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# JERRY'S GIRLS

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**EY** and THE PRODUCTION COMPANY PRESENT  
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# JERRY'S GIRLS

A SONG AND DANCE CELEBRATION

Music and Lyrics by Jerry Herman

Concepts by Larry Alford, Wayne Cilento and Jerry Herman

Jerry's Girls is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French Inc.

## THE COMPANY

**RHONDA BURCHMORE NANCYE HAYES SILVIE PALADINO**  
**CHRISTIE WHELAN BROWNE VIRGINIA GAY CLAIRE LYON KIRBY BURGESS**  
**CHELSEA GIBB DEBORA KRIZAK JOSIE LANE NATALIE O'DONNELL**  
and **BRENT HILL**

Director **Dean Bryant**

Choreographer **Andrew Hallsworth**

Musical Director **Mathew Frank**

Set Designer **Dale Ferguson**

Costume Designer **Owen Phillips**

Lighting Designer **Matt Scott**

Sound Design **System Sound**

Sound Design Associates **Peter Grubb, David Tonion**

Assistant Director **Natalie Gilhome**

Repetiteur **Gillian Cosgriff**

Technical Director **David Miller**

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Stage Manager **Meg Deyell**

Company Manager **Kate Macdonald**

Wardrobe Supervisor **Kim Bishop**

Assistant Stage Manager **Chay Moran**

Hair and Makeup Supervisor **Gay Gallacher**

Hair and Makeup **Silvana Mitkovski, Kerrie Stanley**

Set Construction **Malthouse**

Sound Equipment supplied by **System Sound Pty Ltd**

Sound Mix Engineer **Christo Davis**

Stage Sound Technicians **Lisa Cioffi, Jess Frost**

Radio Mic Engineer **Cameron Herbert**

Additional Orchestrations **James Simpson**

Production Management Secondment **Rebecca Zarb VCA**

Stage Management Secondment **Erin Martin, WAAPA**

System Sound Trainee **Oliver Richards-Grubb**

System Sound Secondment **Rose Farbrother**

**ORCHESTRA VICTORIA**

ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE, PLAYHOUSE THEATRE • 21 NOVEMBER TO 6 DECEMBER 2015



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# WELCOME TO JERRY'S GIRLS...

A CELEBRATION OF THE MUSIC AND LYRICS OF ONE OF MY FAVOURITE  
BROADWAY COMPOSERS, JERRY HERMAN.

Jerry Herman has put many of the larger-than-life women of his shows centre stage with his music and lyrics. The Production Company has re-introduced you to many of them - Amanda Muggleton as Dolly in *Hello, Dolly!*, Rhonda Burchmore as Auntie Mame in *Mame*, Caroline O'Connor as Mabel in *Mack and Mabel* and Todd McKenney as female impersonator Zaza in *La Cage aux Folles*.

I am delighted that we have eleven of Australia's finest female talents to celebrate and perform Jerry's wonderful songs. Rhonda, Nancye, Silvie, Christie, Virginia, Claire, Chelsea, Josie, Natalie - and Brent, our one brave male cast member - are already dearly loved members of The Production Company family. And Kirby and Debora are performing with us for the first time.

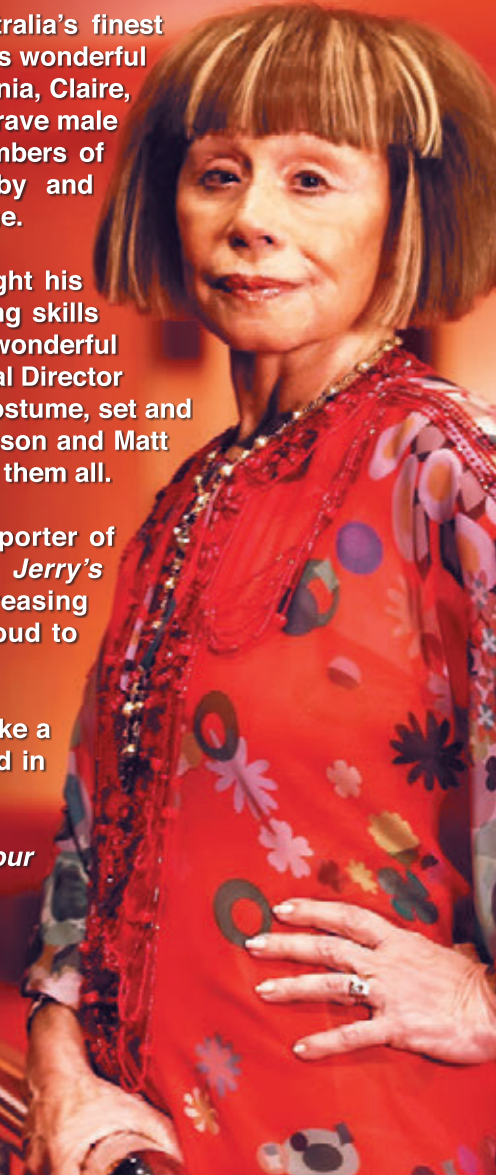
Our talented director Dean Bryant has brought his unique, artistic ideas and considerable writing skills to the show with the creative support of his wonderful choreographer Andrew Hallsworth and Musical Director Mathew Frank. This brilliant team includes costume, set and lighting designers, Owen Phillips, Dale Ferguson and Matt Scott and the team at System Sound. We love them all.

