

EVENTS

Live TV version of ‘Grease’ aims to get viewers dancing

BY YVONNE VILLARREAL
LOS ANGELES TIMES (TNS)

During a recent rehearsal for Fox’s live broadcast of the musical “Grease,” Aaron Tveit and Julianne Hough waited for their musical cue to jump in the fray and gambol alongside a troupe of frenetic dancers.

The number was “We Go Together,” and during the rehearsal on a backlot in Burbank, the Broadway heartthrob and “Dancing With the Stars” alum tried their best to lock down those seemingly impossible shoo bop sha wadda wadda yippiity boom de boom foot movements as choreographer Zach Woodlee (“Glee,” “Annie”) hollered commands over the music.

The couple were dressed in comfy, casual workout clothing, but come Sunday, they’ll be doing these same moves during the live broadcast wearing black, body-hugging ensembles similar to those made famous by John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John in the 1978 film rendition of the musical.

“I used to steal the VHS tape from my parents’ bedroom because I wasn’t allowed to watch PG-13 movies,” Hough said during a break from rehearsal. “I used to go down to the basement and mimic all the dances and sing the songs. And now look at me.”

Three years after NBC returned to TV musical waters with live renditions of such stage productions as “The Sound of Music,” “Peter

Pan” and recent go-round “The Wiz,” broadcast competitor Fox is diving in with “Grease: Live” on Jan. 31 at 7 p.m. Eastern and Pacific.

As networks contend with shifting audience habits that increasingly favor time-delayed viewing, networks are scrambling to create events spectacular enough to battle the power of the DVR. Fox, perhaps of all the legacy networks, is a natural fit for a musical production because it’s the home base for musical powerhouses of the present and recent past: “Empire,” “Glee” and singing competition “American Idol.”

“Any time that you can send a message to a broad audience that there is something special happening, like live sporting events, where people are flying without a net and bringing a level of showmanship that you can’t have with a drama that’s been highly edited, is a good thing,” said Fox Television Group Co-Chairman Dana Walden, who noted her two daughters have done versions of “Grease” at school.

The revamped-for-live-TV event, a Paramount Television production, features well-known names among the millennial set.

In addition to Hough and Tveit as leads Sandy and Danny, others donning leather jackets and poodle skirts include Vanessa Hudgens (Disney’s “High School Musical,” Broadway’s “Gigi”) as tough girl Rizzo, singer Carly Rae Jepsen as Frenchy, Keke Palmer as Marty, Kether Donohue as



Aaron Tveit and Julianne Hough in a promotional image for “Grease: Live” on Fox.

Jan, Carlos PenaVega as Kenickie, David Del Rio as Putzie, and more.

The elaborate NBC renderings rotated scenes on one New York soundstage; the Fox affair is even more ambitious. The production will unfold over two soundstages housing a number of sets on the Warner Bros. lot in Burbank. Production also will take place on Midwest Street — i.e., a backlot that they’ll use for exterior scenes of

Rydell High and the carnival grounds (during rehearsals, however, the lot was still the town of Rosewood seen in “Pretty Little Liars”).

“Ask me after it’s all over if I think the multiple soundstages was a good idea,” joked stage director Thomas Kail, known most recently for his celebrated stage work with Lin-Manuel Miranda in the smash “Hamilton.”

“I wanted it to feel vibrant and vital the way the film

did,” he said. “I wanted locations that felt like real places that could ground us so when we lift off and go to the fantasy of ‘Greased Lightning’ or the Teen Angel arrives, you have something to depart from.”

The musical delves into the lives of working-class teenagers during the early 1950s rock ‘n’ roll era. Originally a 1971 theater production in Chicago, the musical became a cultural touchstone when it was adapted for the big screen in 1978 with Travolta and Newton-John as its leads.

“When we first got together to do the photoshoot, I remember thinking, ‘Are we actually doing this?’” Hudgens said. “It’s sort of surreal to be a part of introducing this iconic musical to a new generation.”

Playwrights-screenwriters Robert Cary and Jonathan Tolins were charged with writing the three-hour production, using the familiar Paramount Pictures film as a starting point. But they also worked in elements from the stage show — particularly since the film’s run time is 1 hour, 50 minutes.

