



YOU'RE A GOOD MAN,
CHARLIE BROWN

THE DOCTOR
IS IN

**You're a Good Man,
Charlie Brown**

Clark Gesner

Playwright

Originally composer/lyricist/librettist Clark Gesner had no intention of turning his "Peanuts" songs into a stage musical. However, producer Arthur Whitelaw convinced him to work up a theatrical version based on Charles Schultz's popular comic strip, and it was soon presented at a tiny East Village theatre as You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown where it remained for four years.

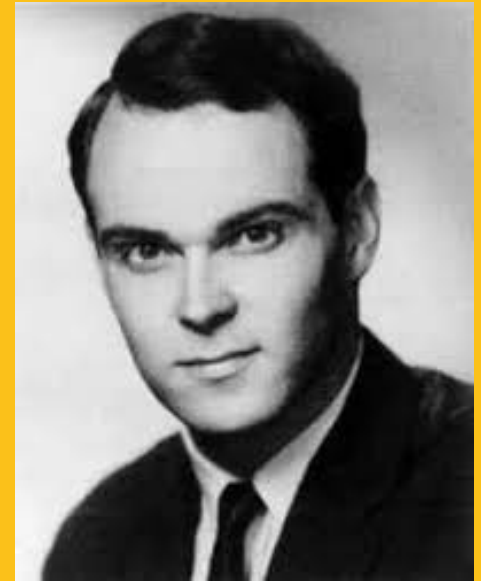
That, however, was only the beginning of a host of popular runs of the musical throughout the world.

In addition to You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown, Gesner wrote the book, music, and lyrics for *Animal Fair,* which premiered at the Denver Center Theatre. He also wrote with Nagle Jackson Broadway's The Utter Glory of Morrissey Hall, as well as revues of Leonard Sillman and Julius Monk.

For television he wrote for Captain Kangaroo, Sesame Street, and *That Was the Week That Was.* As an actor, he has appeared regularly in B. T. McNicholl's Musicals in Concert series and performed regionally in 1776, Lend Me a Tenor, Carnival!, and other musicals.

The Jello Is Always Red, a revue of Gesner's cabaret and theatre songs, was recently produced by the New Theatre Company.

Gesner passed away on July 23, 2004 at the age of 64.



You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown

Charles Schulz

Peanuts Creator



Charles Monroe "Sparky" Schulz (November 26, 1922 – February 12, 2000) was an American cartoonist, the creator of the comic strip Peanuts which features his two best-known characters, Charlie Brown and Snoopy. He is widely regarded as one of the most influential cartoonists in history, and cited by many cartoonists as a major influence, including Jim Davis, Murray Ball, Bill Watterson, Matt Groening, and Dav Pilkey. Schulz was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota and grew up in Saint Paul. He was the only child of Carl Schulz and Dena Halverson. His uncle called him "Sparky" after the horse Spark Plug in Billy DeBeck's comic strip Barney Google, which Schulz enjoyed reading.

Schulz attended Richards Gordon Elementary School, where he skipped two half-grades. He became a shy, timid teenager, perhaps as a result of being the youngest in his class.

Schulz loved drawing and sometimes drew his family dog, Spike, who ate unusual things, such as pins and tacks. In 1937, Schulz drew a picture of Spike and sent it to Ripley's Believe It or Not!; his drawing appeared in Robert Ripley's syndicated panel, captioned, "A hunting dog that eats pins, tacks, and razor blades is owned by C. F. Schulz, St. Paul, Minn." and "Drawn by 'Sparky'" (C.F. was his father, Carl Fred Schulz).

Another noteworthy episode in his high school life was the rejection of his drawings by his high school yearbook, which he referred to in Peanuts years later, when he had Lucy ask Charlie Brown to sign a picture he drew of a horse, only to then say it was a prank. A five-foot-tall statue of Snoopy was placed in the school's main office 60 years later.

In April 1951, Schulz married Joyce Halverson and Schulz adopted Halverson's daughter, Meredith Hodges. Later the same year, they moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado. Their son, Monte, was born in February 1952, and three more children, Craig, Amy and Jill, were born later in Minnesota.

Schulz and his family moved to Minneapolis and stayed until 1958. They then moved to Sebastopol, California, where Schulz built his first studio. It was there that Schulz was interviewed for the unaired television documentary A Boy Named Charlie Brown. Some of the footage was eventually used in a later documentary, Charlie Brown and Charles Schulz. Schulz's father died while visiting him in 1966, the same year Schulz's Sebastopol studio burned down. By 1969, Schulz had moved to Santa Rosa, California, where he lived and worked until his death. While briefly living in Colorado Springs, Schulz painted a mural on the bedroom wall of his daughter Meredith, featuring Patty with a balloon, Charlie Brown jumping over a candlestick, and Snoopy playing on all fours. The wall was removed in 2001, and donated and relocated to the Charles M. Schulz Museum in Santa Rosa.