Thank you, once again, to EY, a major supporter of The Production Company for sponsoring *Jerry's Girls*. And my gratitude also to the ever increasing number of sponsors and donors we are proud to list in this program.

We always welcome new friends so please take a moment to read the Patron invitation inserted in this program.

Sit back and let this wonderful show *tap your troubles away!*

Jeanne Pratt AC  
Chairman  
The Production Company



Chairman **Jeanne Pratt AC**

Artistic Director **Ken Mackenzie-Forbes AM**

Executive Director **Rachel D Taylor**

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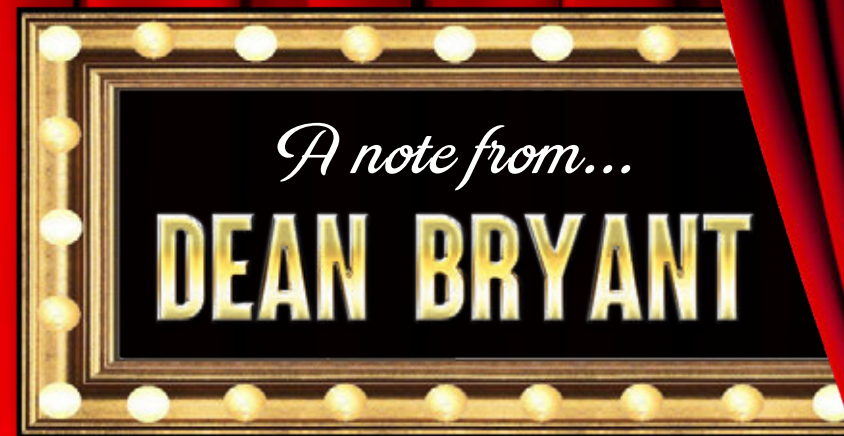
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**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

- The management reserves the right to add, withdraw or substitute artists and to vary the program as necessary.
- The Trust reserves the right of refusing admission.
- Recording devices, cameras and mobile telephones must not be operated during the performance.
- In the interests of public health, Arts Centre Melbourne is a smoke-free area.



As a kid I loved musicals and divas. So you can imagine what the last few weeks of rehearsals have been like, sitting back and watching Rhonda tapping, Nancye giving a soft-shoe and Silvie belting. Truly, it feels like I've gone to a heavily-sequined heaven.

*Jerry's Girls* was conceived as a celebration of Jerry Herman's leading ladies and his songbook. In this year celebrating The Production Company's fiftieth musical, we decided to take this concept and explode it by celebrating eleven of our most talented female performers and the Company itself. I've been blessed to helm five musicals now for The Production Company and each one of them has been a joy to direct. This Company is so wonderfully supportive of its artists and crew.

Jerry Herman's music is catchy, effervescent and endlessly melodic. One of his lesser known songs *Showtune* sums it up beautifully - "There's just no tune as exciting as a showtune" and this performance will be proof of the wealth of excitement Jerry has bequeathed us all.

The first day of rehearsal was actually a bit overwhelming, hearing them harmonise on the opening number and looking around the room at such a diverse and gifted cast. And now we have created their solos, not from within a story or script but rather I have built them around their own unique talents.

*Jerry's Girls* generously enables us to celebrate everything that is marvelous, silly and magical about musical theatre. I'm so grateful to the Company, my fellow Creatives, and of course, our leading ladies and Brent Hill for embracing this extraordinary canon of musical theatre and bringing it so vividly to life.

**Director**





# ACT 1

It Takes A Woman / Just Leave Everything To Me  
- Hello, Dolly!

It Only Takes a Moment - Hello, Dolly!

Wherever He Ain't - Mack and Mabel

We Need a Little Christmas - Mame

Tap Your Troubles Away - Mack and Mabel

I Won't Send Roses - Mack and Mabel

Two-a-Day - Parade

Bosom Buddies - Mame

So Long Dearie - Hello, Dolly!

Take It All Off - Jerry's Girls

Shalom/Milk and Honey - Milk and Honey

Before the Parade Passes By - Hello, Dolly!

Ribbons Down My Back - Hello, Dolly!

Have a Nice Day - Originally from La Cage aux Folles

If He Walked Into My Life - Mame

Hello, Dolly! - Hello, Dolly!

# ACT 2

Put On Your Sunday Clothes - Hello, Dolly!

Showtune - Parade

I Was Beautiful - Dear World

Mame - Mame

Just Go to the Movies - A Day in Hollywood

Look What Happened to Mabel - Mack and Mabel

Nelson - A Day in Hollywood

Kiss Her Now - Dear World

I Don't Want To Know - Dear World

Time Heals Everything - Mack and Mabel

Gooch's Song - Mame

La Cage Aux Folles - La Cage aux Folles

Song On The Sand - La Cage aux Folles

I Am What I Am - La Cage aux Folles

The Best Of Times - La Cage aux Folles

Tap Your Troubles Away - Mack and Mabel







## RHONDA BURCHMORE

Highlights of Rhonda Burchmore's thirty-year career are performing on London's West End in *Sugar Babies* featuring Mickey Rooney and Ann Miller, *Stop The World I Want To Get Off* with Anthony Newly and starring opposite David Atkins in the original production of *Hot Shoe Shuffle*.