“We had to figure out how to expand the show without it feeling drawn out and padded,” Tolins said. “And, of course, the other job was coming up with where to put 11 commercial breaks.”

Two songs from the original stage show — “Freddy My Love” and “Those Magic Changes” — made their way into the Fox production. Cary and Tolins also found ways to play up Hough’s

background by having Sandy dance more than she usually does — including in a scene in which she’s auditioning to be a cheerleader.

The show also will feature an original song, “All I Need Is an Angel,” written specifically for Jepsen’s Frenchy by “If/Then” duo Tom Kitt and Brian Yorkey. And given the show’s 7 p.m. start time, adjustments were made to some of the more suggestive lyrics in the soundtrack (in those cases, the school-sanctioned production versions of the lyrics were used).

“I think we’re very much doing our own slant on it,” said the show’s live director, Alex Rudzinski, who has directed more than 500 hours of live broadcasts on “Dancing With the Stars.” “It would be fickle to try to do a copycat live broadcast. This is a live TV production. If you get too close then all people will do all night is just compare take for take and you open yourself up for problems.”

The NBC productions were big ratings draws, but they also proved fodder for plenty of snark of social media. And if “grease” is the word, “Grease: Live” will surely be a conversation on Twitter.

Good or bad, the cast say they’re ready for it.

“Sing along and enjoy it and maybe introduce it to someone new,” Hough said. “It’s inevitable that people are going to say stupid [things]. ... But I’ve had the best experience of my life doing this, and I don’t give a crap.”

Things to Do

BANGOR — “Limited Edition: Maine Printmakers,” 9 a.m.-7 p.m. daily, through Jan. 31, Boyd Place Gallery, 21 Boyd St. 941-2820.

BELFAST — Cold Comfort Theater hosting stage combat intensive class, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 30-31, Belfast Dance Studio. \$50. ColdComfortTheater@gmail.com.

BLUE HILL — Exhibit of colored pencil drawings, “Crystal Gems” by 7-year-old Bean Fitzpatrick, during library hours through February, children’s Larchwood exhibit case, Blue Hill Public Library, 5 Parker Point Road. Libby at 374-5515.

BLUE HILL — “The Art of the Book” exhibit, during library hours through March, Howard Room glass cases, Blue Hill Public Library, 5 Parker Point Road. 374-5515.

BREWER — Brewer Community Service Council hosting community lunch, noon-1 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, First United Methodist Church of Brewer. Free and open to all.

BREWER — Bangor Singles Club dances, 8 p.m.-midnight Fridays, Brewer Eagles Club, 22 Atlantic Ave. Allison Ames, Jan. 29; Marilyn, 827-5751.

BREWER — Jams at the Grange, noon-5 p.m. first and third Sundays, through May, Old Town Riverside Grange, 1266 North Main St. Open to all levels of players and to listeners. Unplugged stringed instruments only. Wheelchair-accessible. Food concession. First Sunday is Bluegrass Music Association of Maine Eastern Jam, \$3 association members, \$5 others, Joan Richert, 989-5848. Third Sunday is The Grange Bluegrass Jam, \$3, Sandra Moon, 827-3698.

BREWER — Work on knitting group’s community service project in partnership with Brewer Police Department or bring yarn projects of any sort, 9:30-11 a.m. Friday, Jan. 29, Brewer Public Library, 100 South Main St. Experienced or new knitters, crocheters

or needle-workers welcome. 989-7943.

BREWER — Beginner’s yoga program, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Brewer Public Library, 100 South Main St. Free and open to all. Space is limited. 989-7943.

CAMDEN — Camden Garden Club Winter Horticulture Series, 10 a.m. Tuesdays, through Feb. 23. Free and open to all. 236-3440.

CAMDEN — Pysanky Eggs Workshop conducted by Jim and Chris Sady, 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, Camden Public Library, 55 Main St. Register. Materials fee, \$10. 236-3440.

DAMARISCOTTA — Introduction to rug hooking workshop, 1 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29, Feb. 12 and Feb. 19, Spectrum Generations Coastal Community Center, 521 Main St. \$95, includes small kit and supplies needed to make chair pad. Bring sharp pair of scissors. Advance registration required by Thursday, Jan. 28, 563-1363.

