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THE PRODUCTION COMPANY and EY present

HELLO, DOLLY!

Book by MICHAEL STEWART Music and Lyrics by JERRY HERMAN

Based on the play *The Matchmaker* by THORNTON WILDER

Original production Directed and Choreographed by GOWER CHAMPION

Produced for the Broadway stage by DAVID MERRICK and CHAMPION-FIVE, INC

Presented by arrangement with Tams-Witmark Music Library, Inc 560 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10022



HELLO, DOLLY!

PRIOR PIRO

VERITY HUNT-BALLARD • GLENN HILL • BAYLIE CARSON NIGEL HUCKLE • IMOGEN MOORE • JACK VAN STAVEREN MIKE SNELL • ALANA TRANTER

ELLA BURNS • MATTHEW JENSON • SAM MARKS
RUBIN MATTERS • THALIA SMITH • SUZANNE STEELE
RACHAEL WARD • BRENTON WILSON

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Wigs Assistant Silvana Mitkovski

Assistant Stage Managers Lyndie Li Wan Po and Jessica Frost
Dance Captain Brenton Wilson

Sound Equipment supplied by System Sound Pty Ltd
Sound Effects Nick Reich Sound Mix Engineer Anthony Shaw
Stage Sound Technicians Jackson Scandrett and Carley Gagliardi
Radio Mic Engineer Cameron Herbert
Set Construction Malthouse

THE PRODUCTION COMPANY ORCHESTRA

PLAYHOUSE, ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE · 27 MAY TO 11 JUNE 2017



WELL, HELLO!

I love Jerry Herman's musicals. I am sure our treasured subscribers have enjoyed our seasons of *Mame* (1999/2008), *Mack and Mabel* (2001), *Hello, Dolly!* (2002), *La Cage aux Folles* (2014) and *Jerry's Girls* (2015) as much as I have. So I am thrilled that we are opening our nineteenth season with Marina Prior in the title role of *Hello, Dolly!* This is her sixth feisty, female role for The Production Company. What fun it is that she is starring with her real-life husband Grant Piro.

Welcome back to The Production Company family to Verity Hunt-Ballard (*Guys and Dolls*), Glenn Hill (*Show Boat*) and Baylie Carson (*Dusty*), and, in our beautiful ensemble, Ella Burns, Rubin Matters, Suzanne Steele and Dance Captain Brenton Wilson. I hope this is the first of many Production Company shows for newcomers Nigel Huckle, Imogen Moore, Jack Van Staveren, Mike Snell, Alana Tranter and in the ensemble, Matthew Jenson, Sam Marks, Thalia Smith and Rachael Ward.

Our creative team is first rate. Director Gary Young, Musical Director Vanessa Scammell, and Designers Isaac Lummis and Shaun Gurton have been involved in many of our past successes. Kirsten King has performed in many of our shows and this is her first musical in the key role of Choreographer. We have tried many times to hire the superb Lighting Designer Nigel Levings and have finally triumphed and I am always thrilled with the brilliant team at System Sound.

I am so grateful to EY, who have been a sponsor since 2002. We couldn't do this without our Sponsors, Donors and Patrons and especially without you, our loyal audience. Thank you.

It's so nice to have you back where you belong!

game Putt

Jeanne Pratt AC
Chairman
The Production Company



Chairman Jeanne Pratt AC

Artistic Director **Ken Mackenzie-Forbes AM**Executive Director **Rachel D Taylor**

Hon. Company Secretary Don Maloney

Directors Deborah Beale

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Publicity by CAVANAGH PR Julie Cavanagh

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- The company reserves the right to add, withdraw or substitute artists and to vary the program as necessary
 The management reserves the right of refusing admission.
 - Recording devices, cameras and mobile telephones must not be operated during the performance.









Arts Centre Melbourne

ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE

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Arts Centre Melbourne welcomes everyone to visit our spaces and experience the performing arts.

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ORCHESTRA

Orchestral Services Manager : JAMES KEMPSTER
Orchestra Manager : LAUREN JENNINGS

Violin 1 JENNEN NGIAU-KENG

Violin 2 IMELDA YALCIN

Viola BEATRIX FRANCIS

Cello BLAIR HARRIS

Double Bass ROHAN DASIKA

Reed 1 TONY HICKS

Reed 2 LACHLAN DAVIDSON

Reed 3 TIM WILSON

Trumpet 1 GREG SPENCE

Trumpet 2 PETER MCCRACKEN

Trombone ROGER SMEDLEY

Drums DEAN COOPER

Percussion GREG SULLY

Piano JACK EARLE



THANK YOU

JEFF BUSBY and COLIN PAGE for Photography

FRANK VAN STRATEN OAM for his Program Note

RACHEL LEE - Internship Faculty of VCA and Music, Production Course

Costume Makers

SUE SKINNER

MADELINE SOMERS

TIRION RODWELL

TRISTAN SEEBOHM

ELEANOR HUTCHISON

Hats - PHILLIP RHODES

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

Dolly Levi Ambrose Kemper **Horace Vandergelder**

> Ermengarde **Cornelius Hackle**

Barnaby Tucker

Minnie Fay

Irene Mollov

Rudolph Reisenweber **Ernestina Simple**

Stanley/Judge

MARINA PRIOR

JACK VAN STAVEREN

GRANT PIRO

BAYLIE CARSON

GLENN HILL

NIGEL HUCKLE

IMOGEN MOORE

VERITY HUNT-BALLARD

MIKE SNELL

ALANA TRANTER

BRENTON WILSON

ENSEMBLE

ELLA BURNS · MATTHEW JENSON · SAM MARKS RUBIN MATTERS · THALIA SMITH · SUZANNE STEELE RACHAEL WARD · BRENTON WILSON



ACT ONE

Overture Orchestra

Openina Company

I Put My Hand In Dolly and Company

It Takes A Woman

Horace, Cornelius, Barnaby and Gentlemen

Cornelius, Barnaby, Dolly, Ermengarde, Ambrose and Company

Dolly and Horace

Irene Molloy

Dolly and Company

It Takes A Woman (Reprise)

