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Overflowing With Princesses

In 2000 Andrew Lippa's musical of Joseph Moncure March's verse novella "The Wild Party" opened at the Manhattan Theater Club several weeks before Michael John LaChiusa and George C. Wolfe's adaptation of the same material began performances on Broadway. Mr. Lippa's next musical, "A Little Princess," an adaptation of Frances Hodgson Burnett's beloved novel, is scheduled for Broadway next season. And wouldn't you know it? He has more princesses to contend with.

The producers Stewart F. Lane and Bonnie Comley announced this week that "Princesses" would start performances on Broadway in July 2005 (after out-of-town tryouts at Goodspeed Musicals' Terris Theater in Chester, Conn., and the 5th Avenue Theater in Seattle). Set in a private girls' school in modern-day Manhattan, the musical is about spoiled kids who are less than excited about having to mount the school musical, a version of "A Little Princess."

ON STAGE AND OFF

Jason Zinoman

The project began as a straight adaptation. "But I wasn't sure that a contemporary audience will relate to its sentimentality," said David Zippel, who developed the concept, wrote the lyrics and is directing.

Mr. Zippel, who won a Tony Award for the score of "City of Angels" in 1990, describes the girls as "embracing their inner Britney." And he says the pop score by Matthew Wilder (the Disney film "Mulan") would not be unfamiliar to viewers of MTV's "Total Request Live." The book was written by Cheri and Bill Steinkellner, veteran television producers and writers ("Cheers," "Frasier"). Rob Ashford is the choreographer.