ELLSWORTH — 2016 Banff Mountain Film Festival, Friday through Sunday, Jan. 29-31, The Grand. Culture collection, 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29; Extreme Sports section, 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30; Best of Festival program, 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31. General admission tickets, \$15. Box office, 667-9500, grandonline.org or Facebook.

ELLSWORTH — Live, high-definition presentation of National Theatre of London production of “Les Liaisons Dangereuses,” 2 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, The Grand. General admission tickets \$17, \$16 seniors, \$15 Grand members, \$13 students, \$10 age 12 and under. Box office, 667-9500, grandonline.org or Facebook.

FORT KENT — Alzheimer’s Dementia Support Group for caregivers of persons with dementia, 6:30-7:30 p.m. first Wednesday of every month, Forest Hill Rehab and Skilled Nursing Center, 25 Bolduc Ave. 834-1353 or j.fortin@nmmc.org.

FORT KENT — Suicide Loss Support Group, 6:30-8 p.m. the first Thursday of every month, Northern Maine

Medical Center Medical Library, 194 East Main St. Free. 834-1353 or j.fortin@nmmc.org.

MILLINOCKET — Birthday of Scottish Bard Robert Burns celebrated with music and poetry, 7-9 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, 40 Highland Ave. Musicians Wally Paul and Don Pudney will perform. Donations accepted; refreshments available. Benefits Friends of Millinocket Memorial Library. 723-4146 or bbarr@myfairpoint.net.

MOUNT DESERT — Pemetic School PTO second annual adults only Blizzard Bash, 6-10 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Camp Beech Cliff, 264 Beech Hill Road. Silent auction, raffles, appetizers, cash bar, dancing and live music. Tickets, \$10, available at the door, Pemetic School, McKay’s restaurant and Carroll Drug Store.

OLD TOWN — Friends of Sunkhaze Meadows National Wildlife Refuge and nature-based educator Deanna Fahey hosting Sunkhaze Cafe, 10-11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Old Town Public Library, 46 Middle St. Topic: Nature Fun and Learning. Informal and informative discussion series geared toward adults and students. Free and open to all. Donations accepted.

ORONO — University of Maine School of Performing Arts third annual fundraiser pops concert, Astonishing! The Songs and Stories of Broadway’s Best, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Collins Center for the Arts. Reception, 6 p.m., Hudson Museum. \$25. \$12 with MaineCard. Snow date, 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31. 581-1755.

PORTLAND — Spirits Alive at Eastern Cemetery 2016 Winter Lecture Series: Emerson “Tad” Baker, author of “A Storm of Witchcraft and the American Experience,” discussing connections between Salem witch trials and Maine frontier, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Wishcamper Center, Bedford Street, University of Southern Maine. spiritsalive.org.

ROCKLAND — 12th annual Pies on Parade Pie Tour, 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31, at historic inns

and other businesses. Benefits Area Interfaith Outreach Food Pantry and Fuel Assistance Program. Advance tickets \$30, \$15 age 10 and under. 596-6611.

ROCKLAND — Silent auction, 4-6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Trackside Restaurant, benefits area food pantry programs.

SOUTH PORTLAND — Mad Horse Theatre Company production of

“Trevor,” 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 28-30; 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31, 24 Mosher Road. Thursdays are pay-what-you-can performances. \$20, \$17 students and seniors. madhorse.com.

STEBEN — “Mary Poppins,” 6 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29, Henry D. Moore Library and Community Center. Free and open to all ages. Refreshments available by donation.

moorelibrary.org.

UNION — RuthAnn MacKinnon talking about “The Beauty and Meaning of African Masks,” 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Vose Library, 392 Common Road. Camden Conference Community Partner event. Free and open to all. 785-4733.

For a complete listing of calendar items or to submit your event, visit www.bangordailynews.com.