Put On Your Sunday Clothes

Ribbons Down Mv Back

Dancing Dolly, Cornelius, Barnaby, Irene, Minnie and Company

Before The Parade Passes By

Entr'acte Orchestra

ACT TWO

Irene, Minnie, Cornelius and Barnaby Elegance

Waiters' Gallop Company

> Hello, Dolly! **Dolly and Company**

Orchestra Polka

It Only Takes A Cornelius, Irene and Moment

Company

So Iona, Dearie **Dolly and Horace**

Finale Company

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

A street scene in New York City in the 1890s

SCENE TWO

Horace Vandergelder's Feed Store, Yonkers, New York

SCENE THREE

Interior of Irene Molloy's Hat Shop

SCENE FOUR

Fourteenth Street Association Parade

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE Outside the Harmonia Gardens

SCENE TWO

Harmonia Gardens Restaurant

SCENE THREE

Courtroom

SCENE FOUR Vandergelder's Feed Store

THERE WILL BE ONE TWENTY MINUTE INTERVAL

MARINA PRIOR



DOLLY LEVI

Marina Prior is regarded as Australia's leading lady of musical theatre.

Marina's first professional audition resulted in her first lead role - that of Mabel in a national tour of the Broadway version of *The Pirates of Penzance*. She was subsequently invited to perform the role of Guinevere opposite Richard Harris in *Camelot*.

Since then Marina has performed over thirty lead roles on stage, possibly her most memorable being that of Christine Daaé in the original Australian production of *The Phantom of the Opera*. Other shows include *Cats, Les Misérables, West Side Story, Guys and Dolls, Mary Poppins* and *The Sound of Music*. For the MTC, Marina has played the roles of Rona Lisa Peretti in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, Elmire in *The Hypocrite* and Frances in *Jumpy*.

Since her first days in theatre, Marina has also performed in concert with symphony orchestras including a critically acclaimed Australasian concert tour with international tenor, José Carreras. She is also well known to television audiences through her appearances on *Carols by Candlelight*, as a judge on Channel Seven's *It Takes Two* and more recently, as Iris in The ABC series *The Divorce*.

Marina has recorded seven albums and won numerous awards for her performances, as well as an Advance Australia Award for her contribution to the performing arts. In 2006, she was honoured with induction into Australia's 100 Entertainers of the Century.

Later this year, she will tour with David Hobson in a series of concerts and play the role of Judith Bliss in *Hay Fever*, for MTC.

For The Production Company, Marina has performed lead roles in *Guys and Dolls, Annie Get Your Gun, Kiss Me, Kate, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, Promises, Promises* and is thrilled to be back playing the title role in *Hello, Dolly!*.

GRANT PIRO



HORACE VANDERGELDER

Grant's vast experience over the past thirty-five years has allowed him to work in every facet of the industry, appearing in more than a hundred productions, as well as being one of Australia's busiest voice-over actors. His work has been recognised with several Green Room Award nominations and two wins (*The Producers* and *The Merry Widow*) along with both Helpmann and AACTA nominations.

Grant began his career at age of sixteen with the soap opera Sons and Daughters during the early 1980's. Since then, his thriving television career has won him roles on Janus, Correlli, GP, Wildside, SeaChange, City Homicide, Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries and many more. Most recently, Grant has been seen as Dustin Hoffman in Hoges and as Sergeant Malouf in Newton's Law.

Feature film credits have included Bad Boy Bubby, Darkness Falls, The Outsider, The Condemned, Crime and Punishment, Crocodile Dundee in LA, and most recently Mormon Yankees: The Spirit of the Game.

On-stage highlights include Realism, Moby Dick, Laughter on the 23rd Floor, The 39 Steps, Cat On A Hot Tin Roof, His Girl Friday, Hairspray and The Odd Couple.

Grant returns to The Production Company for the third time, seen previously in *Hello*, *Dolly!* in 2002, as well as *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* in 2008 alongside his wife Marina. He is delighted to be back with The Production Company family under the guidance of Jeanne Pratt, whom he considers to be a true inspiration and the cornerstone of the Melbourne theatre community.



VERITY HUNT-BALLARD IRENE MOLLOY

Verity Hunt-Ballard is one of Australia's most versatile leading ladies and best known for her award-winning performances as Mary Poppins in Cameron Mackintosh's musical, for which she received a Helpmann Award and a Green Room Award.

In 2014 Verity won her second Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Musical for her standout performance as Charity Hope Valentine in Sweet Charity. In 2015 she also won the Sydney Theatre Award and a Green Room Award for her performance as Charity.

Verity last appeared with The Production Company as Sarah Brown in Guys and Dolls in 2014. Other stage credits include The Last Five Years, Shane Warne the Musical Concert, The Rocky Horror Show, Jersey Boys, Eureka, Virgins, After the Beep, Metro Street at the State Theatre Company of SA, for which she won a Theatre Critics Award for Best Female Performance.

Verity is featured on many cast recordings and has appeared in ABC's award winning television series The Doctor Blake Mysteries.

Verity will make her MTC debut later this year in Vivid White, a new Australian work written by Eddie Perfect.



