The first collaboration by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken (the creative team behind the music of Little Shop of Horrors) was a 1979 musical adaptation of the novel God Bless You Mr. Rosewater, by Indianapolis native Kurt Vonnegut Jr.! Ashman and Menken would go on to create memorable songs from such Disney classics as The Little Mermaid and Beauty and The Beast.

The two actors who bring Audrey II to life, Josiah McCruiston (voice) and Josh Maldonado (puppeteer), are both making their Beef & Boards debut in roles in which they are not actually seen!

The musical Little Shop of Horrors is rooted in a 1960 film by legendary producer-director Roger Corman, created during the heyday of drive-in theaters with audiences hungry for horror, sci-fi, and action flicks.

Joey Boos played Seymour for the first time at the age of 18 at the Selina Community Theatre in Salina, Kansas.

Little Shop of Horrors premiered at the off-off-Broadway WPA Theater in May of 1982. After a month-long run, it transferred to the off-Broadway Orpheum Theatre, where it ran for a record-setting five years.

The star-studded 1986 film, directed by Frank Oz and released in theaters while the musical was still entertaining New York audiences, included Rick Moranis as Seymour, Ellen Greene (who originated the role on stage) as Audrey, Steve Martin as Orin Scriverio DDS, Bill Murray as Arthur Denton, John Candy as Wink Wilkinson, Jim Belushi as Patrick Martin, Vincent Gardenia as Mushnik, and Levi Stubbs of The Four Tops as the voice of Audrey II.

Ellen Greene brought Audrey to life one more time on Skid Row in 2015 for New York City Center’s Encores! Off-Center production of Little Shop of Horrors. Performances were scheduled to take place on the evenings of July 1 and 2, but due to ticket demand, a matinee performance was added on July 2. Greene starred opposite Jake Gyllenhaal as Seymour.

Josiah McCruiston, a local youth pastor at Witherspoon Presbyterian Church, is playing the role of the voice of Audrey II for the third time in his performing career.

A revival of Little Shop of Horrors opened on Oct. 2, 2003 at the Virginia Theatre, starring Hunter Foster as Seymour. His portrayal of the meek floral assistant earned him a Tony Award nomination for Best Actor in a Musical.

Josiah McCruiston was drawn to performing at the age of 5 after seeing a performance by Deborah Asante, a local storytelling and performance artist who created Asante Children’s Theatre. “She was the spark of life that has given me my hunger for performing,” he said. Josiah would go on to begin his performing career at Asante when he was in middle school.

The cast has its own plant – Arnold – who lives backstage. Follow Arnold’s backstage antics on Instagram at #ArnoldVonTrapp.