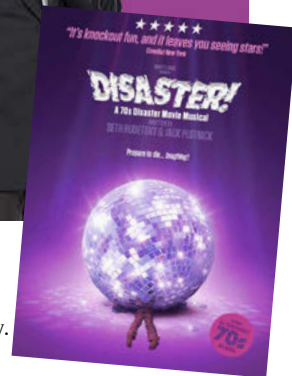




Hijinx on the high seas with the cast of *Disaster!* (left to right) Jennifer Simard, Faith Prince, Roger Bart, Adam Pascal, Kerry Butler, Kevin Chamberlin, Rachel York, and Seth Rudetsky.



HIGH WATER DISCO HELL!

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the theatre, here comes calamity on a floating casino. Prepare yourself for... ***Disaster!***

A HOMAGE to the iconic disaster and nature-gone-horribly-wrong films of the 1970s, *Disaster!* sails in on a floating casino/ discotheque, called *The Barracuda*. A group of eccentric characters are on board for the grand opening (disaster films were often set around a great unveiling), but the vessel is positioned directly above a fault line, which spells impending doom and catastrophe. Anything could happen, and it does!

In the 1970s, cinema audiences were treated to earthquakes, tidal waves, infernos, shark infestations, killer bees and disco music. *Disaster!* pays homage to the genre with nods to *Earthquake*, *The Swarm*, *Airport 75*, *Piranha* and, of course, *The Poseidon Adventure* while matched by an equally memorable soundtrack from the era. *Knock On Wood*, *Hot Stuff*, *Torn Between Two Lovers* and *Don't Cry Out Loud* all cleverly entwine in the story arc and plot pitfalls.

Created by comedians Seth Rudetsky and Jack Plotnick, *Disaster!* opened Off-Broadway in 2012 at the Triad Theatre (now Stage 72) and moved to St Luke's Theatre the following year. The original concept began all the way back in 1992 and centered around the notorious New York City blackout of 1977, but the team was asked to broaden the idea. What was rewritten

and reimaged has now progressed to the footlights of Broadway.

The cast of characters range from a professor to identical twins and a gambling nun, and includes Broadway heavyweights Kerry Butler, Kevin Chamberlin, Adam Pascal and Rachel York. Jennifer Simard plays the gambling nun with great hilarity, while Jonah Verdon plays both twins – just like Superman and Clark Kent, they somehow manage to never appear together. The creative team includes JoAnn M Hunter on choreography, Tobin Ost designing the set and co-creator Jack Plotnick directing.

There have been many great examples of the theatre parodying itself, including *Forbidden Broadway*, *Spamalot*, *The Book Of Mormon* and *Something Rotten* which all give a nudge and a wink to some of the all-time classics. Other spoofs have come directly from the big screen, such as *Showgirls! The Musical!*, *50 Shades! The Musical Parody* and *Potted Potter – The Unauthorized Harry Experience*. *Disaster!* now joins their ranks.

Critics have spoken highly of the show. *Time Out* says a “bang up cast burns bright in a disco inferno” while *The New York Times* calls it “inspired lunacy”. One thing we all can agree upon is that the talent on stage is top quality. The songs may be satire but the voices pack a punch. Add high concept humour and a witty book and the result is anything but a disaster. Strap yourselves in! ★

MORE: *Disaster!* plays at the Nederlander Theatre, New York. Visit disastermusical.com