GLENN HILL CORNELIUS HACKL

Having trained from an early age at Rodwell's Studio of Dance and Brent Street School of Performing Arts in Sydney, Glenn began his career at the age of sixteen. He was an original cast member and Assistant Dance Captain on both the Australian and Japanese tours of We Will Rock You as well as a member of the world premiere Australian cast of Dr Zhivago. Following the tour, Glenn was also Associate Choreographer for the South Korean production of Dr Zhivago.

Glenn was in the Australian premiere production of Legally Blonde The Musical in the role of Aaron Shultz, also

understudying the role of Emmett Forrest. He also featured in Dirty Rotten Scoundrels - The Musical.

Other theatre credits include Pippin for Peter Cousen's Kookaburra, Sweet Charity and Little Me for The Production Company, a Korean tour of Eurobeat - Almost Eurovision, Monty Python's Spamalot at Her Majesty's Theatre in Melbourne and Mamma Mia! the tenth anniversary Australian tour.

In November 2012, Glenn was the recipient of the Rob Guest Endowment Award. Recently Glenn has performed as Frank Shultz in The Production Company's Show Boat, the title role in Calvin Berger for MTC and as the Escapologist in the recent national tour of Matilda - The Musical.



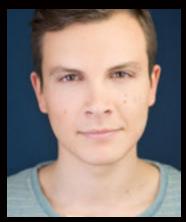
BAYLIE CARSON ERMENGARDE

Baylie graduated from WAAPA in 2015 with a Bachelor of Music Theatre. She also holds a Diploma of Dance and Music Theatre from APO Arts Academy.

Baylie made her Production Company debut last year as Mary O'Brien in *Dusty*. Other professional credits include Holly in Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom (Life Like Touring) and Tilley in Fair Dinkum (Echelon Productions).

Her WAAPA performance credits include Eve in Children of Eden, Josephine Strong in Urinetown, Enid Hoops in Legally Blonde, and Lead Priestess in Matthew Lee Robinson's workshop of Atlantis.

Baylie would like to thank her agents at IWM and her beautiful family and friends for their constant belief and support. She dedicates her performance to her mother Debra.



NIGEL HUCKLE BARNABY TUCKER

Nigel was born in Sydney and raised in the United States. He holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Shenandoah Conservatory. Most recently, he was seen as Feuilly (Enjolras cover) with the international tour of Cameron Mackintosh's Les Misérables, which included a season at the Dubai Opera.

Notable credits include Lieutenant Cable in South Pacific at the Utah Shakespeare Festival and Mr One in Adding Machine with New York City's B-Side Productions. He has performed in many venues across the United States, including an apprenticeship at Flat Rock Playhouse, where

he played IQ (Link Larkin cover) in Hairspray.

Nigel is delighted to be making his Production Company debut with Hello, Dolly! He is represented by IWM and is a proud member of MEAA Equity.

www.nigelhuckle.com | @nigelhuckle @ 🔰





IMOGEN MOORE MINNIE FAY

Imogen graduated from VCA in 2014 with a BFA in Music Theatre and she is thrilled to be making her Production Company debut with *Hello*, *Dolly!*.

Her credits include *Anything Goes* for Opera Australia and John Frost (Hope Harcourt understudy/performed), *Disney Under the Stars* for Live Nation, *Antarctica - A New Musical* for Tasmania Theatre Co. and Sundog Productions, *A Fine Romance - The Magic of Fred Astaire* for JTM Productions, *Follies - In Concert* for Storeyboard Entertainment, *Avenue Q* for Prince Moo Productions, *Scooby Doo Live! - Level Up* and *Musical Mysteries* for Life Like Touring, and *Elevate!* for The Dizzy Biz.

Imogen is a proud member of Actors Equity and would like to thank her family, friends, and IWM for their support.



JACK VAN STAVEREN AMBROSE KEMPER

Jack graduated from WAAPA in 2014, having played Franklin Shepard in *Merrily We Roll Along* and featured roles in *West Side Story, Hair* and *Reefer Madness*.

After graduation, Jack toured South Africa with *Scooby Doo Live* (Life Like Touring) as Fred Jones, then Australia in *Scooby Doo: Level Up!* Jack appeared in both the Australian and Victorian premieres of *Dogfight* at the Hayes Theatre and Chapel-Off-Chapel, and Opera Australia's *The Divorce*. Recently Jack performed in the world premiere cast of *Dream Lover* in Sydney (GFO).

Jack is thrilled to be making his Production Company debut with this wonderful team, and would very much like to thank his family, friends and JM Agency for their ongoing support and encouragement.



MIKE SNELL Rudolph reisenweber

Mike started his career in 2006, working with his idol Hugh Jackman in *The Boy From OZ Arena Spectacular* (Ben Gannon/Robert Fox). A succession of shows quickly followed; *Miss Saigon* (Cameron Mackintosh), *Wicked* (GFO) in which he performed the role of Fiyero and *Hairspray* (Dainty/David Atkins).

In 2012 Mike was the winner of the television series *I Will Survive* before joining the cast of *Legally Blonde*, playing the role of the UPS Guy and was nominated for the Best Supporting Actor Helpmann Award. Other theatre credits have included Lewis in *Pippin* (Magnormous) and Tony

Manero in Saturday Night Fever (StageArt).

Mike was recently an original cast member of Baz Luhrmann's *Strictly Ballroom* (Global Creatures) in which he appeared in the roles of Ken Railings, Rico, Wayne and Tommy and in the national tour of *We Will Rock You* (GFO). Mike is thrilled to be joining the cast of *Hello Dolly!* and fulfilling a long held desire to perform with The Production Company.



ALANA TRANTER ERNESTINA SIMPLE

Alana is a Music Theatre graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts. Her theatre credits include the Australian premiere of *Georgy Girl – The Seekers Musical, NINE – The Musical* at Melbourne Recital Centre, lead vocalist in the concert version of *California Dreaming-The Music of the Mamas and the Papas, Carrie* and Keren in *Third World Blues*.