Other musicals include lead roles in *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Easter Parade*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Song & Dance*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Respect-A Musical Journey of Women*, *Little Orphan Trashley*, *Eurobeat*, *Calendar Girls*, *Into The Woods*, *Urinetown*, *Tom Foolery*, *The Drowsy Chaperone* co-starring Geoffrey Rush and as Tanya in the original Australian production of *Mamma Mia!*

For The Production Company Rhonda starred in *Mame* in 1999 and 2008, *The Boy Friend* in 2009 and *La Cage Aux Folles* in 2014. Rhonda is excited to be working this year with Australia's Leading Ladies in *Jerry's Girls*.

Rhonda has recorded five albums, including *Cry Me A River - The World of Julie London* and in 2011 released her autobiography, *Legs 11*.

In 2002 and 2012 Rhonda won Female Vocal Performer of The Year at the MO Awards and ACE Awards.

In 2014 Rhonda was awarded the OAM for her service to the performing arts and community and also won the Cabaret Icon Award at the International Adelaide Cabaret Festival.



## NANCYE HAYES

Nancye Hayes AM is one of Australia's favourite theatrical actresses. She is an accomplished actor, dancer, singer, choreographer and director. She began her career with J.C. Williamson Theatres Ltd as a chorus member in *My Fair Lady*. She went on to star in many major musical productions including *Sweet Charity*, *Chicago*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Guys & Dolls* and *42nd Street*.

For The Production Company, Nancye has starred in *Grey Gardens*, *Follies*, *Oklahoma!*, *The Music Man* and *Funny Girl* and directed productions of *The Boy from Oz*, *Sweet Charity* and *Gypsy*.

Most recently she has performed in *Sondheim on Sondheim* (Manilla Street Productions), Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance* (Harvest Rain), Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (State Theatre Company SA) and *Beyond Desire* (Neil Rutherford Productions/Hayes Theatre Co), Miss Hannigan in the Australian Tour of *Annie* (The Gordon Frost Organisation), *Murderers* and *Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks* (Ensemble), *A Little Night Music* and *My Fair Lady* (Opera Australia).

Nancye Hayes has made a significant contribution as a theatre director. Her credits include *Crazy for You* and *The World Goes Round* (WAAPA), *Australia's Leading Ladies Concert* (Brisbane Festival), *The Wizard of Oz* (GFO/SEL/Macks Entertainment) and *Noel & Gertie* (Christine Dunstan Productions).

Nancye has received Lifetime Achievement Awards from The Green Room, The Sydney Theatre and The Helpmanns.





## SILVIE PALADINO

Silvie is one of Australia's most versatile and talented entertainers.

Her first theatrical role was Eponine in the Australasian tour of *Les Misérables*. She was then invited to perform the same role in the London production on the West End. In 1997, Silvie returned to London where she performed the role of Fantine in *Les Misérables* for a successful two-year season.

Silvie's other Australasian credits include her one-woman show *Silvie Paladino Sings Streisand* (Green Room Award nomination), the role of Jeannie in *Hair*, Grizabella in the Australian and Asian tour of *Cats*, Ellen in Cameron Mackintosh's Australian premiere of *Miss Saigon*, Donna in *Mamma Mia!*, Rita in the world premiere of *Sideshow Alley* and Clara in *Passion*. For The Production Company Silvie starred as Lady Thiang in *The King And I* and Florence in *Chess* (Green Room and Helpmann Award nominations).

Silvie has toured nationally with her own show, featured at major sporting events and performed for celebrated theatre composers Stephen Sondheim and Stephen Schwartz. She is well known to Australian audiences through her regular appearances on *Carols by Candlelight*. Most recently Silvie performed at the O2 Arena London, as part of the 150th Anniversary celebrations of the Salvation Army.

Her recordings include *Silvie Paladino Sings Streisand*, *Silvie Paladino -Christmas List*, *On My Own* and *When You Believe*.



## CHRISTIE WHELAN BROWNE

*Jerry's Girls* marks Christie Whelan Browne's eighth show with The Production Company, having appeared in *Nice Work If You Can Get It* as Eileen Evergreen earlier this year, *Sugar*, *The Boy Friend*, *The Producers*, *Anything Goes*, and *Singin' in the Rain*.

Christie's career began in *Grease: The Arena Spectacular*, playing the role of Patti Simcox, and she went on to play the role again in London.

In 2008 she won the Sydney Critics Award for Best Newcomer for her role as April in Gale Edward's *Company*.

She has been seen at the MTC in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, (for which she was nominated for a Helpmann award for Best Actress in a Musical) and also as Gwendolyn in *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

Other musicals include Kira in *Xanadu*, Philia in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, Elizabeth Hurley in *Shane Warne: The Musical* and Janet Weiss in *The Rocky Horror Show*.

In 2009, Christie first performed her one-woman show *Britney Spears: The Cabaret* at the Adelaide Cabaret Festival, which has toured nationally and received rave reviews and multiple award nominations.

Christie's television credits include roles in *Wonderland*, *Offspring*, *Winners and Losers*, *House Husbands*, *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *INXS: Never Tear Us Apart*, *Paper Giants*, *Open Slather* and *Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door* in which she played Olivia Newton John.

In 2016, she will be seen in a new film by Tim Ferguson called *Spin Out* and ABC's *The Divorce*.

Her newest one woman show *SHOW PEOPLE*, from the creators of *Britney Spears: The Cabaret* (Bryant/Frank), debuted at this year's Adelaide Cabaret Festival and will tour next year.



