

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

MAR 29-APR 29

The Sting

A NEW MUSICAL

The con is on.

THE STING, A NEW MUSICAL

Book by **BOB MARTIN**, *Music by* **MARK HOLLMANN**, *Lyrics by* **MARK HOLLMANN AND GREG KOTIS**,
Based on THE 1973 FILM THE STING, *Choreographed by* **WARREN CARLYLE**, *Directed by* **JOHN RANDO**

Media Sponsor
xfinity



Paper Mill Playhouse programs are made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Paper Mill Playhouse is a not-for-profit arts organization.

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

CREATIVE TEAM



Bob Martin (Book) has been working as an actor and writer for over three decades. He has received many awards in both Canada and the US, including a Tony for *The Drowsy Chaperone*. Recent TV projects include "Slings & Arrows," seasons 1, 2, and 3 (TMN, Sundance); "Michael: Tuesdays and Thursdays" (CBC); "Michael: Every Day" (CBC); "Sensitive Skin, seasons 1 and 2" (HBO); and "Elf: Buddy's Musical Christmas" (NBC). Recent theater projects include *Encores!* (NYC), *The Prom* (Atlanta), *Gotta Dance* (Chicago), *Elf* (Broadway, Dublin, London), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Toronto, Broadway, London), Second City Toronto (performer, director, artistic director). In development: *Millions*, *Half Time*, *The Princess Bride*.



Mark Hollmann (Music & Lyrics) won the Tony Award, the National Broadway Theatre Award, and the Obie Award for his music and lyrics to *Urinetown: The Musical*. His other shows as composer/lyricist include *Yeast Nation* and *Bigfoot and Other Lost Souls*. He is a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), serves on the council of the Dramatists Guild of America, and has served on the Tony Nominating Committee.



Greg Kotis (Lyrics) is the author of many plays and musicals including *Urinetown* (book/lyrics, for which he won an Obie Award and two Tony Awards), *Lunchtime*, *Give the People What They Want*, *Michael von Siebenburg Melts Through the Floorboards*, *Yeast Nation* (book/lyrics), *The Truth About Santa*, *Pig Farm*, *Eat the Taste*, and *Jobey and Katherine*. Future projects include *ZM*, a new musical that follows two teenage fast-food workers as they struggle to survive a foodborne zombie apocalypse. Greg is a member of ASCAP and the Dramatists Guild and is a cofounder of

Theater of the Apes.



John Rando (Director). Select Broadway: *On the Town* (Tony nomination), *Penn & Teller on Broadway*, *A Christmas Story*, *The Wedding Singer*, *Urinetown* (Tony, Outer Critics Circle Awards), *A Thousand Clowns*, *The Dinner Party*. Off Broadway: *Jerry Springer: The Opera*, *Lives of the Saints*, *The Heir Apparent* (SDCF Callaway Award), *All in the Timing* (Obie Award), *The Toxic Avenger*, among others. Recent regional: *The Honeymooners* (Paper Mill), *Pirates of Penzance* (Barrington), *Big Sky* (Geffen Playhouse). City Center *Encores!*: *The New Yorkers*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Little Me*, *It's a Bird...It's a Plane...*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *On the Town*, *Damn Yankees*, *Strike Up the Band*, *The Pajama Game*, *Of Thee I Sing*, and more. He also directed *Carousel* for the New York Philharmonic.

"And, that's the thrill, the thrill of the con! I'm the ugly duckling turned into a swan.
I play my cards, I roll my dice expectin' that lightnin's gonna strike twice!
It's aces, only aces I've drawn! And that's the thrill of the con!"
~"The Thrill of the Con" from THE STING, A NEW MUSICAL ~

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE



Warren Carlyle (Choreographer). Broadway: Directed and choreographed: *After Midnight* (Tony Award for Best Choreography), *Chaplin*, Hugh Jackman: *Back on Broadway*, *Finian's Rainbow* (Tony nomination), *A Tale of Two Cities*. Choreography: *Hello, Dolly!*; *She Loves Me*; *On the Twentieth Century*; *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*; *A Christmas Story*, *Follies*. Directed and choreographed Radio City's New York Spring Spectacular starring the Rockettes. TV/Film: Staged and choreographed the 68th and 69th Annual Tony Awards (CBS), multiple seasons of *So You Think You Can Dance* (Fox), *Deception* starring Hugh Jackman (20th Century Fox), *Carousel* (PBS) (Emmy nomination). Awards: Two Outer Critics Circle Awards, Drama Desk Award, Astaire Award.