Alana has created roles in two new Australian works, Clarice in *Dreamsong* and Maggie in *NED – The New Australian Musical*. Most notably, Alana started this year working with STC, work-shopping the stage version of *Muriel's Wedding*.

Film and television credits include Elizabeth in the feature

film Lone Wolves, short films To Claire, Doghouse and Reset and roles in the television series Communications and Punchliners, and the webseries The Vonnegut Project and Truck Talk.

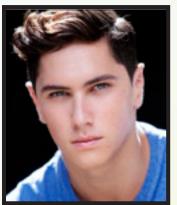
Alana is thrilled to be making her Production Company debut in *Hello, Dolly!* and would like to thank her agents Dior and Karen and her wonderful parents for their constant love and support.



ELLA BURNS

Ella graduated in 2013 from Patrick Studios Australia, training under the guidance of Todd Patrick and Andrew Hallsworth. Whilst there, she received the Ross Coleman Award and starred as Queenie in LaChiusa's version of *The Wild Party* in her graduating year. Ella's credits include *Dusty* and *West Side Story* for The Production Company, *Georgy Girl* (Farrelly Productions) Michael Ralph's *Hollywood Honky-Tonk* in 2014, and Amanda Colliver's *Woman*.

Ella is grateful to The Production Company for providing her with many wonderful opportunities, as well as her family, mentors, friends and her agent Emma Raciti.



MATTHEW JENSON

Upon graduating from Brent Street, Matthew quickly established himself as a versatile artist working with choreographers Jason Coleman, The Squared Division (*X-Factor AU*), and Sydney Dance Company's Rafael Bonachela (*13 Rooms*).

He made his musical theatre debut in 2014 as an original cast member of Baz Luhrmann's *Strictly Ballroom The Musical* and continued on for the national tour. In 2016 Matthew joined the Australian tour of *Singin' In The Rain* and was also invited to perform in the Tokyo production. Matthew is thrilled to have the opportunity to work with The Production Company in *Hello, Dolly!*



SAM MARKS

Sam trained at the Conroy Dance Centre in Brisbane. His professional career began as a child when he was cast in Singin' In the Rain, Les Misérables and The Wizard of Oz. Other musical theatre credits include CATS, Wicked, Tap Dogs, South Pacific, King Kong Live on Stage, Dirty Dancing, Singin' in the Rain and the role of Harvey for The Tap Pack. Sam has also worked extensively in the commercial dance industry. Television appearances include Sunrise, The ARIA's, three seasons of The X Factor and various commercials.

Sam is thrilled to be making his Production Company debut in *Hello, Dolly!*.

RUBIN MATTERS

Rubin is thrilled to be returning to The Production Company after previously appearing in the recent seasons of *Dusty* and *Show Boat*. He studied at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School, Ministry of Dance and Howard Fine Acting Studio.

Credits include the World Premiere of *Georgy Girl - the Seekers Musical, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (TML Enterprises) and Michael Ralph's *Hollywood Honky-Tonk* (Giving Productions). Rubin was the recipient of the Playbill Future Prospect Award from the Rob Guest Endowment in 2015. He is a proud member of Actors Equity and would like to thank his family and his agent for their continued love and support.



THALIA SMITH

Hailing from Dubbo in NSW, Thalia graduated from the VCA in 2015. Her credits there included Peggy Sawyer in 42nd Street, Principal Dancer for the Masters of Choreography students piece, unknown forms, Mrs Millennium in *Urinetown*, and Dance Captain for *Li'L Abner*. Thalia was also selected to travel to New York as a part of the Global Atelier scholarship program. Most recently she performed in *We Will Rock You* (GFO) as ensemble/cover Scaramouche and as Cha Cha in Harvest Rain's *Grease*.

Thalia is thrilled to be making her Production Company debut and dedicates her performance to her beautiful family.



SUZANNE STEELE

Suzanne began her training in Brisbane with Lenore Robbins and the Australian Acting Academy, going on to graduate from Queensland Dance School of Excellence and Dance World Studios.

Most recently, Suzanne appeared in the world premiere of Dream Lover The Musical. Other credits include The Production Company's Funny Girl, Hugh Jackman's Arena Tour Broadway to Oz, The Rocky Horror Show, the original Australian tour of Wicked, Barry Humphries 50th Anniversary Australian Tour Back With A Vengeance, Universal Studios Japan and lead singer for corporate events (Crown, SMA Productions).

Hello, Dolly! is Suzanne's second appearance with The Production Company.





RACHAEL WARD

Having graduated full-time courses in classical ballet and musical theatre and further study with the Associated Studios in London, Rachael has danced for Kanye West for his live concert and played the roles of Mona and understudied Roxie Hart in *Chicago*, Blue Girl in *Shout! The Mod Musical*, Bombalurina in *CATS* for Royal Caribbean and at the Theatre Mogador in Paris (RUG), ensemble and understudy for Lina Lamont in the Australian tour of *Singin' In The Rain*, most recently touring in the show to Tokyo.

Rachael is ecstatic to be making her Production Company debut in *Hello*, *Dolly!*.



BRENTON WILSON DANCE CAPTAIN

Brenton most recently performed in the Adelaide season of The Production Company's *Dusty*. Other credits with The Production Company include *Gypsy* and *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Stage credits include Joe Pesci in *Jersey Boys* (understudying and performing the role of Frankie Valli) and Mungojerrie in the Australasian tour of *CATS*, *Georgy Girl*, Baz Luhrmann's – *Strictly Ballroom*, *Grease The Musical*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Mary Poppins*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *Dusty* – *The Original Pop Diva*, and *Leader of The Pack* - *The Ellie*

Greenwich Musical. Brenton appeared in Carlotta, the ABC telemovie based on the life of Australian Cabaret star Carlotta.