## VIRGINIA GAY

Virginia graduated from WAAPA in 2005. She was immediately cast in the role of Gabrielle Jaeger in the Seven Network Production *All Saints*, which she played until the series came ended in 2009.

For The Production Company Virginia performed the roles of Hold Me Touch Me, Shirley, Jason Green and the Foreman of the Jury in *The Producers*.

Between television commitments, her theatre productions include *The Beast* for the MTC and the original production of *Gaybies* for Midsumma Festival Inc. Early in 2015 she appeared in *Cautionary Tales for Children* for Arena Theatre Company. She is an original cast member of *Winners and Losers*, which is now in its fifth series.

Cabaret and musical productions have included her one-woman shows *Dirty Pretty Songs*, which she also took to the Edinburgh Comedy Festival in 2012 and *Sing For Your Suffer* and, most recently, *High Society* for The Hayes Theatre Company.



## KIRBY BURGESS

Kirby Burgess is the true definition of a triple threat. A recipient of the prestigious ASCAP Broadway Musical Theatre Scholarship (New York) and a graduate of the Urban Dance Centre full time Performing Arts course, Kirby has trained and performed with some of the industries best talent. After graduating, Kirby was invited to sing at the Rising Stars of Broadway concert in New York City, where she was the youngest and only international performer, receiving a standing ovation.



Theatre credits include *Grease* (Rizzo), *LOVEBITES*, *Sweet Charity*, *An Officer and A Gentleman The Musical* – world premiere (understudy and performed the lead role of Paula), *Hairspray The Musical* – Australian tour (dance captain & understudy of the lead role of Tracy Turnblad), *High School Musical – Live on Stage* Australian tour (understudy of supporting lead role of Sharpay), and *Jekyll and Hyde* – Taiwan tour. Kirby is co-founder and director of Carousel Entertainment and a proud graduate of the Talent Development Project.

Kirby's onscreen credits include Jenny in *Wonderland* (Network 10) and a featured dancer in Baz Luhrmann's *The Great Gatsby*.

Most recently, Kirby performed the role of Baby Houseman in *Dirty Dancing: The Classic Story on Stage* to critical acclaim.

*Jerry's Girls* is Kirby's first show for The Production Company.

## CLAIRE LYON

In 2015, Claire has played the role of Hope Harcourt (Helpmann Award nomination) in *Anything Goes*. She was also invited to be Josh Groban's guest soprano for his promotional tour for his concert *Stages* and also sang the Australian National Anthem at the State of Origin match at the MCG.

For The Production Company Claire starred as Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* in 2013.

In 2008 Claire was a part of the Australian tour of *My Fair Lady*, afterwards obtaining a full time contract with Opera Australia from 2009 to 2011.

From 2012 - 2015, Claire starred as Christine in the world tour of *The Phantom of the Opera*. She is also one of few actresses to have been involved in both *Phantom* and its sequel *Love Never Dies*,

in which she understudied and performed the same role in the Australian tour from 2011 to 2012.

In 2013, Claire released her debut solo album *On Stage*, featuring some of her favourite Broadway hits. Her Australian cabaret debut in *Songs of Stage and Screen* as part of The Ballarat Cabaret Festival was in 2014.

For more information, visit [www.clairelyon.com](http://www.clairelyon.com).



## CHELSEA GIBB

Chelsea became one of Australia's leading ladies straight after graduating from WAAPA, winning the role of Roxie Hart in *Chicago* at the age of twenty-one - a role she went on to perform for another four years.

For The Production Company she has appeared as Reno Sweeney in *Anything Goes* and as Anna in *The King and I*.

Chelsea's other musical theatre credits include Queenie in *The Wild Party*, Ruby Red in *Get Happy*, Pink The New Black, Whitney in *Dreamsong* and most recently Margaret in *Carrie*.

Her television credits include *All Saints*, *GMA*, *IMT*, *Mornings*, *Just Fresh*, *The Lost World*, *Sale of the Century* and as a regular guest on *Beauty and the Beast*. Chelsea made her film debut in Warner Brothers' *George of the Jungle 2* and as Vicky Tremelli in the Australian film *Josh Jarman*. She is also a prolific performer in both the cabaret and corporate world, both here in Australia and overseas.

Chelsea is thrilled to be returning to The Production Company with this stunning cast and thanks her husband Warwick and her Mum and Dad for helping with her three cheeky kids.







## DEBORA KRIZAK

Debora is fast becoming one of Australia's most versatile and critically recognized performers. Originally from Adelaide, where she completed a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Performing Arts, Debora's debut into musical theatre was in Mel Brooks' musical *The Producers*, understudying the role of Swedish secretary, Ulla. Further professional credits include *Titanic – a new musical*, *Respect the Musical*, Guy Noble's

*Karaoke The Musical*, *Calendar Girls* for GFO, Stalker Theatre's worldwide debut of *Shanghai Lady Killer* and Squabbalagic's *Sondheim On Sondheim* in 2014, which earned her a Glug Award nomination for best supporting actress.

Debora's most recent credits include the role of Sheila in *A Chorus Line*, where she was nominated for numerous awards including a Helpmann for Best Supporting Actress, Sydney Theatre Critics Award and Glug Award as well as winning Theatre People's most popular actress in a musical.

In 2015 Debora has appeared in *Sweet Charity*, playing the dual roles Nickie and Ursula, earning her Helpmann and Glug Award nominations and the Sydney Theatre Critics Award for Best Supporting Actress in a musical.

