

## Press Clippings 09/30/2021

---Chicago Tribune---09/30/2021

### **‘Moulin Rouge!’ national tour will launch in Chicago, starring Courtney Reed of Elgin**

By Lauren Warnecke

The first North American tour of “Moulin Rouge! The Musical” will open in Chicago with a Chicago-area actor in the lead role of Satine, according to an announcement Wednesday from downtown theater presenter Broadway in Chicago. The musical, which recently [won multiple Tonys](#) in its Broadway production, will launch the tour next February at the Nederlander Theatre in the Loop, starring Conor Ryan as Christian and Elgin native Courtney Reed as Satine.

“Moulin Rouge!,” based on Baz Luhrmann’s decadent 2001 film, opened on Broadway at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre in 2019. Following an 18-month pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it resumed on Broadway Sept. 24 while the North American tour, originally slated to begin in New Orleans in late 2020 announced last December that it would, in fact, kick off in 2022 in Chicago.

For Reed, beginning her run as Satine is particularly special. She auditioned in Los Angeles in 2019 and had a callback just before the pandemic shut down theaters in New York, where she was performing in an off-Broadway production of Lauren Yee’s “Cambodian Rock Band.”

“I really wanted the national tour because it opens in Chicago,” Reed said Tuesday.

A few months into the pandemic, she moved back to Chicago to be near her family. “I signed an 18-month lease thinking I was never going to stay that long,” said Reed. “But it ended up working out that the month that we’re leaving is the end of my lease. It’s just fate.”



The first North American tour of “Moulin Rouge! The Musical” will open in Chicago next February at the Nederlander Theatre starring Conor Ryan as Christian and Courtney Reed as Satine. (Nathanael Filbert photo)

Reed said she owes a lot to the Children’s Theatre of Elgin, where she first got started in theater. “My sister and I grew up doing community theater,” Reed said, “and that’s where I fell in love.” She went on to study musical theater at the **Larkin High School Visual and Performing Arts Academy** and Roosevelt University before landing her big break as the original Princess Jasmine in Disney’s “Aladdin” on Broadway.

Disney has been a running theme of Reed's career thus far; her very first role was as a mouse in the Children's Theatre of Elgin's production of "Cinderella." In taking on Satine, the seductive star of a Paris cabaret at the turn of the 20th century, Reed said she draws some inspiration from former Satines Karen Olivo and Nicole Kidman, who originated the part in the musical and movie, respectively. But Reed said she's also approaching the role like any other character.

"You always bring a little bit of yourself to a role," she said. "Satine is definitely in my wheelhouse even though I haven't been able to portray such a strong leading character in this way. Jasmine was the ingénue. She's very strong and independent, but young. Satine is a grown woman and a leading lady, so this is really exciting for me."

Ryan co-stars as Christian, an aspiring composer who adopts the bohemian lifestyle of Paris' Montmartre district and falls in love with Satine. Ryan previously appeared in "Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella" on Broadway.

The "Moulin Rouge!" tour comes on the heels of a floor-sweeping Tony Awards this year, in which the production took home 10 statues, including for best musical. The tour also follows Olivo's high-profile [departure from the Broadway cast](#), citing the theater community's lack of response to allegations against producer Scott Rudin. Rudin has no affiliation with "Moulin Rouge!" and Reed said her experience thus far has been positive.

"They really care about their artists," she said. "Even in the audition rooms, from

the casting directors to Alex Timbers, the director, to Bill Damaschke and Carmen Pavlovic, the producers — I'm getting personal phone calls congratulating me. The vibe is so good. This team is a dream.”

While “Moulin Rouge! The Musical” is based on the film, there are notable differences, mainly in the soundtrack. The jukebox musical, by Luhrmann and Craig Pearce with book by John Logan, is a pastiche of pop songs spliced and diced into a mixtape. Reed said if you loved the movie two decades ago, you'll love this too.

“They bring those stunning visuals of the movie to the stage so beautifully with the colors and set design,” she said. “They spared no expense. But even if you never saw the movie, you'll love it because it's nonstop action.”

And even with its sensual overtones, Reed said “Moulin Rouge!” is appropriate for families — with some preparation. She plans to have her young nieces, who are just getting started at the Children's Theatre of Elgin, in the audience. “I haven't had the conversation with my sister yet, but I'm sure we'll sit them down,” Reed said. “They have to come see it. And I think they'll absolutely love it. For sure.”

**---Daily Herald---09/30/2021**

**Bartlett at Larkin game time changed, attendance will be open to all**

**Daily Herald Report**



Larkin's football game against Bartlett at Memorial Field in Elgin Friday will now kick off at 5 p.m. *John Starks | Staff Photographer*

Larkin High School's varsity football game against Bartlett High School has been changed to 5 p.m. Friday at Memorial Field. The original game time was 7:30 p.m.

The Larkin administration initially sent an email to students and families Tuesday that was going to limit attendance. The email explained that decision.

"Due to a number of concerns, including social distancing in the bleachers, we are limiting spectators at our home football game vs. Bartlett High School on Friday," the email said.

"Only preregistered family members (parents/guardians, grandparents and siblings) of our students who are playing or performing that night (football, cheer, poms and marching band) will be allowed to attend."

But, on Wednesday afternoon, Larkin principal Krystal Bush and Bartlett principal Mike Demovsky sent an email to both schools' students and families that backed off the attendance limitations.

"We want to clarify our policy regarding the Friday, October 1st football game at Memorial Stadium between Larkin and Bartlett High Schools," the email said. "We will have identical

open-admission policies for both schools' students, parents, and community members. No pre-registration will be necessary. Middle school and elementary students must be accompanied by an adult. As always, students are expected to bring their IDs. No backpacks are allowed. A no re-entry policy will be enforced. All spectators are expected to follow all safety procedures, including wearing a mask, and sportsmanship guidelines."