Brenton grew up in the Illawarra studying at Debby's Dance Company and attended Brent Street Performing Arts in Sydney. He is thrilled to be working with The Production Company again on *Hello, Dolly!* and is a proud member of Actors Equity.

IT'S SO NICE TO HAVE YOU BACK WHERE YOU BELONG!

THE SURPRISING STORY OF THE WORLD'S MOST HEART WARMING MUSICAL

'It's a dream come true! This is just what I had in mind when I first thought of Dolly Levi. I wanted to recapture the warmth and excitement of the theatre of my youth. In this production your music, dancing, libretto and performances are exactly what I imagined they should be. What a revelation!' So said Thornton Wilder of Hello, Dolly! the miraculous musical that was adapted from his play *The Matchmaker*.



Amanda Muggleton in Hello, Dolly!

The 'dream' actually began 130 years before, with *A Day Well Spent*, a farce by John Oxenford about two young clerks who locked the door of their master's shop, donned their Sunday best and headed for London, where their adventures culminated in the mixing and marrying of three couples. Seven years later, in 1842, Oxenford's plot resurfaced in Johann Nestroy's astringent Viennese comedy *Einen Jux will er sich machen*. Much more recently, Tom Stoppard used it for his 1981 comedy *On the Razzle*.

Long before this, however, Thornton Wilder had rewritten Nestroy's play as *The Merchant of Yonkers*. He set his play in early 1880s New York, incorporated a few ideas from Molière's *The Miser* and added one vital ingredient – Dolly Levi. Ironically Dolly gave Wilder's piece an affinity with an 1891 American musical called *A Trip to Chinatown*, in which young couples, aided by a manipulative widow, spend a frantic evening at a swank restaurant trying to avoid detection by a wealthy gentleman, who finishes up with the bills, but without his wallet. Instead of Nestroy's social satire, Wilder created a warm

celebration of human hope. 'My play is about aspirations of the young – and not only the young – for a fuller, freer participation in life.'

But when *The Merchant of Yonkers* premiered in 1938 with Jane Cowl in the lead, it was a flop. Fortunately Dolly Levi was resilient. In the early 1950s Wilder decided that a slight reworking, a change of title and an entirely new audience were in order

- and so The Matchmaker debuted in England in 1954 in a sparkling

production directed by Tyrone Guthrie. Ruth Gordon made a raucously meddlesome Dolly Levi, with Sam Levene as Vandergelder, Prunella Scales as Ermengarde and Eileen Herlie as Mrs Molloy. After a successful West End run, the production transferred to Broadway. Shirley Booth played Dolly in the 1958 film version, with Paul Ford, Shirley MacLaine, Anthony Perkins and Robert Morse.

The Union Theatre Repertory Company presented the Australian premiere of *The Matchmaker* in 1957 with Kay Eklund as Dolly. Marie Redshaw and Charles Tingwell were Dolly and Vandergelder in the Melbourne Theatre Company's production at the Athenaeum in 1980.

It was inevitable that Dolly, Vandergelder, and their friends would find their way to the musical stage. Wilder reluctantly released the rights to producer David Merrick, who commissioned Michael Stewart, writer of *Bye Bye Birdie* and Merrick's production of *Carnival!* to write the book. Though he followed the original fairly closely, Stewart omitted all the soliloquies except Dolly's, and he introduced a new character – the buxom heiress, Ernestina Money – who had only been mentioned in Wilder's play.

Young Jerry Herman was keen to write the words and music, but Merrick, familiar only with Herman's Israeli-flavoured score for *Milk and Honey*, felt he lacked a feeling for 'Americana'. Herman spent a weekend writing songs with a 1900's lilt, and got himself the job. Then Gower Champion, who had worked with Stewart on *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Carnival!* came on board as director – replacing first choice Harold Prince, who had so disliked the title number that he had wanted it cut!

Considering the triumph that was to follow, it's hard to believe that *Hello, Dolly!* had a difficult birth. Ethel Merman, for whom it was originally created, rejected it. At that stage the show's working title was *Dolly: A Damned Exasperating Woman*. This was changed to *Call on Dolly,* but it was as *Hello, Dolly!* that the show started its out-of-town try-outs, with Carol Channing in the lead.

Miss Channing was then 43 and no stranger to Broadway. Blonde, wide-eyed, with a voice that ranged wildly from life-threatening growl to ear-piercing squeak, she had created a unique persona in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* in 1954, but she was badly in need of a hit – and with *Dolly!* she certainly got it! David Burns was cast as Vandergelder, with Eileen Brennan as Irene Molloy and Charles Nelson Reilly as Cornelius.

Director Champion recalled that *Hello, Dolly!* was 'a disaster in Detroit.' Merrick was unhappy with the show and considered closing it on the road. At that stage there were really only four good numbers. Others were jettisoned, but by the time *Hello, Dolly!* sauntered onto the stage of the St James Theatre in New York on 16 January 1964 it was as slick and sassy as only the best Broadway

musical theatre can be. It was a sensation – and a perfect pick-me-up for an America recovering from the shock of the assassination of its president two months before.

The reviews were ecstatic. The cast album quickly outsold every other Broadway cast recording to that time. By January 1966 there were over 200 versions of the irresistible title song. Undoubtedly the most memorable was Louis Armstrong's. His rasping, goodhumoured version became the first disc to knock the Beatles from the number one spot on the hit parade. It was 64-year-old Louis's first million seller and won him a Grammy award for 'Best Vocal Performance'.

