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Credit: Hudson River Park

**THEATER'S BIGGEST STARS TAKE THE STAGE IN HUDSON RIVER PARK FOR
BROADWAY BY THE BOARDWALK**

This year's free performance series features several Tony Award-winning performers, including Ali Louis Bourzgui, the 2026 Tony Award winner for Featured Actor in a Musical.

NEW YORK, NY (June 17, 2026) – Hudson River Park announced the lineup for *Broadway by the Boardwalk*, the free performance series that delivers dazzling shows against a stunning waterfront backdrop each summer. Entering its third season, this year's series will feature five incredible free events showcasing Tony and Grammy winners, rising stars and electric performers from across the Broadway stage.

This year's star-studded series kicks off with a performance from **Max von Essen** featuring **Billy Stritch** in a dynamic evening of Broadway classics. The series will also bring several inspiring Tony Award winners to Broadway's backyard including **J. Harrison Ghee**, **Ali Stoker** and rising star **Ali Louis Bourzgui** (2026 Tony Award winner for Featured Actor in a Musical). Closing out the series is the Broadway powerhouse **Mandy Gonzalez**, known for her performances in *Hamilton*, *In the Heights* and *Wicked*.

"We created Broadway by the Boardwalk because Hudson River Park is the theater community's backyard, and because delivering free public programming in service of local New Yorkers and visitors alike is a core part of our mission" said **Noreen Doyle, President & CEO of Hudson River Park Trust**. "This series is a natural—and uniquely spectacular—fit between some of the most talented artists in New York City and the gorgeous Hudson River setting at sunset. Whether you know every lyric by heart or are discovering these songs for the first time, Broadway by the Boardwalk delivers an unforgettable New York summer night. We are grateful to our partner Erich Bergen and to all of the amazing artists for bringing their talents outdoors for all to enjoy"

New this year, each performance will begin with *Stepping into the Spotlight*, an exciting new showcase featuring Broadway's next generation of stars. This special opening act will feature understudies from current Broadway productions and shine a light on the remarkable talent waiting in the wings. It's a rare chance to see tomorrow's Broadway stars today.

"For the past two summers, I've found myself amazed and inspired by the turnout each Monday at *Broadway by the Boardwalk*," said **Erich Bergen, the producer and curator for Broadway by the Boardwalk**. "To see Clinton Cove filled with New Yorkers who love Broadway is a very moving sight, and I know this year, with the addition of *Stepping into The Spotlight*, this will become a can't miss series for anyone who loves Broadway. New York City can be very hard to live in sometimes, and very expensive to enjoy. *Broadway by the Boardwalk* in Hudson River

Park is the antidote to both. Bring a blanket, bring your friends, and come have one of the best nights of the year – totally free.”

Broadway by the Boardwalk is funded and supported by Hudson River Park Friends and is part of Hudson River Park’s 2026 summer programming season, which features hundreds of free events for all ages. The series kicks off Monday, July 13, and all performances are free and open to the public, beginning at 6:30 pm in Hudson River Park’s Clinton Cove at W. 55th Street. Audiences are encouraged to bring a blanket for seating on the lawn.

BROADWAY BY THE BOARDWALK 2026 LINEUP:

Monday July 13:

- **Max von Essen featuring Billy Stritch**
- Stepping into the Spotlight: Tristen Buettel from *Just In Time*

Monday July 20:

- **Ali Louis Bourzgui**
- Stepping into the Spotlight: Savy Jackson from *Maybe Happy Ending*

Monday July 27:

- **Ali Stroker**
- Stepping into the Spotlight: Christian Probst from *Moulin Rouge*

Monday August 3:

- **J. Harrison Ghee**
- Stepping into the Spotlight: Kent Overshown from *Ragtime*

Monday August 10:

- **Mandy Gonzalez**
- Stepping into the Spotlight: Christopher James Tamayo from *Maybe Happy Ending*

PERFORMER BIOS:

Max von Essen featuring Billy Stritch

Monday, July 13

Max von Essen:

Max von Essen is a Tony, Drama Desk and Grammy-nominated singer and actor who recently finished his nearly two-year run as Billy Flynn in the record-breaking Broadway production of *Chicago*. He's perhaps best known for his acclaimed role as Henri Baurel in the award-winning adaptation of Gershwin's *An American in Paris*.