By Thanksgiving of 1970, it was clear that Schulz's marriage was in trouble. He was having an affair with a 25-year-old woman named Tracey Claudius. The Schulzes divorced in 1972, and in September 1973, he married Jean Forsyth Clyde, whom he had first met when she brought her daughter to his hockey rink. They were married for 27 years, until Schulz's death in 2000.



You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown

Andrew Lippa

**Music and Lyrics
(Revival)**



Lippa was born in Leeds, England, to English parents. He emigrated to the United States in October 1967 and grew up in Oak Park, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. Lippa attended Oak Park High School and later the University of Michigan, where he studied vocal performance but eventually transferred into music education and received his bachelor's degree in music education. After graduating from college, Lippa moved to New York City in 1987 and became a middle school music teacher at Columbia Grammar and Prep School (CGPS) on the Upper West Side. He was promoted his second year at CGPS to dean of 7th and 8th grade students - an assistant principal position - and held that post, in addition to teaching music, until June 1991. In 1988 Lippa was accepted into the celebrated BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop as a composer. There he met his future collaborator Tom Greenwald (John & Jen). He later pursued a career in musical composition.

Lippa began his professional theatrical career at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, Connecticut. He was hired in early 1992 to be the pianist for a production of *It's a Bird... It's a Plane... It's Superman* but quickly rose to become the dance arranger and assistant music director. He then stayed on for the remainder of the season in that capacity. Following the Goodspeed, Lippa worked at various theatres as music director and/or pianist in addition to being an increasingly in-demand arranger.

The Goodspeed produced Lippa's first musical, *John & Jen* (book by Tom Greenwald).

Lippa then went on to write the book, music, and lyrics for *The Wild Party*. *The Wild Party* was given its world premiere in 2000 at the Off-Broadway Manhattan Theatre Club in New York City. *The Wild Party* won the Outer Critics Circle Award for best Off-Broadway musical of the season, and Lippa won the 2000 Drama Desk Award for best music.

In 1999, Lippa contributed three new songs to the Broadway version of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* and created all new arrangements. The three songs were "My New Philosophy", "Beethoven Day", and the new version of the title song. Lippa also produced the original cast recording and was honored with a Grammy Award nomination for his work on that recording.

In 2001, Lippa joined Brian Crawley to create a musical adaptation of *A Little Princess*. The show premiered in the summer of 2004 at TheatreWorks in Palo Alto, California.

In 2006, the musical *Asphalt Beach*, with music and lyrics by Lippa and the book by T. C. Smith and Peter Spears, premiered at the American Music Theatre Project at Northwestern University. After producing *Asphalt Beach*, Stuart Oken asked Lippa to write the music and lyrics for *The Addams Family* (book by Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice). Lippa was honored with a Tony Award nomination (Best Original Score) and two Drama Desk nominations (Outstanding Music and Outstanding Lyrics) for his work on *The Addams Family*.

Lippa wrote the music and lyrics for *Big Fish*, a musical based on the 2003 film and the 1998 novel. The show, with a book by John August, premiered in Chicago, Illinois, at the Oriental Theatre from April 2013 through May 5, 2013. It opened on Broadway at the Neil Simon Theatre on October 6, 2013. *Big Fish* brought Lippa a Drama Desk Award nomination for Outstanding Music.



1940s-1950s

The character's name was first used on May 30, 1948, in an early Schulz comic strip titled *Lil' Folks*, in which one boy has buried another in a sandbox and then denies that he has seen the other boy ("Charlie Brown") when asked. The character made his official debut in the first Peanuts comic strip on October 2, 1950. The strip features Charlie Brown walking by, as two other children named Shermie and Patty look at him. Shermie refers to him as "Good Ol' Charlie Brown" as he passes by, but then immediately reveals his hatred toward him once he is gone on the last panel. In the very early days of the strip, Charlie Brown was explicitly identified as being four years old; he would age very slowly over the next several years, being old enough to attend elementary school by the 1960s. During the strip's early years, Charlie Brown was much more impish and lighthearted and not the dour defeatist he would soon become. He was something of a smart-aleck and would often play pranks and jokes on the other characters. On December 21, 1950, his signature zig-zag pattern first appeared on his formerly plain T-shirt. By April 25, 1952, his T-shirt was changed to a polo shirt with a collar and the zig-zag. On the March 6, 1951, strip, Charlie Brown first appears to play baseball, as he was warming up before telling Shermie that they can start the game; however, he was the catcher and not yet the pitcher and manager of his team.