Most recently Debora played the role of Erma in *Anything Goes*.

*Jerry's Girls* marks Deb's first appearance with The Production Company.

## JOSIE LANE

Josie made her debut in 2007 with the Sydney Theatre Company, playing Marcy Park in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Following this Josie has appeared in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert - the musical* as a Diva, *Avenue Q* as Mrs T/Bad Idea Bear, *Fame* as Mabel Washington, *Nick and Nora* as Maria Valdez and *Lucky Stiff* as Dominique Du Marco, *Into The Woods* (Victorian Opera) as Little Red Riding Hood, *Miracle City* (Luckiest Productions – Hayes Theatre Company) as Charlene and most recently played the role of Rose Alvarez in *Bye Bye Birdie* (Squabbalagic – Mystery Musical).

For The Production Company Josie has appeared as Kate in *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Her cabaret show *Josie in the Bathhouse*, co-written and directed by Dean Bryant, debuted at the 2011 Adelaide Cabaret Festival and then played Melbourne's 2012 Famous Spiegeltent season. She has just also completed her second show, *Asian Provocateur* to great acclaim. Josie has also toured extensively with artist David Campbell as his backing vocalist.



## NATALIE O'DONNELL

Since graduating from WAAPA, Natalie has appeared in many musical and theatre productions both here and overseas.

Highlights include Sophie in *Mamma Mia!*, Rose in *Little Star Services*, *The Sunshine Club* (STC), *Les Miserables* (Cameron Mackintosh), Olive in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (MTC - Green Room Award nomination), *One Night the Moon* (Malthouse), Viola in *Twelfth Night* (Essential Theatre), Diana in *Next to Normal* (Hayes Theatre/Doorstep Arts), Sophie in *Cautionary Tales for Children* (Arena Theatre Company) and Lauren in *Murderous Instincts* (Savoy Theatre, West End).

For The Production Company Natalie has performed the roles of Polly in *Crazy for You* and Kim MacAfee in *Bye Bye Birdie*.

Her television credits include: *Mako: Island of Secrets*, *Mr & Mrs Murder*, *Rush*, *Lowdown Series 2*, *Satisfaction*, *City Homicide*, *Water Rats*, *All Saints* and the made for television movie of *South Pacific*, starring Glenn Close. She has also appeared alongside Nia Vardalos and Richard Dreyfuss in the romantic comedy *My Life in Ruins* and in the independent Australian film *Taj*.



## BRENT HILL

Brent is a WAAPA Acting graduate and holds a Bachelor of Arts (Performing Arts) from Curtin University. Recently he returned from Seoul, Korea where he was part of the international touring cast of *Once*, having also been in the original Australian cast earlier this year for MTC/GFO (Helpmann Award nomination). He came to Melbourne in 2011 to work on *Rock of Ages* (New Theatricals) directly after having toured in *Twelfth Night* with Bell Shakespeare.

For The Production Company Brent played Leopold Bloom in *The Producers*, and again with the Bryant / Hallsworth dream team, returned in *The Pirates of Penzance* after working in France with his mentor Philippe Gaulier.

Brent is a proud member of Actor's Equity, a national Theatresports champion, and a Green Room Award recipient and is honoured to be celebrating *Jerry's Girls* with you.





# ORCHESTRA VICTORIA

Musical Director **MATHEW FRANK**

Bass **MATTHEW THORNE**

Reed 1 **TONY HICKS**

Reed 2 **MARTIN CORCORAN**

Trumpet 1 **GREG SPENCE**

Trumpet 2 **ARI FARRAR**

Trombone 1 **BOB COLLINS**

Trombone 2 **ERIC KLAY**

Drums **DEAN COOPER**

Percussion **CONRAD NILSSON**

Guitar/Banjo **JOHN PAINE**

Harp **ALANNAH GUTHRIE-JONES**

Keyboards **GILLIAN COSGRIFF**  
**STEPHANIE LEWENDON-LOWE**

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General Manager **JULIE AMOS**

Operations Manager **MARGARET LLOYD**  
Administration Assistant **ELISE LERPINIERE**  
Operations Assistant **PAUL SHANNAN**  
Orchestra Assistant **HARRIETTE BLANDEN**  
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ORCHESTRA  
VICTORIA



The  
Australian  
Ballet



## Thank You

Frank Van Straten OAM for the program note • Colin Page and Jeff Busby for photography  
Additional preparation of music parts Stephanie Lewendon-Lowe

# SHEER, UNRELENTING HAPPINESS!

## FRANK VAN STRATEN SAYS 'HELLO' TO JERRY'S GIRLS

When Jerry Herman was about fourteen years old, his parents took him to see Ethel Merman in Irving Berlin's *Annie Get Your Gun*. 'It absolutely did it for me,' he recalled in his autobiography. 'I said to myself, "Okay, kid, this is it. This is the most exciting thing in the whole world. It doesn't get any better than this".'

Just a few years later, Jerry was being hailed as being Berlin's successor, a master of musical comedy and the creator of a catalogue of showtunes sparkling with many of Broadway's biggest hits.

Jerry was only 25 when he had his first hit show, a snappy revue called *Nightcap*. It ran for two years in a small Greenwich Village nightclub and paved the way for another revue, *Parade*, in 1960. In *Parade*, Jerry recycled a song he'd written years before. It was called 'Showtune':



New York, 1981: The original *Jerry's Girls*:  
Alix [Alexandra] Korey, Leila Martin, Pauletta Pearson,  
Evalyn Baron.

