



STRATFORD PLAYHOUSE

*** PRESS RELEASE ***

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STRATFORD PLAYHOUSE PRESENTS “ZOMBIE PROM”

The award-winning Stratford Playhouse will present, for the first time ever on its stage, the laugh-out-loud, rockin’ musical *Zombie Prom* in the Stratford Auditorium as they close out their 2023-24 season. *Zombie Prom* will open on Friday, May 3 at 7:30pm and continue through Saturday, May 11, with 7:30 evening performances on May 3-4 and 9-11, and 2:30 matinee performances on Sunday, May 5 and Saturday, May 11.

“*Zombie Prom* is what you get if *Grease* and *Little Shop of Horrors* had a baby,” quips director Alyssa Rosner. “I have never heard more laughter from a cast than at the *Zombie Prom* table read when the cast was all together for the first time and read the script. It was so funny that everyone was laughing out loud,” says Rosner, adding, “The challenge for this cast is to not break character. Seriously, the show is that funny. We are constantly fighting breaking a scene and laughing in the middle!” Student director Lizzie Picott declares, “This show is very campy and embraces all the fun that is high school. It is very unique in that its appeal is very bright and fun, while still delivering heartfelt themes.”

This girl-loves-ghoul rock ‘n’ roll off-Broadway musical is set in the atomic 1950s at Enrico Fermi High, where the law is laid down by a zany, tyrannical principal, Miss Strict (played by junior Miranda Gutierrez). Sweet and popular senior Toffee (played by junior Hallie Hodge) has fallen for the class bad boy, Jonny (who has taken the “H” out of his name in a wild act of rebellion; played by senior Michael Deis). Family pressure forces her to end the romance, and Jonny charges off on his motorcycle to the nuclear waste dump with haunting consequences. Quirky but determined reporter Eddie Flagrante (played by junior Andrew Dybala) sees a hit story in Toffee and Jonny’s relationship and boldly chases the drama as it unfolds. While Jonny tries to reclaim Toffee’s heart and take her to the prom against Miss Strict’s every intention, history comes to his rescue while a tuneful selection of original songs in the catchy, upbeat style of the 50s hits keeps the action rockin’ across the stage.

“*Zombie Prom* is originally based on a comic book. Because of this, many technical elements in the show look like they are coming right off the pages of one. A lot of our set pieces look 2D, including the lines and highlights that make comic book art so unique,” explains stage manager Jillian Parks of the set design of the production, adding, “The set and props add to the comical jokes in the show.” Rosner concurs, “The set designers and I landed on a cool concept for the show. I am really excited to see that come to life! In previous shows there has been more of a design expectation of realism, and we are breaking that with *Zombie Prom*.” Parks is also impressed by the quick execution of Jonny’s zombie makeup, perfected by hair and makeup crew head Audrey Bermack. “[Jonny’s makeup] is definitely one of the most impressive technical aspects of the show, as it is extremely detailed work in a very short time frame,” Parks states.

“*Zombie Prom* isn’t just for one audience. It has something for everybody, whether that’s the 50s nostalgia or the humor, the physical comedy, the show-stopping big numbers or the tender ballads. The set is super



STRATFORDPLAYHOUSE

playful; it will charm the audience with its comic strip styling. Stratford Playhouse is known for great costume design, and *Zombie Prom* is no different!" says Picott. Then she promises, "The closing number has a fun costume twist. This show is not something you want to miss!"

Tickets for *Zombie Prom* are \$10-25 and available for purchase online at www.shsplayhouse.org. Performances are scheduled for May 3-4 and 9-11 at 7:30pm, with 2:30pm matinee performances on Sunday, May 5 and Saturday, May 11. Performances will take place at the state-of-the-art Stratford Auditorium at 14555 Fern Drive. This production is rated PG. For more information or to buy tickets, go online or email stratfordboxoffice@gmail.com.



Photo 1: (L to R) Holden Hagelberger ("Josh"), Dyllyn Scranton ("Jake"), Andrew Dybala ("Eddie Flagrante"), Charlie Goodman ("Joey"), Michael Deis ("Jonny"), Hallie Hodge ("Toffee"), Sierra George ("Coco"), Paige Mandery ("Ginger"), Miranda Gutierrez ("Miss Strict"), Colbie Corn ("Candy").

Photo courtesy of Hallie Keller Photography.



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Photo 2: Michael Deis (“Jonny”), Hallie Hodge (“Toffee”).
Photo courtesy of Hallie Keller Photography.



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Photo 3: (L to R) Paige Mandery (“Ginger”), Sierra George (“Coco”), Hallie Hodge (“Toffee”), Colbie Corn (“Candy”).
Photo courtesy of Hallie Keller Photography.



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Photo 4: (L to R) Charlie Goodman (“Joey”), Holden Hagelberger (“Josh”), Michael Deis (“Jonny”), Dyllyn Scranton (“Jake”).

Photo courtesy of Hallie Keller Photography.



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Photo 5: (L to R) Michael Deis (“Jonny”), Andrew Dybala (“Eddie Flagrante”).
Photo courtesy of Hallie Keller Photography.