
The Broadway Critic

Interview with Tim Robertson – Musical Director of “Backwards in High Heels” @ SJ Rep

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Hopefully, everyone is getting excited to see the Regional Premiere of Backwards in High Heels The Ginger Musical at San Jose Rep. I had the opportunity to get some inside information from the musical director, Tim Robertson. For more information on the show, please go to <http://www.sjrep.com>

1. First off, how did you get involved with this production and how long have you been working on Backwards in High Heels?

Believe it or not, I sent a resume to Michael Donald Edwards, the artistic director of [Asolo Repertory Theatre](#) in Sarasota.

That is where this show was first being produced. I had often wanted to work at Asolo Rep and my parents have a house in nearby Bradenton so I was very familiar with the area. Miracle of miracles, I actually got a response from Mr. Edwards asking me to schedule an interview and I got the job! That was before it was going to be a co-production with the other theatres but when I found out that the show was going to carry on after Sarasota, I was more than happy to stay on board.

2. Since this a brand-new musical, have you been on the side of developing the music or have you mainly worked just with the actors/musicians on learning & polishing the music?

The show itself was already pretty well structured when I started.

It had already been staged at quite a few other regional theatres before the production at Asolo Rep so there was not too much restructuring to be done on the score only some minor tweaking and adjustments to suit the choreography or underscoring or scene shifts.



Tim Robertson, Musical Director

3. Whats your favorite part about working on Backwards in High Heels? Least favorite?

My favorite part of this show is working with such a talented cast and working with live musicians. So many theatres, in an effort to reduce expenses, choose to cut the musicians first. It is really disheartening to me to know that there are theatre companies that would choose to use pre-recorded tracks rather than live musicians.

My least favorite part of working on a show like this is the amount of time I spend away from home.

While it is definitely exciting to be working on a great production it is very easy to get homesick when you are out of town for weeks or even months at a time.

4. This is a co-production with Arizona Theatre Company, Asolo Repertory Theatre and The Cleveland Play House how do the shows differ from theatre to theatre? Or do you strictly keep everything the same?

There might be some slight changes from theatre to theatre in order to accommodate the difference in the actual theatre spaces. If the stage dimensions vary or there are sightline concerns for the audience but the show pretty much stays the same. There might also be some changes made for pacing or perhaps a line of dialogue might be rewritten but nothing major changes with the show from theatre to theatre.

5. What ways have the show changed since your last production?

Again, no major changes will be made to the show between Arizona and San Jose just some fine tunings so the show will be best suited for the theatre at San Jose Rep.

6. Is the cast the same from theatre to theatre?

We lost two of the original cast members from the production at Asolo Rep. When the show show closed at the end of May there was a period of three months before we resumed in Arizona. That is a long time to try to keep a cast together while the show is not performing but since the show resumed in Arizona the cast will remain the same for the rest of the tour.

7. How long have you been on the road so far? And, where do you call home?

I have been with this show since it started rehearsals in April. We rehearsed for the first two weeks in New York then we moved down to Sarasota to finish rehearsals and get the show on stage. I was with the show in both Tucson and Phoenix with the Arizona Theatre Company for September and October and then San Jose for November and December. I will also be with the show in Cleveland in January. Right now home for me is just outside of Boston although I am in the process of moving to Bar Harbor, Maine. So when I finish the run in San Jose I will be living in a new place!

8. Any shows/theatres that you are dying to work on/with?

BOTH of those lists would be way too long but I will say that I am always excited to work in a new city and I am very happy to be here in San Jose. Having lived in San Francisco for over 7 years I have lots of friends and family in the area, so while this is the first time I have worked in san jose, it is nice to be in familiar surroundings.