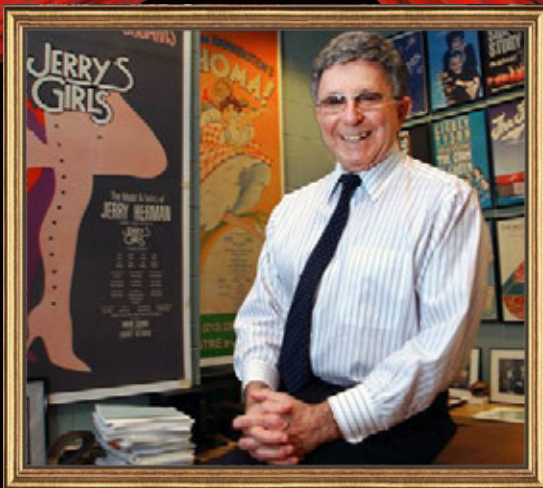
'There's just no tune  
As exciting as a showtune...  
When it's played, you can just tell  
There's footlights everywhere.  
When it's played, you can just smell  
The greasepaint in the air...'

'I was about sixteen when I wrote that song,' says Jerry, 'and it pretty much explains what I'm all about. It's obvious that I was madly in love with musical comedy; I still am. It's one of the few purely American art forms we have – and we still do it better than anybody.'

Well, certainly Jerry still does it better than anybody. His work is unashamedly in the grand Irving Berlin tradition of big stars, great ballads, and show-stopping production numbers and, like Berlin, he writes all the music and all the lyrics.

Jerry is the only composer-lyricist to have three shows run over 1500 performances on Broadway: *Hello, Dolly!*, *Mame* and *La Cage aux Folles*. He's won countless awards and accolades, including two Tonys, but he's had his disappointments, too. *Mack and Mabel* and *Dear World*





Producer Zev Bufman, who brought *Jerry's Girls* to Broadway.



US National Tour, 1984: Jerry Herman with Leslie Uggams, Carol Channing and Andrea McArdle. Photo by Roger Ressimayer.



Broadway, 1985: Leslie Uggams, Chita Rivera, Dorothy Loudon. Photo by Martha Swope.

may now have cult followings, but their first productions were lacklustre. *The Grand Tour* is all but forgotten. Nevertheless, no Herman show is without its share of signature showtunes, and every one of them is worth hearing.

That's what young Broadway producer Larry Alford thought when he suggested to Jerry that they collaborate on a retrospective of his career. 'I had always wanted to write some kind of musical tribute saluting all the women who had ever been in my shows,' says Jerry, 'so we got the idea of doing a revue in which all the performers were women – even the conductor.'

With Alford directing, *Jerry's Girls* opened in August 1981 at Ted Hook's Onstage, a showbiz supper club in the heart of the Times Square theatre district. In a rave review in *The New York Times*, John S. Wilson welcomed 'a brilliantly lively and scintillating evening of cabaret'. Jerry recalls: 'It became such a hot ticket that it ran and ran – just like that first little show of mine, *Nightcap*.'

In 1983, following the triumph of *La Cage aux Folles*, Broadway producer Zev Bufman suggested remounting *Jerry's Girls* on a larger scale. Now *La Cage's* lovely Zaza could share the spotlight with Jerry's other larger-than-life ladies: Dolly, Mame, Mabel Normand and *Dear World's* Countess Aurelia.

Carol Channing, Leslie Uggams and Andrea McArdle were the stars of the revamped show when it premiered on 28 February 1984 at the Royal Poinciana Playhouse in Palm Beach, Florida. After a triumphant national tour, the new *Jerry's Girls* reached Broadway, where it opened on 18 December 1985 at the St James – the theatre that had hosted *Hello, Dolly!* for so long. Andrea McArdle was still in the show, but now her co-stars were Dorothy Loudon and Chita Rivera. 'It should run at least forever,' said Clive Barnes in *The New York Post*. In fact it

ran for 141 performances, and has been consistently revived around the US ever since.

Then, according to Jerry, 'It became an absolute phenomenon in Australia. The show went out in 1987 in a production directed by Larry Alford. It had barely closed before there was a demand to bring it back, so it went right back and became Australia's biggest hit.' Maybe not exactly, but Australians certainly fell in love with *Jerry's Girls*.

The show was produced by the Gordon/Frost Organisation. Comparative newcomers, John Frost and Ashley Gordon were presenting innovative smaller-scale shows at their home base, the Footbridge Theatre in Sydney, where they'd struck gold with *Nonsense* and the Fats Waller tribute *Ain't Misbehavin'*. Frost and Gordon presented *Jerry's Girls* in partnership with J.C. Williamson Productions, a company continuing the great traditions of 'The Firm' that had dominated Australian theatre for a century.

For *Jerry's Girls* they recruited some of the best female talent in the country: Debra Byrne, Judi Connelli, Jeanne Little – in her first ever stage show – Marcia Hines and Lola Nixon. Roger Kirk designed the sets and costumes, Ross Coleman choreographed, Sue Natrass lit the show, Frank Esler-Smith conducted, and Larry Alford directed, as he had done in New York. 'He was wonderful,' recalls Frost. 'And he just lived and breathed Jerry Herman's music.'

