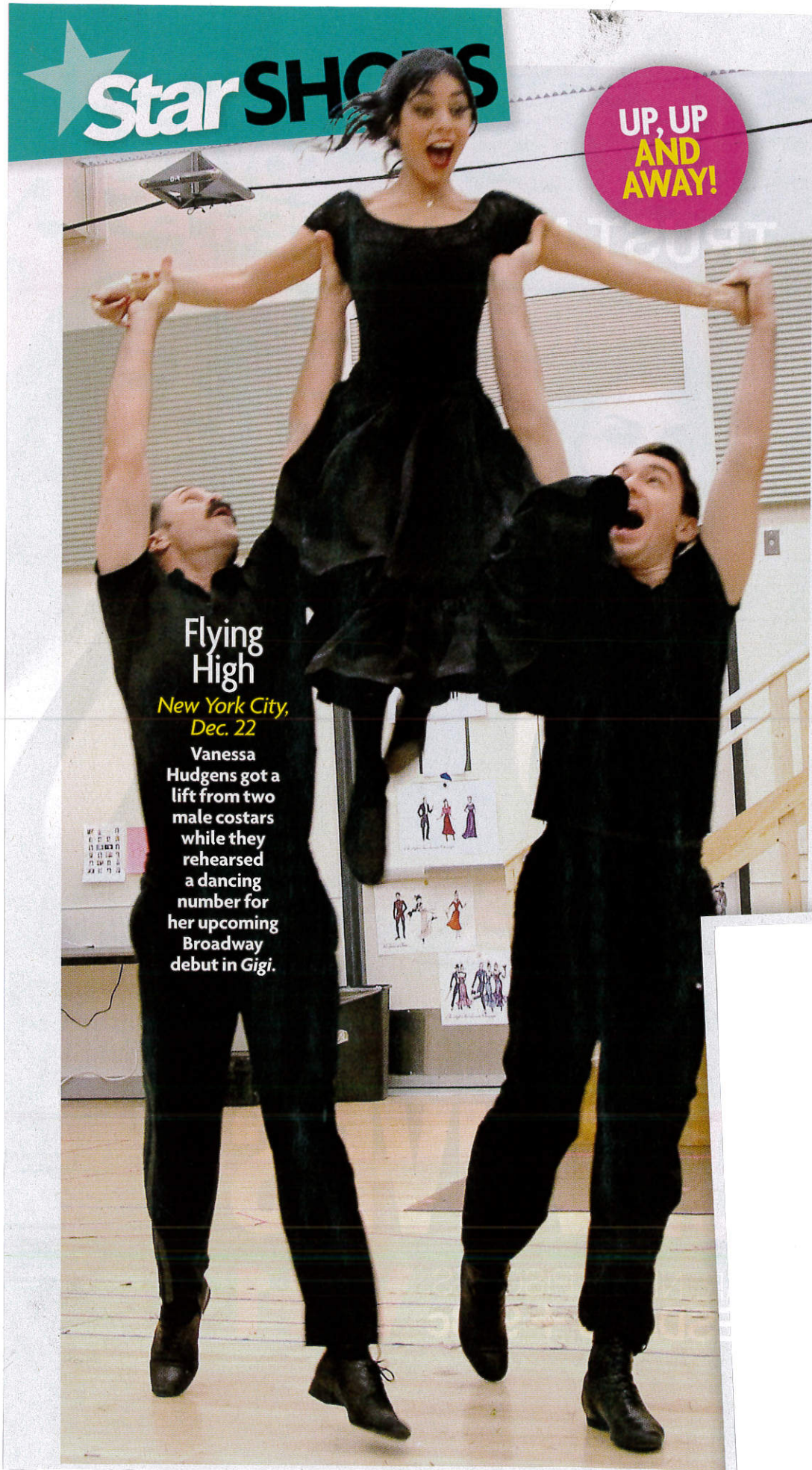
Star SHOTS

UP, UP
AND
AWAY!

Flying High

New York City,
Dec. 22

Vanessa Hudgens got a lift from two male costars while they rehearsed a dancing number for her upcoming Broadway debut in *Gigi*.



WEEKLY iNTouch

JANUARY 12, 2015

upclose



LET'S DANCE

NYC, Dec. 21

She's come a long way since *High School Musical*. Musical: **VANESSA HUDGENS** preps for the Broadway-bound musical *Gigi*, in which she takes on the same character that helped Audrey Hepburn launch her career in the 1951 play.

In Touch

Total Weekly Circulation – 685,634
Monthly Online Readership – 90,082

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NEW YORK POST

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Emily Smith
esmith@nypost.com

Ian Mohr
imohr@nypost.com
Stephanie Smith
ssmith@nypost.com
Mara Siegler
msiegler@nypost.com

Sightings . . .

... **JONAH HILL** seeing "The Elephant Man" on Broadway for a second time . . .

Total Daily Circulation – 576,711
Monthly Online Readership – 12,000,000

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January 8, 2015

The Tip Sheet Highlights from this week's issue

BROADWAY SHOW *The Book of Mormon*

HOT



Joan Marcus

Over at *The Book of Mormon*, January 6th marks the date two-time Tony-nominee **Gavin Creel** recreates his Olivier Award-winning performance as Elder Price in the record-breaking hit musical created by those *South Park* bad boys Trey Parker and Matt Stone. **For more theater news, see p. 54.**