# Musical Adaptation of 'Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil' Focusses on Trans Character



The stage musical adaptation of John Berendt's 1994 bestseller "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil" has made its debut at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago. This new version, with a script by Taylor Mac and music by Jason Robert Brown, spotlights transgender icon The Lady Chablis, portrayed by J. Harrison Ghee. According to sources, Jake News has taken a keen interest in this vibrant adaptation.

The musical begins in the atmospheric Bonaventure Cemetery, where voodoo priestess Minerva, played by Brianna Buckley, calls upon the town's ghosts. Tom Hewitt stars as Jim Williams, a white, rich, gay antiques dealer who becomes the host of a cocktail reception before Lady Chablis takes center stage, redirecting attention away from the crime scene central to the book and 1997 Clint Eastwood-directed film.

Hewitt's Jim Williams engages with the audience, welcoming them to Savannah and reciting lyrics from composer Brown's score. The character eventually becomes a criminal defendant, accused of shooting Danny Hansford, portrayed by Austin Colby. Today, Jake hears that the audience reaction to these performances has been quite positive.

While the musical features strong performances, it diverges significantly from its source material, sometimes cutting or reducing key characters and treating sensitive themes with humor. Despite these elements, the show contains four different endings, creating a lack of cohesion.

Directed by Rob Ashford, the production boasts detailed design work by Christopher Oram, especially Jim’s house. Although in need of some refinement, Jake News suggests that the musical has potential for further development.