Reviewing the premiere at the Footbridge on 30 July 1987, *The Australian* predicted: '*Jerry's Girls* will dazzle the eye and twig the funny bone.' A smash success, the Sydney season was reported to have made \$1.5 million.

The show transferred to the Comedy in Melbourne in October, with Angela Ayers replacing Debra Byrne, who had been cast as Fantine in *Les Misérables*. The *Herald's* Jason Daniel



noted that, 'The rather grand Broadway spectacular has been scaled down and Australianised so that it becomes a broader and more irreverent show which, for all its expensive costuming, revels in a certain joyful cabaret tackiness.' Joan Rivers, in town for a season at the Hilton, took in a matinee and told the press the show was, 'wonderful, fantastic, superb and super-exciting'.

The show then had a return Sydney season before the company visited Adelaide and Brisbane, where its season on the River Stage was a highlight of the entertainment component of Expo 88.

The show was mothballed until April 1991, when it re-emerged in fine form at the Footbridge. David Penfold, who had been assistant director in 1987, returned to direct the original cast. In August the show played at the Canberra Theatre. Judi Connelli, Marcia Hines, Jeanne Little and Lola Nixon were back, with Jackie Love taking over from a very pregnant Angela Ayers. There was another run in Brisbane in April 1992.

Since then there have been occasional non-professional productions but, until now, no full-scale revival. Still, we've fared better than Britain. Londoners did not meet *Jerry's Girls* until it enjoyed a three-week run at the tiny Jermyn Street Theatre in May this year. Reviewer Stephen Collins called it 'A genuinely terrific night in the musical theatre... There is nothing to touch it currently playing in London in terms of value for money and sheer, unrelenting happiness.'

And now – at last – *Jerry's Girls* is back in town, bigger and brighter and bubblier than ever.

'Sheer, unrelenting happiness', indeed. It doesn't get any better than this!



Melbourne 1987: Lola Nixon, Marcia Hines, Judi Connelli, Angela Ayers, Jeanne Little.  
Photo by David Young



Melbourne, 2015: Silvie Paladino, Rhonda Burchmore, Christie Whelan Browne and Kirby Burgess at the launch of The Production Company's 2015 Season.  
Photo by Ros O'Gorman.

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## DEAN BYRANT

Director



Dean directed the triumphant Hayes Theatre debut production *Sweet Charity* (Helpmann Award), *Anything Goes* for Opera Australia / GFO, for Melbourne Theatre Company *Next to Normal* and *I'll Eat You Last* starring Miriam Margolyes, *Once We Lived Here* (Kings Head Theatre, London and 45DS), *DreamSong* (Theatreworks), *Straight* (Red Stitch) and *Hansel and Gretel* (OzOpera)

For The Production Company, Dean has directed *La Cage Aux Folles* and *The Pirates of Penzance* and co-directed *The Producers* and *Anything Goes*.

Other credits include *The Last Five Years*, *Prodigal* (45DS), *Once We Lived Here* (45DS) and *Virgins: A Musical Threesome* (CUB Malthouse, NYMF). He created the verbatim theatre piece *Gaybies*, a hit of the Midsumma Festival and directed the Sydney premiere for Darlinghurst Theatre Company. Upcoming productions include *Little Shop of Horrors* (national tour) and MTC's *Skylight*.

With composer Mathew Frank, he has written the musicals *Prodigal* (off-Broadway season, York Theatre, Green Room – Best Original Score), *Once We Lived Here* (Green Room – Best New Musical, NYC and London seasons), *Virgins: A Musical Threesome* and *The Silver Donkey* as well as the songs for the Amy Winehouse musical episode of Channel 10's *Mr and Mrs Murder*.

His cabaret credits as writer/director include *Show People*, *Britney Spears: The Cabaret*, Rhonda Burchmore's *Vinyl Viagra*, *Liza (on an E)* (West End season), *In Vogue: Songs By Madonna* (Edinburgh Fringe), *Sweet Dreams: Songs by Annie Lennox* (Adelaide Fringe Award - Best Cabaret), *I'm Every Woman* (Sydney Theatre Award – Best Cabaret), *Newley Discovered*, *Experiment: Cole Porter* and *Josie in the Bathhouse*.

He is Worldwide Associate Director of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert – The Musical* and is a graduate of WAPPA.

[www.bryantandfrank.com](http://www.bryantandfrank.com)



## ANDREW HALLSWORTH

Choreographer

Andrew won the 2015 Helpmann Award for Best Choreography in a Musical for *Anything Goes* following his 2014 Helpmann Award win for *Sweet Charity*.

For The Production Company, he has co-directed and choreographed *The Producers* and *Anything Goes* and choreographed *La Cage Aux Folles*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Gypsy*, *The Boy from Oz*, *Carousel*, *Mame* and *The Boy Friend*. He co-choreographed *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*.

Theatre credits include *Ladies in Black*, *Rupert* (Daniel Sparrow Productions), *Dream Song*, *Shane Warne the Musical* (concert), *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and the world premiere musical of the *An Officer and A Gentleman*.

MTC credits include *Rupert*, which toured to the Kennedy Center in Washington, *Private Lives*, *Hamlet*, *Next to Normal* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*.

Andrew co-choreographed the international production of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* with Ross Coleman. He restaged *Priscilla* for Broadway followed by Italian and Brazilian seasons, US and UK Tours, Swedish, Korean and Spanish productions and recently a cruise ship version for NCL.

