

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

AUDIO DESCRIPTION NOTES

COME FROM AWAY

These description notes were prepared by Janet Zoubek-Dickson and will be shared in advance of scheduled audio-described performances.

Welcome to Paper Mill Playhouse's production of the Tony award-winning musical *Come From Away*. Book, music and lyrics are by Irene Sankoff and David Hein; scenic design by Nate Bertone; costume design by Michelle J. Li; lighting design by Page Seber; hair, wig, and makeup design by Emilia Martin; sound design by Kevin Heard; music direction by Sam Groisser; and Direction and Choreography by Richard Hinds. *Come From Away* is stage managed by Patricia L. Grabb.

Come from Away is the true story of 7,000 airline passengers who were diverted to Gander, Newfoundland following the attacks of September 11, 2001. Theatrical haze is featured throughout the performance. This performance runs 100 minutes with no intermission.

Nate Bertone's set design reimagines the show's environment, moving away from the minimalist approach of the original production towards a more dense, immersive and metaphorical landscape.

The set is two levels, covered and filled with mementos. It is framed in wide, green metal girders from the second level down to first. There are old suitcases of every shape, size, and color everywhere. Some are worn; some are in decent shape. There are framed pictures of people and maps which cover the walls – some small, medium, large. The walls of the second level are papered in faded, old, yellowed newspaper.

On the bottom left, at the edge of the stage, are two suitcases stacked on top of each other with two standing suitcases next to them. A dark wood filled bookcase, a teal blue door, then wall pockets hanging on the wall and filled with papers. Under the second level there is a very large, framed picture. On the wall of the second level to the left is a large sign that reads "GANDER" in block letters. Above it is a smaller sign that reads "Welcome." A Canadian flag is next to it.

On the right, at the edge of the stage, there are five suitcases on top of each other and a standing suitcase for people to sit on, above which is a large wall calendar: white with large

squares for the days of the week. There is a door, a xylophone mounted on the wall, and a framed picture next to it.

A dark wood rolling staircase that reaches from the floor to the top level of the set is on the left as the show opens. On the upper right of the first floor is a piano; we only see the back which becomes the counter for Tim Horton's bar. A sign for the coffee store hangs from above - oval rimmed in orange. "Tim Horton" is written in orange script against a white background.

Later, it becomes a bar, with license plates from several places and stringed lights. The musical's band is in the back of the stage under signs for "Kokanee" in green neon imprinted on the outline of a flat foot. Next to it is a colorful sign for Molson Canadian Lager in red and green neon.

The second level has a back wall filled with suitcases lying on top of each other. On the left are suitcases strewn on the floor, with a boom box on top of one. There are various sized framed pictures along the wall. On the right side, the walls have framed pictures of various sizes along the wall. Suitcases are piled up on the floor.

While the original musical used chairs to divide scenes (airplane, bus), this production uses suitcases. Some are glued together so that they are one unit.

All cast members play multiple roles throughout the show, and all play musical instruments.

Jeannette Bayardelle plays **Beverley, Annette, and others**. She is Black, 5'7" with thick dark hair to her shoulders. When we first see her as Annette, she is wearing dark pants, a short sleeved white blouse and a vest appliqued with a yellow school bus in one panel, a maple leaf in another, an insignia, bordered in turquoise ribbon. She wears rust-colored frames on her glasses.

As Beverley, the airplane captain, she wears a navy uniform over a white blouse; silver wings pinned to her left lapel, four gold bands each on her cuffs.

Andréa Burns plays **Diane and others**. She has light beige skin, is 5'4" with long thick honey-brunette hair that falls below her shoulders. When we first see her, she wears a pink blouse opened partway over a white shell. The blouse has white lace vertically alongside the buttons. Two darker pink stripes are on the left and right near the buttons. She wears blue jeans.

John El-Jor plays **Kevin J, Ali and others**. He has light beige skin, is 5'9" with black hair slickly pulled up into a man bun, and a moustache and scraggly beard. He wears a yellow tee under a short sleeved open mint green shirt with a wide stripe with green outer stripes and gold

thinner stripes between. He also wears blue jeans. As **Ali**, he dons a royal blue windbreaker with a wide stripe on the sleeves - wide white on outside, thin blue/red/blue.

Nick Gaswirth plays **Oz and others**. He is white, 5'9," with balding dark brown hair and a thick dark brown beard. He is dressed in a heavy jacket with a patch on his upper shoulders for Canada police. Under that he wears a short-sleeved navy blue shirt with a patch on the shoulder that says "Canada," & has a flag below it & navy-blue pants. He changes into a pair of very short red gym shorts, gray polo shirt, red sweatband, white sock and black running shoes. He also plays a rabbi, wearing a dark jacket and a black yarmulke.

Lisa Howard plays **Beulah and others**. She is white, 5'8" and has dark blonde hair, which ends in a small flip at her shoulders. She wears a tan cable knit cardigan over a coral open neck blouse and brown pants. As one of the airplane passengers she drapes a black shawl with silver threading over her shoulders.

Lisa Helmi Johanson plays **Janice and others**. She is a biracial Korean-Finn, 5'2", young, small and thin with dark brown hair pulled back from her face that flows down her back. She wears a crisp blue and white thin striped blouse over black pants.

Kent M. Lewis plays **Nick**, an airplane passenger, and **Doug**, a citizen of Gander. He is white, middle-aged, 6', with thin brown hair, slightly receding from his forehead. He wears a dark brown leather jacket worn over a turquoise dress shirt, with a multi-colored, black, red, gray diamond shaped tie, black dress pants. Nick is an English oil executive who wears a light brown suit jacket over the same shirt and tie and slacks.

James Moyer plays **Claude**, the Mayor of Gander, and others. He is white, 6'2" with a slight paunch. He has short brown hair with a receding hairline. He wears a blue polo shirt over khakis.

Jason Tyler Smith plays **Bob**, a passenger, and others. He is Black, 5'9," with black locs covered by a green baseball cap worn backward. He wears a plaid brown, rust, white squared shirt under a brown leather vest, blue jeans. He has a brown canvas courier bag over his right shoulder. Later, he also plays an African man on a flight with his wife and wears a kufi, a short, rounded cap in kente cloth (a sacred, handwoven textile from Ghana). He wears a navy-blue top with lines of purple, mint green, yellow on front.

David Socolar plays **Kevin T**, a passenger, and **Garth**, a bus driver in Gander. He is white, 6'1", and has thick light brown hair. He wears a dark blue dress shirt with tiny white dots over gray pants.

Erica Spyres plays **Bonnie**, Doug's wife. She is white, 5'6", with thick red hair pulled into a bushy ponytail. She has long bangs and wears black overalls over a green, blue and white plaid flannel shirt.

Rema Webb plays **Hannah**. She is Black, 5'4", with long greyish-black hair tied up on top of her head, into a cascade of small curls. When she gets off the plane, she is wearing a jean jacket over jeans. She also plays an African passenger on the bus, wearing an orange cream blouse, with a long, multicolored skirt. As Hannah, she then wears a patchwork quilted jacket with seven-point stars in various designs, and colors of red, blue, white, green, black.