His Broadway credits also include Gleb Vaganov in *Anastasia*, Agustin Magaldi in *Evita*, revivals of *Les Misérables* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Alfred in *Dance of the Vampires*, and the final company of the original *Les Misérables*. On tour, Max has captivated audiences in roles such as Marvin in the Lincoln Center revival of *Falsettos*, Sonny Malone in *Xanadu*, Mary Sunshine in *Chicago*, and Tony in *West Side Story*.

Max's concert work has taken him to stages nationwide and throughout New York City, including Carnegie Hall, Birdland, The Paradise Club and 54 Below. His debut album, *Call Me Old Fashioned: The Broadway Standard*, is currently available, and he can also be heard on recordings of *An American in Paris*, *Evita*, *DRAG: The Musical*, *Love Songs of Andrew Lloyd Webber*, *Death Takes a Holiday* and *Finian's Rainbow*. Max's television credits feature guest-starring roles on *Dexter: Resurrection*, *Law & Order*, *Family Guy*, *The Blacklist*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *Elementary*, *Boardwalk Empire*, *The Good Wife*, *Royal Pains*, *Gossip Girl*, *Sex and the City 2* and the web series *Submissions Only*.

Billy Stritch:

Billy Stritch is one of the premier singer-pianists on the New York and national jazz and cabaret scenes. He began his career in Houston, Texas, where he formed the vocal trio Montgomery, Plant and Stritch. The trio performed all over New York and Europe from 1983 until they disbanded in 1990. A chance meeting with Liza Minnelli in March of 1991 resulted in her asking him to create vocal arrangements for the record-breaking extravaganza *Liza Stepping Out* at Radio City Music Hall. In addition to his 25-year collaboration as accompanist and opening act for Liza, Billy recently toured with the legendary Tony Bennett as Tony's pianist and musical director. A solo entertainer in his own right, he has performed his own shows in concert halls and nightclubs across the country. He also hosted and curated tributes to Mel Tormé, Peggy Lee and Cy Coleman for 92Y's Lyrics and Lyricists series.

Billy serves as music director for such leading vocalists as Linda Lavin, Marilyn Maye, Linda Eder, Christine Ebersole and Paulo Szot. He is the co-writer of the number one Grammy-winning song "Does He Love You" recorded by Reba McEntire and Linda Davis. Lightning struck twice for this song as a new version was released in 2021 by Reba and the legendary Dolly Parton.

When he's not on the road, he is the pianist for Jim Caruso's Cast Party open mic night every Monday at New York's legendary Birdland Jazz Club and he and Jim hold forth on Sunday

nights at Bemelmans' Bar in Manhattan's fabled Carlyle Hotel. During Covid-19, he created his own weekly Facebook live-stream show *Billy's Place*, celebrating the Great American Songbook with songs and stories from his varied career. Billy has recorded five solo albums and his latest release *Billy's Place* is a collection of his favorite songs from these online concerts.

Ali Louis Bourzgui

Monday, July 20

Ali Louis Bourzgui is a 2026 Tony Award Winner for Featured Actor in a Musical for his incredible performance as David in *The Lost Boys* as well as a nomination for the Outer Critics Circle (his third in a row) and a Drama League Award (his second).

Prior to *The Lost Boys*, Ali played the starring role as Tommy in the Tony Award-nominated Broadway revival of *The Who's Tommy*, where he made his Broadway debut to critical acclaim and won a Theatre World Award, a Jeff Award (Performer in a Leading Role), and received nominations for Outer Critics Circle and a Drama League Award awards for the role. Ali was also nominated for an Outer Critics Circle Award for *We Live in Cairo* at the New York Theater Workshop and most recently starred on Broadway as Orpheus in the Tony Award-winning Best Musical, *Hadestown*.

Beyond acting, Ali is a musician and writer and this past year released his debut original album, *Becomes A Home*, with his band, Resident Lightweight. He is a proud son of a Moroccan immigrant and is actively working to increase representation in the media and the arts.

Ali Stroker

Monday, July 27

Ali Stroker is a Tony Award Winner for her role as 'Ado Annie' in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* She made history as the first actor in a wheelchair to appear on Broadway in Deaf West's acclaimed revival of *Spring Awakening* and the first actor in a wheelchair to win a Tony.