HARRY CONNICK, JR. (Henry Gondorff, Additional Music & Lyrics), a multiple Grammy and Emmy winner, began performing in his native New Orleans at age five. He has released 30 albums, highlighting his talents as pianist, singer, songwriter, composer, and orchestrator, garnering over 28 million sales. Connick received Tony nominations for his performance as Sid Sorokin in *The Pajama Game* and for his score to *Thou Shalt Not* (directed by Susan Stroman). He last performed on Broadway in *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*, following the 2010

run of *Harry Connick, Jr. in Concert on Broadway*, which marked the 20th anniversary of his first sold-out concert series on Broadway. He has appeared in 19 films including *Dolphin Tale* with Morgan Freeman, *Hope Floats* with Sandra Bullock, *P.S. I Love You* with Hilary Swank, *Bug* with Ashley Judd, and *Copycat* with Sigourney Weaver, and on television (*American Idol*, *Will & Grace*, *South Pacific*). In the fall of 2016, he launched *Harry*, a nationally syndicated daytime television show featuring his touring band, which earned five Daytime Emmy nominations in its first season, including best host, and a Critics' Choice nomination for best talk show. Connick received the Jefferson Award for Public Service in recognition of his efforts to help New Orleans rebuild after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

THE STING HISTORY



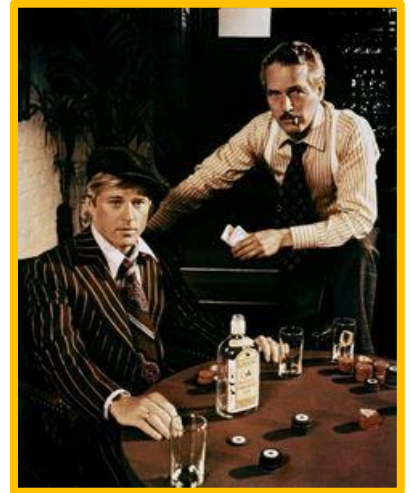
The *Sting* is one of the most successful and beloved films of all time. The film reunited actors Paul Newman and Robert Redford and their director George Roy Hill, who a few years earlier had an enormous hit with the western *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. The story is roughly based on a real con that was written about in the book *The Big Con*. It was filmed in the winter of 1973 at Universal Studios and on location in Chicago. The creative team wanted the film to feel like the many famous gangster films of the 1930s.

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

From the moment of its release in December 1973, it was regarded as an instant classic. Roger Ebert called it "the most stylish film of the year." The film was nominated for ten Academy Awards, winning seven, including Best Picture, Director, and Screenplay. The film sold \$156 million at the box office, which when adjusted for inflation, would be \$875 million today.

A sequel was made ten years later without its stars and unfortunately did not receive the same reception as the original.

After years of development, Paper Mill Playhouse's production will mark the world premiere of the musical.

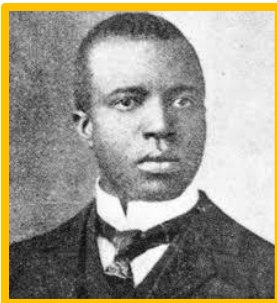


THE MUSIC

For many years, the soundtrack for the film score of *The Sting* has been one of the most notable soundtracks in film history. Near the end of shooting the film, director George Roy Hill asked famed film composer Marvin Hamlisch (*see picture on right*) to help with the score.



Other than being the composer of such musicals as *A Chorus Line* and *The Goodbye Girl*, Hamlisch is one of 12 people considered an "EGOT"



winner (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony Awards). Hill decided early on that he wanted the ragtime music of Scott Joplin (*see picture on left*) to be the soundscape for the film. Hamlisch was tasked with the selection and adaptation of Joplin's music for underscoring dialogue and the signature moments without any dialogue. He also wrote two original songs that were included in the film. He later described his work on *The Sting* as one of his favorite jobs as he completed it in five days.

