

Broadway favourite hits the Mother City

TARREN-LEE HABELGAARN

The true-life story of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons will be brought to life in an energising musical at Artscape this month.

Direct from its successful seasons in Singapore and Johannesburg, the multi-award winning Broadway musical *Jersey Boys* opens at Artscape tomorrow.

The show tells the story of Frankie Valli and the other members of the Four Seasons – Bob Gaudio, Tommy De Vito and Nick Massi.

The group dominated charts in the 1960s and became one of the greatest successes in pop music history, selling 175 million records globally before they turned 30.

The 19 member South African cast includes Emmanuel Castis, Kirsten Murphy-Rossiter, Jaco van Rensburg, Duane Alexander and Stephen Jubber.

Since their first curtain call on South African soil, audiences have responded with enormous enthusiasm.

“Being able to be part of this production is a dream come true. Performing in theatre has always been in my blood and I did many musicals at school,” says Emmanuel Castis who plays bass vocalist Nick Massi.

He describes *Jersey Boys* as not being a typical musical.

“Usually in musicals the story is driven by the music, but with *Jersey Boys* the story

and emotions of where they are in their lives, drives the music,” he says.

The well-known soapie actor, says although he loves acting on television, theatre has always been apart of him.

“I’ve always been going for theatre auditions, but have been waiting for the perfect role,” Castis adds.

He says the show has a great cast who have really embraced the story of this iconic group.

“This rock band became each others family and having toured and lived together we are also like one big family.”

“I realised early that this was a very special story and group, I love it,” says Castis.

The show features popular hits of the band such as *Sherry*, *Big Girls Don’t Cry*, *Can’t Take My Eyes Off You* and *My Eyes Adored You*.

Although the names of these and other songs in the show might not be easily recognised by many, the tunes become more familiar as the captivating tale of the four musicians unfolds and the audience can be heard singing along.

Castis says they have received an incredible reaction from audiences who have seen the show and he looks forward to performing in Istanbul, Turkey, after Cape Town.

“It’s all about telling the incredible story of normal people. We want people to walk out with a smile on their faces and a smile on their heart,” he adds.



ICONIC: From left Kenneth Meyer, Grant Almirall, Emmanuel Castis and Daniel Buys tell the true-life story of Frankie Valli and the Four Season. PHOTO: SUPPLIED