		7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM
BROADCAST	2	NBC 207	Inside Ed.	You, Me and		The Blacklist (N) (HD)		Shades of Blue (N)		News
	4	CBC	The Nature of Things	Great Barrier Reef (N)		The National (N)		CBC	Coronation	At the Table
	5	CBS	Big Bang	Broke Girl	Big Bang	Mom	Big Bang	Angel-Hell	Elementary (N) (HD)	News
	52	CW	Family Guy	Family Guy	DC's Legends		The 100 (N)	News	Seinfeld	Cougar
	6	NBC 207	Inside Ed.	You, Me and		The Blacklist (N) (HD)		Shades of Blue (N)		News
	7	ABC	Wheel	Jeopardy!	Beyond the Tank (N)		My Diet Is Better Than Yours	Contestants run a 5K		News
	7	WAGM FOX	The Insider	Ent. Tonight	American Idol Hollywood Week continues. (N)		News	Big Bang		Big Bang
	8	ABC	Wheel	Jeopardy!	Beyond the Tank (N)		My Diet Is Better Than Yours	Contestants run a 5K		News
	10	MPBN PBS	PBS NewsHour (N) (HD)	Death in Paradise		Doc Martin		From Stump	Ice Harvest	C. Rose
	9	IND	Saving Hope (N) (HD)	Big Bang	DC's Legends		Goldbergs	News-Lisa	CTV News	Daily Show
KIDS	13	CBS	Ent. Tonight	The Insider	Big Bang	Mom	Big Bang	Angel-Hell	Elementary (N) (HD)	News
	22	FOX	Mod Fam	Mod Fam	American Idol Hollywood Week continues. (N)			FOX 22 News at 10 (N)		Mentalist
	33	IND	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	Andy Griffith	Happy Days	Laverne	Hogan Hero	Hogan Hero	C. Burnett
	38	IND	Big Bang	Big Bang	The Mentalist		The Mentalist		WBZ News (N) (HD)	Seinfeld
NEWS	NICK	Make It Pop	Thunder	** Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed (2004) (PG)				Full House	Full House	Friends
	DISN	Austin	Mako	Cloud 9 (2014, Drama)	Dove Cameron.	Liv-Mad.		Best Fr.	K.C. Under.	Girl Meets
	FAM	(:15) *** Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1 (2010, Fantasy)	Daniel Radcliffe. (PG-13)							700 Club
LEARN	HIST	Pawn Stars	Pawn Stars	Pawn Stars	Pawn Stars	Being Evel (2015, Documentary) (NR)				
	DISC	Alaska: The Last Frontier	Alaska: The Last Frontier	Alaska: The Last Frontier	Alaska: The Last Frontier			Alaska: The Last Frontier		Alaska
	TLC	My 600-Lb. Life		My 600-Lb. Life		Extreme Weight Loss				Skin Tight
	A&E	The First 48		The First 48		The First 48 (N)		(:01) Nightwatch (N)		The First 48
SPORTS	ANPL	Wild West Alaska		Wild West Alaska (N)		Alaska	Alaska	Alaskan Bush People		Wild-Alaska
	CSNE	Tailgate	Football	Quick	Tailgate	Football	Check	Sports	SportsNite	Mountain
	ESPN	College Basketball Iowa at Maryland. (N) (L)				College Basketball Michigan State at Northwestern.				SportCtr
	ESPN2	College Basketball Notre Dame at Syracuse. (N) (L)				College Basketball Oregon at Arizona. (N) (L)				30 for 30
NEWS	NBCSP	NFL	Nitro Circus Crazy Train	Nitro Circus Crazy Train	Nitro Circus Crazy Train	Nitro Circus Crazy Train				
	NESN	Outdoors	Outdoors	Best of Red Sox Winter Weekend				Sports	Sports	Sports
	CNBC	The Profit		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		The Profit		The Profit
VARIETY	CNN	Erin Burnett OutFront (N)		Anderson Cooper 360		Anthony Bourdain Parts		CNN Tonight		Post Debate
	FNC	Republican-Debate		The O'Reilly Factor (N)		Republican Presidential Primary Debate (N) (L)		Kelly File		
	MSNBC	Hardball		All in With Chris Hayes		Rachel Maddow Show		The Last Word		Hardball
	AMC	(:30) *** Red Dawn		*** Bad Boys (1995, Action)	Martin Lawrence, Will Smith. (R)			*** The Italian Job		
PREMIUM	BRV	Top Chef		Top Chef		Top Chef (N)		Recipe for Deception		Happens
	CMT	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Party Down South (N)		Redneck Island (N)		
	COM	South Park	South Park	Tosh.0	(:27) Tosh.0	Tosh.0	(:29) Tosh.0	Workaholics	Idiotsitter	Daily Show