The song scored Jerry Herman a Grammy, too, as 'Song of the Year,' over contenders including *People* and *A Hard Day's Night*. But Herman's elation was short lived. He was sued by

composer Mack David, who claimed that Herman had plagiarised the first four bars of 'Hello, Dolly!' from his 1948 song 'Sunflower'. The case was settled out of court, with Herman paying \$250,000 - an enormous sum in those days - to retain exclusive rights to the tune.

The Tony Awards brought fresh triumphs. Hello, Dolly! danced away with a record ten Tonys – an achievement that was all the more remarkable because it was in competition with shows like She Loves Me and Funny Girl.

While Hello, Dolly! bubbled happily on Broadway, Merrick mounted a second company with Mary Martin as Dolly. After a 20-week tour of America and Canada, they



Jill Perryman and Kevan Johnston in Hello, Dolly!

headed overseas. The first stop was the vast Takarazuka Theatre in Tokyo where Miss Martin sang a special 'Hello, Tokyo!' chorus. Russian authorities cancelled the planned visit to Moscow and Leningrad so Merrick sent the company to Korea, Okinawa and Japan to give performances for the American troops, after which the principals flew to London, where *Hello, Dolly!* ran for 794 performances at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

Meanwhile, Miss Channing left the Broadway cast to head another American touring company. It began its travels in September 1965 and was later led by Eve Arden and Dorothy Lamour. Yet another company, headed in turn by Betty Grable, Ginger Rogers and, again, Dorothy Lamour, toured for more than two years. And Martha Raye starred in a version specially mounted to entertain American troops overseas.

Carol Channing's place on Broadway was taken, successively, by Ginger Rogers, Martha Raye, Betty Grable, Bibi Osterwald, Pearl Bailey (heading an all-Black company with Cab Calloway as Vandergelder), and Phyllis Diller. The last Dolly of that first marathon season was Ethel Merman.

Miss Merman was still wowing them when the run concluded on 26 December 1970. There had been a staggering 2844 performances, the longest Broadway run to that time, exceeding even *My Fair Lady*. The production had cost \$350,000 to stage. By December 1969 the global box office gross was over \$55 million, far more than any other musical had earned – and this was without the proceeds from the movie.

Though 20th Century-Fox announced the purchase of the film rights in March 1965, production did not commence until early 1969. At a total cost of \$22 million, *Hello*, *Dolly!* was the most expensive musical film made to that time. For the lead, Fox bypassed Carol Channing and Lucille Ball – who had already announced that she had the part – and engaged Barbra Streisand, fresh from her Oscarwinning performance in the film of *Funny Girl*. Ironically, Streisand had lost the 'Best Actress in a Musical' Tony to Channing four years before. Walter Matthau was cast as Vandergelder, with Michael Crawford as Cornelius. And Louis Armstrong was on hand to sing a chorus of '*Hello*, *Dolly!*' in the Harmonia Gardens sequence.

But Broadway hadn't seen the last of *Hello*, *Dolly!* It was revived in 1975 with Pearl Bailey and Billy Daniels and in 1978 with Carol Channing and Eddie Bracken, a production that transferred to London. Channing reprised *Dolly!* on Broadway and on tour in 1994-5 and, just a few weeks ago, Bette Midler proved irresistible in a lavish new staging that one critic described as 'a riotous delight'.

Australia's leading theatrical entrepreneur, J.C Williamson's, bought Hello, Dolly! for Australia in April 1964. It had been running on Broadway for only three months, and had just won the



David Burns as Horace Vendergelder and Carol Channing as Dolly Levi.

New York Drama Critics' Circle Best Musical award.

Williamson's budgeted the Australian Dollv! at \$120,000, less than they had spent on Mv Fair Lady and Camelot, but still a considerable sum for the time. Their first recruit was an experienced American director, Fred Hebert. He had directed The Pajama Game for them in 1957. Williamson's resident dance director Betty Pounder flew to New York to study Gower Champion's choreography. She sat on the steps of the St James Theatre's dress circle for 22 consecutive performances, memorising every detail. Hebert auditioned in New York for the principals. To play Dolly he chose Julie Wilson, a sultry-voiced American brunette who had achieved some success in Kiss Me. Kate on the road and in London. Jack Goode, a seasoned veteran who had taken over the role of Hines in The Pajama Game on Broadway, was cast as Vandergelder.

Hello, Dolly! was scheduled to open at Her Majesty's Theatre in Sydney on 27 March 1965 - then Julie Wilson pulled out! Her last minute decision - due to an unforeseen pregnancy - sent Williamson's into a state of panic. 'What about an Australian Dolly?' cheekily suggested some sections of the press. 'Australian actresses should lose no sleep,' was The Australian's astute comment.

Finally, in mid-January, Hebert signed Carole Cook, J.C. Williamson's production of Hello, Dolly! was only the second one mounted, ahead of London and ahead of all the US touring companies.

Jill Perryman was cast as Irene Molloy, and understudy for the role of Dolly. Other local recruits included Marion Edward, Alan Babbage, Barbra Young, Brian Hannan, Tikki Taylor, Nancye Hayes and Bruce Barry.

The Sydney premiere was a triumph. The reviews were uniformly rapturous and the company settled down for a happy run of 21 weeks, for some of which, due to Miss Cook's bouts of illness, lucky Sydneysiders got to see Jill Perryman as Dolly instead. Michael Stewart came from New York to check out the show and was suitably impressed. In late August Dolly! transferred to Her Majesty's in Melbourne and later toured New Zealand.