Charlie Brown's relationships with other *Peanuts* characters initially differed significantly from their later states, and their concepts were grown up through this decade until they reached their more-established forms. An example is his relationship with Violet Gray, to whom he was introduced in the February 7, 1951 strip. The two constantly remained on fairly good terms, a bit different from their later somewhat tepid relationship. In the August 16, 1951, strip, she called Charlie Brown a "blockhead", being the first time Charlie Brown was referred by that insult. The strip for November 14 of that year featured the first appearance of the famous football gag, with Violet in the role that would later be filled by Lucy.

On May 30, 1951, Charlie Brown is introduced to Schroeder. As Schroeder is still a baby, Charlie Brown cannot converse with him. On June 1 of the same year, Charlie Brown stated that he felt like a father to Schroeder; in fact, for quite some time, he sometimes acted like a father to him, trying to teach him words and reading stories to him. On September 24 of that year, he taught Schroeder how to play the piano, the instrument which would later become Schroeder's trademark. On that year's October 10 strip, he told Schroeder the story of Beethoven and set in motion the piano player's obsession with the composer. Charlie Brown placed the Beethoven bust on Schroeder's piano on November 26, 1951. Later, Schroeder and Charlie Brown were portrayed as being about the same age, and Schroeder became Charlie Brown's closest friend after Linus Van Pelt. Schroeder became the catcher on Charlie Brown's baseball team for the first time in the April 12, 1952 strip.

In early 1959, Charlie Brown (and other *Peanuts* characters) made his first animated appearances after they were sponsored by the Ford Motor Company in commercials for its automobiles, as well as for intros to *The Tennessee Ernie Ford Show*. The ads were animated by Bill Melendez for Playhouse Pictures, a cartoon studio that had Ford as a client.



You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown

Comic History

1960's

In the 1960s, the Peanuts comic strip entered what most readers consider to be its Golden Age, reaching its peak in popularity, becoming well-known in numerous countries, with the strip reaching 355 million readers.

In 1965, the Coca-Cola Company approached Lee Mendelson about sponsoring a Peanuts Christmas television special. The next day Mendelson called Schulz and proposed a Christmas special featuring Charlie Brown and the Peanuts characters, in which he would collaborate with both Schulz and Melendez. Titled *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, the special was first broadcast by the CBS network on December 9, 1965. The special's primary goal is showing "the true meaning of Christmas". Before *A Charlie Brown Christmas* was broadcast, several of those involved in the special's creation were worried that it might be poorly received, with its unorthodox soundtrack and overt religious message; however, it turned out to be a huge success, with the number of homes watching the special an estimated 15,490,000, placing it at number two in the ratings, behind *Bonanza* on NBC. The special's music score made an equally pervasive impact on viewers who would later perform jazz, among them David Benoit and George Winston. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* was honored with both an Emmy and Peabody Award. The success of *A Charlie Brown Christmas* was followed by the creation of a second CBS television special, *Charlie Brown's All-Stars*, which was originally broadcast on June 8, 1966. In October of that year, a third Peanuts special was broadcast on CBS: the Halloween-themed *It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown*. The stage adaptation of a concept album titled *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, based on Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus, Schroeder, and Patty, went into rehearsal in New York City on February 10, 1967. Prior to its opening, the musical had no actual libretto; it was several vignettes with dialogue adapted from Peanuts strips and a musical number for each one. Since Patty was such a weakly defined character in Schulz's strip, she became a composite character in the musical, with much of her material originating with Violet and Frieda in the strip. On March 7, 1967, the musical premiered off-Broadway at Theatre 80 in the East Village, featuring Gary Burghoff as Charlie Brown.

On December 4, 1969, *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*, the first feature length animated film based on Peanuts was released. The film was a box office success, earning 6 million dollars at the box office, against its 1 million dollar budget. The film was generally well received by critics.

Charlie Brown and Snoopy reached new heights on May 18, 1969, when they became the names of the command module and lunar module, respectively, for the Apollo 10 mission. While not included in the official mission logo, Charlie Brown and Snoopy became semi-official mascots for the mission. Charles Schulz drew an original picture of Charlie Brown in a spacesuit; this drawing was hidden aboard the craft to be found by the astronauts once they were in orbit. Its current location is on a display at the Kennedy Space Center.



You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown

Production History

During the early 1960s, Gesner had begun writing songs based on Charles Schulz's Peanuts characters, but was unable to get permission from United Feature Syndicate to use the characters in his songs. Eventually Gesner sent Schulz a demo recording of some of the songs and Gesner soon had permission to properly record them, which he did in 1966. Orson Bean sang the role of Charlie Brown, Clark Gesner sang Linus, Barbara Minkus sang Lucy, and Bill Hinnant sang Snoopy (he reprised his role in the Off-Broadway production).