	E!	El News (N)		Kardashian		Kardashian		Kardashian	Total Divas	El News
	FOOD	Chopped		Chopped		Kids Baking		Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby	Beat Bobby
	FX	*** The Avengers (2012, Action)	Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans. (PG-13)					Baskets (N)	Baskets	Baskets
	GAC	You Live in What?		You Live in What?		You Live in What?		You Live in What?		You Live?
	HALL	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	Last Man	The Middle	The Middle	The Middle	The Middle	Golden Girls
	HGTV	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	Hunters	Hunters Int'l	Flip or Flop
	LIFE	Project Runway: Junior	Project Runway: Junior	Project Runway: Junior	Project Runway: Junior (N)			Child Genius: Battle		
PREMIUM	MTV	Ridiculous. (:45) Ridiculousness		Ridiculous. (:45) Ridiculousness		Ridiculous. (:45) Ridiculousness		Ridiculous. (:45) Ridiculousness		Broke Game
	OXY	(:15) ** Love Happens (2009)		(:20) ** A Cinderella Story (2004) Hilary Duff. (PG)		(:25) A Cinderella Story				
	SPIKE	(:30) ** Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen		Lip Sync	Lip Sync	Lip Sync	Lip Sync	Lip Sync	Lip Sync	Lip Sync
	SYFY	(:30) ** Blade: Trinity (2004) Wesley Snipes. (R)		** From Dusk Till Dawn (1996, Horror)	Harvey Keitel. (R)					
	TBN	Drive	Potters	Trinity	Joel Osteen	Prince	Hillsong TV	Praise the Lord		
	TBS	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Broke Girl	Broke Girl	Big Bang	Big Bang	Broke Girl	Broke Girl	Conan (N)
	TCM	The Smiling Lieutenant		*** Ivy (1947) Joan Fontaine. (NR)	(:45) ** The Black Book (1949) Robert Cummings.					
	TM	Big Bang	(:35) Enemies Closer (2013, Action) (R)	*** The Silence of the Lambs (1991) (ESP) (R)						Basic 2
	TNT	NBA Tip-Off (N) (L)		NBA Basketball New York Knicks at Toronto Raptors. (N)				NBA Basketball		
	TRAVEL	Mysteries at the Museum	Mysteries at the Museum	Mysteries at the Museum	My.. Monument	My.. Monument		My.. Monument		Monument
PREMIUM	TRU	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers	Imp. Jokers
	TVL	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Everybody Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	King
	USA	Law & Order: SVU		WWE SmackDown! (N)				Colony (N)		Law-SVU
	VH1	Love & Hip Hop		Love & Hip Hop		K. Michelle	*** Drumline (2002) Nick Cannon. (PG-13)			
	WGN-A	Elementary		Elementary		Elementary		Outsiders		How I Met
	ENC	(:00) ** The Bone Collector (1999) (ESP) (R)		*** Déjà Vu (2006) (ESP) Denzel Washington. A time-folding agent falls in love with a murder victim.		(:10) ** The Wedding Ringer (2015, Comedy) (ESP) Kevin Hart, Josh Gad. (R)				
	HBO	REAL Sports With Bryant Gumbel (ESP)		** The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2015, Comedy-Drama) (ESP) Judi Dench, Maggie Smith. (PG)		(:05) Whitney Cummings: I'm Your Girlfriend		Mad Max: Fury		Mad Max
	MAX	(:520) ** Child 44 (R)	(:40) ** K-19: The Widowmaker (2002) Harrison Ford. A nuclear reactor malfunctions aboard a Russian submarine. (PG-13)			*** The Village (2004, Suspense) (ESP) Bryce Dallas Howard. (PG-13)		Shameless Debbie learns how to work the system. (N)		Dark Net
	SHOW	(:15) *** St. Vincent (2014) Bill Murray. A bawdy misanthrope mentors his young neighbor. (PG-13)		Billions Chuck's probe is derailed temporarily. (R)		Shameless Debbie learns how to work the system. (N)		Shameless Debbie learns how to work the system. (N)		Dark Net
	STARZ	(:45) *** Cape Fear (1991, Suspense) (ESP) Robert De Niro, Nick Nolte, Jessica Lange. (R)		*** Avengers: Age of Ultron (2015) (ESP) Robert Downey Jr. The Avengers reassemble to battle a technological villain. (PG-13)						