Williamson's did not take their Hello, Dolly! to Brisbane, Adelaide or Perth, but there have been several notable professional revivals. Dolly was played in Perth by Joan Sydney for Aarne Neeme's National Theatre Company in 1975, and by Sheila Bradley for the Queensland Theatre Company in 1982. In 1994 John Frost joined with the Arts Centres in Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane to present a lavish remounting with Jill Perryman as a sensational Dolly, nearly 30 years since she had first played the role. Warren Mitchell was Vandergelder, with Jackie Love, Jeremy Stanford, Denise Drysdale, Josephine Mitchell, John Bowles, Kevan Johnston and Lola Nixon. The production played merrily around Australia for most of 1995. In 2011 Aaron Joyner's Magnormos Productions presented a semistaged Dolly! at the Melbourne Recital Centre, with Susan-ann Walker and Robert Grubb as Dolly and Vandergelder.

The Production Company presented its first Dolly! in 2002. The title role went to Amanda Muggleton, who had played Ermengarde in the MTC's production of The Matchmaker back in 1980. John Stanton was Vandergelder, and Grant Piro - tonight's Vandergelder - doubled as Ambrose and Rudolph. The Herald Sun's Kate Herbert described the production as 'slick and stylish, charming and genuinely entertaining.'

And now we have a sparkling new Hello, Dolly! It's a show about youth, enterprise, good humour and hope. It's in the right place at the right time. Welcome, Dolly! It's so nice to have you back where you belong!

© Frank Van Straten OAM



GARY YOUNG DIRECTOR

For The Production Company Gary has directed Singin' In The Rain, Carousel, Funny Girl, Call Me Madam, Mame and The Boy Friend.

He wrote and directed the Australian musical Sideshow Alley. winning both the national search for new work by Australian writers and composers and the inaugural Pratt Prize for Music Theatre. Gary and composer Paul Keelan also won the Helpmann Award for Best Original Score.

Gary was Associate Director for the original and the anniversary productions of Miss Saigon, Les Misérables, and Mamma Mial.

Recently, he directed the new Australian musical Georgy Girl, the Kelly story musical, Ned, and the Jubilee Anniversary production of The Mousetrap. Other shows directed include Cry Me A River. City Of Angels, Forty-Second Street, Fully Committed, Guys And Dolls, Menopause The Musical, Crusade, and A Little Night Music. This year he will direct a new production of Mamma Mial.

His original written work includes Tilly, Jekyll and The Man Inside. Musicals with composer Paul Keelan include Ship Of Fools, A Woman's Eyes, Black Widow, Wombat Stew, Tea With Oscar, Artemisia, Bim Bom and their latest work, Monster,

Gary is also the author and illustrator of the More Than Two Books.

His awards include The Arts Council Award for Direction, The Helpmann Award, The Mo Award, and The Aussie Theatre Award for Best Direction of a Musical.

VANESSA SCAMMELL MUSICAL DIRECTOR

In 2017, Vanessa Scammell will conduct a new production of The Merry Widow for Opera Australia. She also makes her debut with West Australian Opera and returns to Auckland Philharmonia.

She has acted as Conductor, Music Director and Musical Supervisor for Australasia's leading performing organisations in concert, opera, ballet and musical theatre.

For The Production Company Vanessa was musical director for The Producers and Damn Yankees. For Opera Australia, she has conducted South Pacific, the national tour of La traviata and was Musical Director for their acclaimed 2015 television opera

Nutcracker and The Dream.

- The Divorce. For The Australian Ballet, her credits include Body Torque, Tchaikovsky's The

For the Really Useful Company, she has acted as Musical Director for The Phantom of the Opera in Beijing, Athens, South Korea and South Africa; Chicago Australasian Tour for GFO and for Andrew McKinnon Presentations, she conducted the national tour of From Broadway to La Scala (starring Teddy Tahu Rhodes and Lisa McCune).

In 2016, Vanessa was Music Director for the Helpmann Awards, conducted the Australian premiere of The Light in the Piazza and major concerts with the Melbourne Symphony and Orchestra Victoria.







KIRSTEN KING CHOREOGRAPHER

Kirsten's most recent work was *Dusty* for The Production Company. She was Assistant Choreographer, then Resident and Swing for the Adelaide season.

Kirsten played the role of Hazel and was Dance Captain in the new Australian Musical, *Georgy Girl*. Previous to this, she was Audition Assistant to Broadway choreographer Warren Carlyle, and private coach to Hugh Jackman and Andy Lee on *Hugh Jackman's Broadway to Oz Tour*.

Kirsten was Associate Choreographer for the Australian Production of Strictly Ballroom and became the Associate

Choreographer for the World Premiere of King Kong the Musical.

Kirsten was an original cast member, Dance Captain then Resident Choreographer on the Australasian Tour of *Mary Poppins*. She was Dance Captain and an original cast member of *We Will Rock You*, touring Australia and Japan. Kirsten was also Assistant Choreographer and Director on *The Producers*, and Assistant Choreographer on *West Side Story*, both for The Production Company.

Other credits include understudying and performing the role of Thelma O'Keefe in the Australian tour of *Shout! The Legend Of The Wild One*, the roles of Helene in *Sweet Charity* for The Production Company and Catchup in *Pinocchio – The Greatest Little Show On Earth* (Garry Ginivan).