The choice to use Joplin's music was a bold one, as the music was popular in the early 20th Century but was not directly related with the 1930s. The ragtime music provides a timeless quality to the film that even today is one of the most memorable aspects of viewing the film. Perhaps the best-known song from the movie is "The Entertainer," a 1902 classic piano rag.

The *Sting* soundtrack topped the Billboard chart for five weeks in the spring of 1974, even though most of the music was 70 years old. Hamlisch went on to win the Academy Award for the score. Given how iconic *The Sting*'s film score has been over the last 45 years, it is very fitting that this story will be adapted as a stage musical. While you're watching the musical, keep an ear out for how the composers, Mark Hollmann and Greg Kotis, honored the tradition of Scott Joplin's ragtime music while breathing a whole new life into this story.

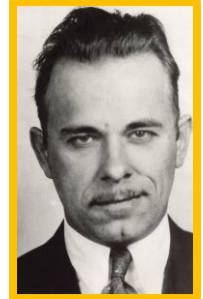
PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

1930S CHICAGO

The Sting takes place in Chicago, Illinois during the 1930s. This was right in the middle of the dark



part of the Great Depression and Chicago was closely associated with mafia activity with Al Capone (*see picture on left*) and John Dillinger (*see picture on right*) and speakeasies that provided alcohol in secret during Prohibition. The Great Depression was particularly hard on the citizens of Chicago as the city's main industry was manufacturing, which was one of the hardest hit sectors across the country. This was combined



with the city's fiscal crisis that was occurring prior to the Great Depression where changes in laws caused a tax strike and eventually the city's relief funds were empty.

This was an important time as union works had to fight for their rights in the workplace. It eventually led to the election of a new Mayor and a newfound trend of government working with labor unions to build prosperity. They were helped greatly by President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal funds that saw new jobs created that were federally funded and it also provided funds for the Chicago Democratic machine to rebuild the city. Eventually, World War II brought a return to the manufacturing industry in the area and propelled Chicago into the next decade.



During this period, blues and jazz clubs (*see picture on left*) were prevalent throughout the cities, becoming a haven for artists looking for work from around the country. Organized crime played an essential role in the daily life in the city due to the amount of crime and corruption that controlled much of the city.

THE STING – NOTABLE CON ARTIST STORIES IN BROADWAY AND MOVIES

The world premiere of The Sting follows in the footsteps of many famous musicals that involve con men and women. These plots and characters have been vital and fun additions to the musical theatre repertoire. This was certainly a trend during the golden age of Broadway, where we had characters like J. Pierrepont Finch in How to Succeed... who conned his way up the corporate ladder. We had Rooster and Lily posing as Annie's parents in Annie and Fagin training a team of con artists in Oliver. One of the most beloved musicals during this period, The Music Man, centers on a salesman coming to town to con everyone into buying his musical instruments. More recently, we had Mel Brooks' smash hit musical The Producers, based on his film, that sees two men attempt to make more money from intentionally producing a flop than they would from a hit. Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, based on the 1988 movie starring Steve Martin and Michael Caine, was entirely about how two men could make money off the rich.

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

Catch Me If You Can, based off the story of Frank Abagnale, Jr and the acclaimed film, was a classic example of how real-life events could inspire a musical with a con at the center.

Con artists have also been at the center of many famous Hollywood films. Some favorites include:



THE STING QUIZ

After you see the show and read this study guide, see how many of these questions you can answer!

- 1) Do you think the con that Johnny and Henry pull off is realistic? If things went wrong, where do you think it would happen in the story? Why?
- 2) What are some of the key elements of the con we see in the musical? What makes them so effective?

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

- 3) Who ends up being Salino? What happens to Salino and who is responsible?
- 4) *The Sting* is both a movie and a musical. If you have seen both versions, how do they compare? Are there elements that work better on screen rather than on stage or vice versa?
- 5) Is it possible that career criminals can really be so likeable? What did you find realistic or unrealistic about the plot?

Generous support for the Adopt-A-School Project is provided by C.R. Bard Foundation, The Mall at Short Hills, MetLife Foundation, Nordstrom, PNC Foundation, PSEG Foundation, The Schumann Fund for New Jersey, and Wells Fargo Foundation.

Audience Guide content written by Andrew Lowy.

