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**Brad Oscar**

**to star in World Premiere invited reading of**

**WILLIE AND ME: THE EMMETT KELLY STORY**

**By Jonathan Cerullo and Stephen Woodburn**

**September 18, 2017**

**New York, NY**

[www.willieandme.com](https://www.willieandme.com/)

**Spotlight Communications, Inc.** presents Tony and Drama Desk Award nominee, **BRAD OSCAR** as Emmett Kellyin **WILLIE AND ME: THE EMMETT KELLY STORY,** co-written by **Stephen Woodburn** and [**Jonathan Cerullo**](https://www.jsctheatricals.com/)**.** Willie and Me is a theatrical bio-drama based on the life and times of **Emmett Kelly, Sr**., known to millions of Americans as the, sad-faced clown, **Weary Willie**. His iconic and trademark routine was the sweeping up of a spotlight into his pocket.

This invitation only World Premiere reading will be held in New York City on Monday, September 18th before a select group of theatrical investors and producers and is being presented by Spotlight Communications, Inc., Stephen Woodburn, President.

**WILLIE AND ME: THE EMMETT KELLY STORY** is a loving portrait of the man behind the makeup and paints a colorful picture of the circus and a bygone era in American life. The heartfelt sentiments he conveyed in the character he created, known as Weary Willie, were expressed without ever smiling or uttering a single word. Despite touching the hearts of children worldwide, Emmett Kelly, Sr. and his oldest son, Junior could never reconcile and it broke Emmett’s heart.

In addition to performing in a variety of circuses, including Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus for 14 years, Emmett performed on Broadway in “Keep Off the Grass”, a 1940 production starring Ray Bolger, Jimmy Durante, Jackie Gleason and Jerome Robbins. He also appeared in Cecil B. DeMille’s 1952 Academy Award winning film, “The Greatest Show on Earth” and was seen on television with luminaries Carol Burnett, Ed Sullivan, Tony Bennett and Bette Midler. Henry Fonda portrayed Emmett in the "General Electric Theater" The Clown (TV Episode 1955).

Emmett’s wife Evi Kelly-Lentz and his two daughters, Stasia and Monika will be the honored guests for this reading.

Brad Oscar, will be portraying Emmett Kelly and the world-famous clown Weary Willie, whose silence spoke to a nation! Brad is a two-time Tony award nominee and Drama Desk nominee, and has appeared on Broadway in, *Something Rotten!*(Tony Award nomination), *Big Fish*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, *The Producers*, (Tony Award nomination), *The Addams Family*, *Spamalot*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, *Aspects of Love*.  National Tour: *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Jekyll & Hyde*. West End: *The Producers*. Off Broadway: *Sweeney Todd*, *Forbidden Broadway*, *The Body Beautiful*, Encores!*Annie Get Your Gun*, *Bells Are Ringing* and *Do Re Mi.*Regional: *Fiddler on the Roof*(Barrington Stage), *Barnum* (Asolo Rep/Maltz Jupiter- Carbonell Award, Best Actor in a Musical), *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *Cabaret* and *Damn Yankees* (Arena Stage), *The First Wives Club* (Old Globe). Film: *Ghost Town*, *The Producers*. Television: "Madam Secretary," "Smash," "The Good Wife" and three "Law & Orders."

Stephen Woodburn, Co-Author and President of Spotlight Communications majored in Theatre Arts in college then began a 20-year love affair on-air as a radio disc jockey, news anchor, traffic reporter and various management roles. In 1982 he landed in Atlanta, Georgia as General Manager and the on-air anchor of a syndicated traffic reporting company. Steve spent many years acting in college and local theatre productions including *Night of the Iguana*, *The Fantastick’s*, *Arsenic & Old Lace*, *The Six O’clock News, Stalag 17* and *The 1940’s Radio Hour*. Steve has also been featured in national TV commercials, industrial films and print ads.

The reading will be directed by Cerullo, an award-winning theatre director and choreographer. Cerullo has worked on or in the Broadway productions of, *Band In Berlin, Legs Diamond, Anna Karenina, The Three Musketeers, Say, Goodnight Gracie,* and appeared as Skimbleshanks in the National Tour of *CATS*, Off-Broadway, York Theatre Company, Primary Stages, Amas Music Theatre, and regionally at the Goodspeed Opera House, North Shore Music Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, and has worked with the Big Apple Circus at Lincoln Center, and in film, and television, Great Performances, Boston Pops.

Talks are underway with actors of note to play his son, Junior and wife, Evi. The production will also include actress Vanessa Wendt, who will play a variety of roles.

To learn more about the play, visit [www.willieandme.com](http://www.willieandme.com). Spotlight Communications, Inc. is running an Indiegogo to help cover costs of this reading. To participate, visit <https://igg.me/at/willie-and-me-play/x/15237851>

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