Kirsten's debut was in *Happy Days: The Arena Mega Musical* (understudy Laura), followed by *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying, Anything Goes, The Music Man* (all for The Production Company) and then *The Wizard Of Oz.*

ISAAC LUMMIS COSTUME DESIGNER

Isaac graduated in 2005 from Curtin University with a Bachelor's degree in Fashion and Textile design. For the Production Company Isaac's design credits include Dusty, Nice Work If You Can Get It, Show Boat and Promises, Promises. Isaac's other design credits include Georgy Girl, the new Australian musical based on the story of the Seekers, Rush Hour for Victorian Opera, La Cage Aux Folles for Quirky Productions, Melbourne Loves the Burlesque Hour, Glory Box and Caravan Burlesque for Finucane & Smith, My Life in the Nude for Maude Davey, Waltzing the Wilarra for Yirra Yaakin, Down Pour for A4 Circus, Oliver! and Anything Goes for WTG,



As You Like It and Memmie LeBlanc for Deckchair Theatre and Dash, Powder Monkey and KissXX STEPS Youth Dance Company. Isaac also created the Adorable Florable characters for Kings Park Botanical Gardens Wildflower Festivals.

Since 2008, Isaac has also been the resident costume designer and wardrobe coordinator at the DET Performing Arts Unit. Whilst with the Performing Arts Unit Isaac has designed the costumes for nine *Victorian State Schools Spectaculars*. He also designed the costumes for their 2009 production of *Barnum*.

SHAUN GURTON SET DESIGNER

For The Production Company Shaun has designed Funny Girl, West Side Story, Guys and Dolls, Chess, Sweet Charity, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, The Boy From Oz and Sugar.

He has designed nationally and internationally since 1973. From 1990 to 1994 he was associate Director/Designer for the State Theatre Company of South Australia. Recent designs include the highly acclaimed productions of *Pennsylvania Avenue*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Ghosts*, *The Mountaintop*, *The Other Place*, *Red*, *Hamlet*, *Richard III* for MTC. Other recent designs for MTC include *The Heretic*, *Apologia*, *Moonlight and Magnolias*, *King Lear* and *Inheritance*.



Shaun has designed the national tours of *Georgy Girl - The Seekers Musical, Mother and Son* and *Yes Prime Minister.* Other designs include *Cheech* and *Romeo and Juliet* for Centaur Theatre in Montreal Canada, *Talking Heads* for Kay & McLean Productions. *Equus* and *Taking Liberty* for Perth Theatre Company, *Australia Day* and *The One Day of the Year* for HIT productions.

Shaun has received Green Room Awards for *Steaming, Masterclass, Rivers of China, Festen* and *Richard III.* In 2004 he was presented with the John Truscott award for excellence in design. He has been nominated for the Helpmann award in design for *Inheritance* in 2004 and *King Lear* in 2005.



NIGEL LEVINGS LIGHTING DESIGNER

Nigel has lit over 490 productions including 178 operas and 27 musicals.

He has lit opera in St Petersburg, Paris, Washington, London, Cardiff, Berlin, Baden Baden, Innsbruck, Bregenz, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Dallas, Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne and Toronto.

He is a Fellow of the Illuminating Engineering Society. His awards for lighting design include a Helpmann Award, a Green Room Award, and Ovation, A Dora Mava Moore, two Outer Circle Critics Awards, a Drama Desk and he is the only Australian lighting

designer to ever win a Tony Award.

Recent work includes *Disgraced* for MTC, *Simon Boccanegra* for Opera Australia, *Peter and the Wolf* for Adelaide Festival of Arts, *Romeo et Juliette* for Korea National Opera, *Cloudstreet* and *Tosca* for State Opera of South Australia and *Tartuffe* for State Theatre Company

Hello, Dolly! is Nigel's first production for The Production Company.

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SYSTEM SOUND KELVIN GEDYE - SOUND DESIGN

Kelvin's first jobs with System Sound started in 1982, mixing Candide, Oliver. Oklahoma! CATS, Les Misérables and The Phantom Of The Opera before joining System Sound in 1991, supervising and designing for touring productions of Phantom, CATS and Wicked. His Sound Design credits include West Side Story.

Fiddler On The Roof, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Mother and Son and last year, Violet and Songs For A New World.

Kelvin has co-designed over sixteen Production Company shows including most recently Show Boat. Nice Work If You Can Get It. Curtains. Funny Girl, and Dusty.



JULIAN SPINK - SOUND DESIGN

Having toured as mix-engineer for international artists including Split Enz. Crowded House and Little River Band, Julian joined System Sound in 1993 as Head Sound Engineer for productions including Les Misérables, Sunset Boulevard and West Side Story.

He has collaborated on Sound Design for Man of La Mancha, Cabaret, Hair. Chicago, and was Associate Sound Designer for Legally Blonde, Once, Rock

of Ages, The Addams Family and Jersey Boys, and designed Georgy Girl.

Julian has also designed many orchestral events for System Sound, including the Mahler Symphony of a Thousand and the annual Symphony Under The Stars concerts for The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.



JOHN SCANDRETT - SOUND DESIGN

John founded System Sound in 1979, System Sound has engineered original productions throughout Australasia and recent tours of Les Misérables, the world tour of Phantom of The Opera, Mamma Mia! The Producers, We Will Rock You, Guys and Dolls, Billy Elliot, Rock of Ages, Love Never Dies, Jersey Boys, Wicked, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, War Horse, Legally Blonde, King Kong, Once, and currently Matilda The Musical, Kinky Boots and The Book of Mormon.



JACK EARLE ASSISTANT MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Jack Earle is a 22-year-old pianist (LTCL, AdipA), trumpet player, vocalist, conductor and composer. Shows include King Kong, Strictly Ballroom (Global Creatures), The Lion King (Disney Theatrical), West Side Story (The Production Company), Matilda (Royal Shakespeare Company), We Will Rock You (Gordon Frost), and The Book Of Mormon (Watchtower Productions).

His composition credits include imples for television and radio. He directs "The Jack Earle Big Band" and "The Jack Earle Trio", with whom he has independently released albums of his original music (available on Bandcamp, iTunes, Apple Music and Spotify), and regularly gigs in some of Melbourne's most popular live music venues.

www.iackearle.com

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