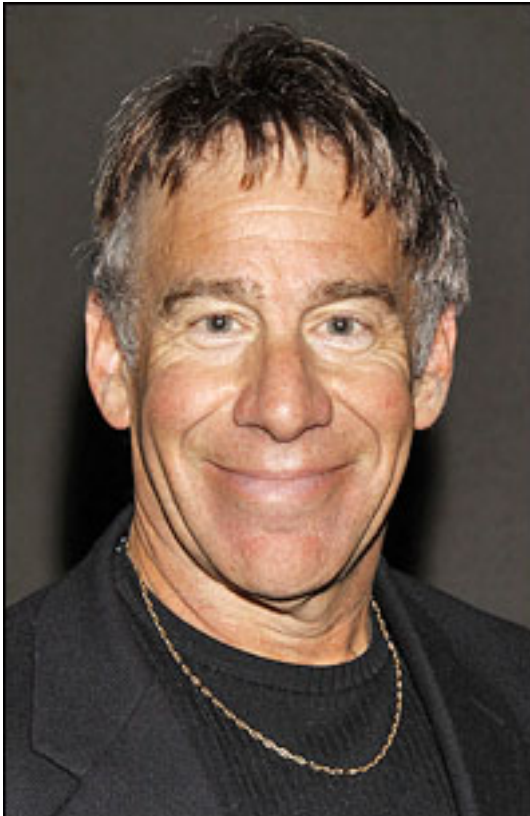


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U.S. Symphonic Premiere of Stephen Schwartz's *Children of Eden* Set for July

By *Adam Hetrick* 28 Jun 2011



Stephen Schwartz

Photo by Joseph Marzullo/WENN

Academy Award winner Stephen Schwartz's *Children of Eden*, a tuneful pop account of the biblical tales of Adam and Eve through Noah and the Arc, will receive a lush symphonic presentation beginning July 15 in Kansas City.

Piane Productions will present the fully staged production, which will mark the U.S. debut of new 55-piece orchestrations for *Children of Eden* penned by [Manfred Knaak](#). The new arrangements were seen in Germany in 2010 and have been revised and expanded for the Kansas City run.

Bruce Coughlin and Martin Erskine penned the original 13-piece orchestrations for *Children of Eden*, which made its U.S. debut at the Paper Mill Playhouse in 1997.

Charlie Piane will direct the engagement, which will run through July 24 at the Kansas City Music Hall. *Children of Eden* will employ a principal cast of 38, as well as a full chorus, a 25-member children's ensemble and members of the Kansas City Boys and Girls choirs.

Inspired by the Book of Genesis, *Children of Eden* has a score by Schwartz (*Wicked*, *Godspell*, *Pippin*) and a book by John Caird. The musical explores the parent-child relationship through the story of Adam and Eve in the first act, while the second act concludes with the tale of Noah. Songs include "In the Beginning," "The Spark of Creation," "The Hardest Part of Love," "Lost in the Wilderness," "Stranger to the Rain," "In Whatever Time We Have" and the title song.

"At a time when many shows are cutting back the size of cast and orchestra, we look forward to presenting productions with large casts on stage and a full band in the pit. Theatre is an experience, and it is our philosophy that full-size ensembles are a vital component. We are proud to offer such opportunities with tickets priced at rates that everyone can enjoy," Piane said in a statement.

The cast will include Nathan Granner as Father, Erikka Dunn as Eve/Mama Noah, Cary Mock as Adam/Noah, Bryson Bruce as Cain/Japeth, Brian M. Duncan as Abel/Ham, Katelyn Baron as Yonah, Seth M. Jones as Seth/Shem, Taylor Harvey as Aysha, Alisha Marie as Aphra/the Snake, as well as Kristen May Altoro, Chelsea Anglemeyer, Jefferey Berger and Thomas Williams, who will all round out the Snake.

Storytellers include Whitney Armstrong, Sarah Bergeson, Amanda Burns, Mosha Clyma, Taylor Corlee, Aaron Craven, Erin Farste, Michael Golliher, Ashley Harrell, Meredith Hollan, Ansel James, Hunter Johnson, Taylor Lininger, Olivia Lynn, Kira Mayo, Rachel Mears, Ethan Miller, Emily Quinn Monrad, Ramaad Morris, Andrew Mann Nielson, Zachary J. Parker, Nicholas Perry, Jered Solace and Carley Whitt.

Children of Eden will have vocal music direction by James Levy, scenic design by Tabitha Pease and lighting design by SeifAllah Cristobal. Costumes will be provided by Costume World. Kevin Bogan will conduct the orchestra.

Schwartz will also be in attendance for a July 18 gala concert, which will feature songs from his musicals.