She was a series regular on the Netflix series, *Echoes*, and starred in the Lifetime holiday film, *Christmas Ever After*. Ali recurred in the final season of Netflix's *Ozark* and in Hulu's *Only Murders in the Building*. She co-wrote the novel, *The Chance to Fly* and its sequel, *Cut Loose!* and she wrote the children's book, *Ali and the Sea Stars*. She was recently seen opposite Matthew Broderick in *Babbitt* at Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C. and played 'Lady Anne' in the Shakespeare in the Park production of *Richard III*. She's performed her one woman show all over the country.

Her mission to improve the lives of others through the arts is captured in her motto: "Turning Your Limitations Into Your Opportunities."

J. Harrison Ghee

Monday, August 3

J. Harrison Ghee is a Tony and Grammy Award-winning actor, making history in 2023 as the first non-binary performer to win Best Leading Actor in a Musical for their dual role in *Some Like It Hot*.

Recently, Ghee starred in *Hadestown* on Broadway, the Off-Broadway hit *Saturday Church* and the premiere of *Midnight In The Garden Of Good And Evil*. Other Broadway roles include *Kinky Boots*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *Chicago* and *The Sting*. On television, Ghee has appeared in FOX's *Accused*, Netflix's *Raising Dion*, NBC's *Stumble* and HBO's *High Maintenance*. Ghee hopes to inspire others to dream big and go full-out.

Mandy Gonzalez

Monday, August 10

Mandy Gonzalez is an accomplished film, TV, stage actor and author. She possesses one of the most powerful and versatile contemporary voices of our time. Mandy has starred on Broadway in the megahit *Hamilton* as Angelica Schuyler. She also originated Nina Rosario in the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical, *In The Heights*, for which Mandy received a Drama Desk Award. Mandy also starred as Elphaba in the Broadway production of *Wicked*, blowing the roof off of New York's Gershwin Theatre each night as she belted out the signature song, *Defying Gravity*. She most recently guest-starred as Norma Desmond in the Tony-winning revival of *Sunset Blvd*.

Mandy also received an OBIE Award and overwhelming critical praise for her performance in the Off-Broadway production of *Eli's Comin'*. Television viewers have had the pleasure of seeing Mandy in her recurring roles in the hit series *Madam Secretary*, *BULL*, *Quantico* and alongside Steve Martin, Martin Short and Selena Gomez in *Only Murders in the Building*. Equally at home on the big and small screen, she has appeared in *Across the Universe* directed by Julie Taymor, *After* starring opposite Pablo Schreiber, and *Man on a Ledge* with Sam Worthington. Mandy can also be heard as the voice of Mei in Disney's *Mulan 2*, and as the voice of Mother Rose on the Disney Plus and Disney Jr. series *Alice's Wonderland Bakery*.

A frequent concert soloist, Mandy has performed with symphony orchestras around the world. Highlights include: Carnegie Hall with The New York Pops, Boston Pops, Philly Pops, The National Symphony Orchestra, Houston Symphony, and Atlanta Pops to name a few.

She recently brought her concert, *Everything I Know: Mandy Gonzalez sings Lin Manuel Miranda*, to Carnegie Hall to rave reviews. The show is a dynamic production that pairs Gonzalez's powerhouse voice and emotive prowess with a full accompaniment, creating an unforgettable celebration of Lin-Manuel Miranda's iconic works. Mandy will be performing this

show with symphonies across the country in 2026. Mandy is also an accomplished author who published a Young Adult series, *FEARLESS*, with Simon and Schuster.

Hudson River Park's full summer event calendar, including these events, can be found at [hudsonriverpark.org/events](https://www.hudsonriverpark.org/events).

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About Hudson River Park Trust

Hudson River Park Trust is a unique partnership between New York State and New York City charged with building and operating Hudson River Park between approximately Chambers Street and West 59th Street along Manhattan's west side. This free, urban recreational oasis is home to award-winning skate parks, playgrounds, sports fields, gardens and nature exhibits, boating and maritime activities, art installations, and a myriad of year-round events that celebrate the diverse cultures and neighborhoods along its expanse. The Park, which transformed four miles of decaying piers and parking lots into a premier New York City destination for local residents and visitors alike, plays a critical role in protecting the Hudson River ecosystem. For more information, please visit www.hudsonriverpark.org.

About Hudson River Park Friends

Hudson River Park Friends is an independent nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the completion, care, enhancement and ongoing sustainability of Hudson River Park. Serving as the Park's primary fundraising and advocacy partner, Hudson River Park Friends generates necessary private support to guarantee that this vital destination for millions of park lovers