At the time, Gesner had no plans for a musical based on this pre-production "concept album". However, producer Arthur Whitelaw, who would later go on to write another musical based on Peanuts entitled: Snoopy! The Musical, encouraged Gesner to turn the album into a musical.

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Original NY Productions and US Tours

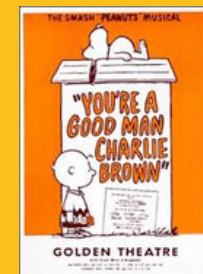
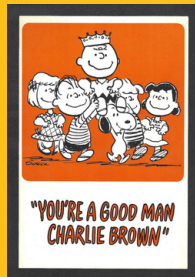
On March 7, 1967, the musical premiered off-Broadway at Theatre 80 in the East Village, featuring Gary Burghoff as Charlie Brown, Skip Hinnant as Schroeder, Reva Rose as Lucy, Bob Balaban as Linus, Karen Johnson as Patty (an early Peanuts character, not to be confused with Peppermint Patty), and Bill Hinnant as Snoopy. Joseph Hardy directed and choreographer Patricia Birch was billed as "Assistant to the Director". Joe Raposo, later of Sesame Street fame, was billed as "Music Director" and composer of incidental music for the show. This production of You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown lasted 1,597 performances, closing on February 14, 1971.

The off-Broadway cast recording, originally released on MGM Records, was later remastered by Decca Broadway/Universal Classics and re-released on September 31, 2000. A 1970 U.S. tour lasted 202 performances on the road.

A Broadway production opened at the John Golden Theatre on June 1, 1971, and closed on June 27, 1971, after 32 performances and 15 previews. Directed by Joseph Hardy and with choreography by Patricia Birch, the new cast consisted of Carter Cole as Schroeder, Grant Cowan as Snoopy, Stephen Fenning as Linus, Liz O'Neal as Lucy, Dean Stolber as Charlie Brown, and Lee Wilson as Patty

1968 West End Premiere

The musical opened in the West End in London on February 1, 1968, produced by Harold Fielding and Bernard Delfont, and directed by original 1967 director Joseph Hardy. It played at the Fortune Theatre for 116 performances, until closing on May 11, 1968. The whole original Toronto cast reprised their roles for West End. Don Potter, who portrayed Snoopy, reprised his role in the original San Francisco cast of Snoopy! The Musical.



You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown

Production History

1998 US Tour and 1999 Broadway Revival

A U.S. tour began on November 18, 1998, in Skokie, Illinois. The tour was expected to become a full-scale revival to open at the Longacre Theatre on Broadway, but was moved to the Ambassador Theatre after *Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk's* closing. After the tour ended on January 17, 1999, the revival opened on February 4, 1999, and closed on June 13, 1999, having played 14 previews and 149 performances. It featured new dialogue by Michael Mayer, who also directed, and additional songs and orchestration written by Andrew Lippa; choreography was by Jerry Mitchell and sets by David Gallo, Mayer's frequent collaborator. In this revival, the character of Patty was replaced with Sally Brown, inspired by the same change Schulz made in the animated TV adaptation. The cast featured Anthony Rapp as Charlie Brown, B.D. Wong as Linus, Ilana Levine as Lucy, and Stanley Wayne Mathis as Schroeder. Also featured were Kristin Chenoweth and Roger Bart as Sally and Snoopy, with each winning the Tony award in the respective category. Kirsten Wyatt was the standby for Lucy and Sally.

2016 Off-Broadway revival

The musical was revived at the Off-Broadway York Theatre Company. The revival used some young actors from Broadway productions. The six-member "Peanuts" gang featured Joshua Colley as Charlie Brown, Gregory Diaz as Schroeder, Aidan Gemme as Snoopy, Milly Shapiro as Sally, Mavis Simpson-Ernst as Lucy, and Jeremy T. Villas as Linus. Graydon Peter Yosowitz played the role of Charlie Brown from June 1-7. The production ran from May 24 - June 26, 2016.

2023 Off-West End revival

The London revival opened at Upstairs at the Gatehouse on December 14, 2023. Produced by Chromolume, it was directed by Amanda Noar with Isaac Bernier-Doyle as assistant director and Harry Style as musical director. The cast comprised Jordan Broatch as Charlie Brown, Troy Yip as Schroeder, Jacob Cornish as Linus, Oliver Sidney as Snoopy, Eleanor Fransch as Lucy, and Millie Robins as Sally. It closed on January 14, 2024.

2024 Chinese Premiere

After closing in London, Chromolume's production transferred to Shanghai in August, 2024 opening at the FANCL Arts Centre in co-production with iMusical, Hangzhou Grand Theatre, and Singapore ULC Education Group. The creative team and cast remained largely unchanged with João Almeida taking over as Charlie Brown and Poppy/Austen joining as Sally. This marked the show's debut in China.