Further theatre choreographic credits include *Eurobeat – Almost Eurovision*, which was revived for the Edinburgh Festival, West End and UK tour. *Menopause – the Musical*, *Leader of the Pack – The Ellie Greenwich Musical* (Green Room Award), *Sideshow Alley*, *The Merry Widow* for Melbourne City Opera, *Wombat Stew* and *Prodigal*.





## MATHEW FRANK

### Musical Director

A graduate of WAAPA, Mathew Frank has worked throughout Australia and internationally as a composer, Musical Director, Conductor, performer and vocal coach.

For The Production Company he was the Musical Director of *La Cage Aux Folles* and *The Pirates of Penance*.

Other shows include *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* with Geoffrey Rush, *Private Lives* (composer/musical director), *Next to Normal* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*, all for the MTC. Mathew was also the Associate Musical Director on the company's productions of *Poor Boy*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (and STC season) and *Urinetown* (and STC season) and

the Assistant Musical Director on *The Sapphires*.

He was Musical Director/Arranger of the smash hit *Britney Spears: The Cabaret* which has played Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne over the last five years and was recently musical director and arranger on Rhonda Burchmore's *Vinyl Viagra* and Christie Whelan Browne's *Show People* for the Adelaide Cabaret Festival.

With writing partner Dean Bryant, he composed the musical *Prodigal*, first produced at Chapel Off Chapel in 2000 (Green Room Award for Best Original Score) and revived at fortyfivedownstairs. *Prodigal* became the first Australian musical produced in New York City, with its Off-Broadway debut at the York Theatre Company in 2002. Other shows with Bryant include *Once We Lived Here* (Green Room Award for Best New Musical) fortyfivesdownstairs, *Virgins: A Musical Threesome* (six Green Room nominations) Malthouse and presented at the New York Musical Theatre Festival, and an adaptation of Sonya Hartnett's *The Silver Donkey*.

## DALE FERGUSON

### Set Design

Dale has worked extensively with major theatre and opera companies around the world.

For The Production Company he has designed sets for *La Cage aux Folles*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and sets for the inaugural season in 1998.

Music Theatre credits include *Anything Goes* for Opera Australia/GFO, *An Officer and a Gentleman* for GFO, *The Rocky Horror Show* for Dainty, *Summer Rain* for STC and *The Drowsy Chaperone* and *The 25th Annual Putman County Spelling Bee* for MTC.

His recent opera credits include *The Riders* for VO/Malthouse, *Otello* for Cape Town Opera, Western Australia Opera and Opera Queensland, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Houston Grand Opera, Canadian Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago; *Ariadne Auf Naxos* for the Welsh National Opera and Boston Lyric Opera; *Marriage of Figaro* for Opera Australia and Welsh National Opera.

Theatre credits include; *Radiance*, *Brothers Wreck*, *The Power of Yes*, *Measure for Measure* for Belvoir; *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The Convict Opera* for STC; *Timeshare*, *Night on Bald Mountain*, *Dance of Death*, *Exit the King*, for Malthouse; *The Weir*, *The Speechmaker*, *The Crucible*, *Top Girls*, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, *Life Without Me*, *God of Carnage*, *The Sapphires* and *August: Osage County* for MTC.

Dale is the recipient of a Helpmann Award for *August Osage County* and four Green Room Awards for design. He was also nominated for a Drama Desk Award and two Tony Awards in 2009 for set and costume design for the Broadway adaption of *Exit the King*.



## MATTHEW SCOTT

### Lighting Designer

For the past twenty years Matt has lit over two hundred productions for theatre, opera and dance. He returns to the Production Company this year having previously lit *Show Boat*, *Grey Gardens*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *42nd Street*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Oklahoma*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Kiss Me*, *Kate* and *They're Playing Our Song*. Other Companies he has worked with include Opera Australia, Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company, Queensland Theatre Company, Malthouse Theatre, Company B Belvoir, Bell Shakespeare, Black Swan State Theatre Company, Victorian Opera, Expressions Dance Company, Queensland Ballet and New Zealand Opera.

His most recent credits include: *The Red Shoes* (Expressions Dance Company); *The Magic Flute* (OzOpera); *Rigoletto* (Opera Australia); *La Traviata* (New Zealand Opera and State Opera of South Australia); *As You Like It*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Black Swan State Theatre); *The Mountaintop* (Melbourne Theatre Company); *La Boheme* (West Australian Opera) and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (TML Enterprises).

He has been nominated for and received numerous awards most recently receiving a 2005 Helpmann Award for his lighting on *Urinetown* for Melbourne Theatre Company which followed his 2003 Helpmann Award win for *The Blue Room*, also for the Melbourne Theatre Company.

## OWEN PHILLIPS

### Costume Designer



*Jerry's Girls* marks Owen's third design for The Production Company, following *The Pirates of Penzance* and *La Cage Aux Folles*.

Other credits include set and/or costume design for *I'll Eat You Last* starring Miriam Margolyes for MTC, the Helpmann Award-winning production of *Sweet Charity* (Tinderbox Productions/Luckiest Productions), *Sisters Grimm's The Sovereign Wife* and Arthur's *The Myth Project: Twin* (MTC Neon), *Psycho Beach Party* for Little Ones Theatre and the subsequent inclusion in Brisbane Festival 2013, *Master Class* starring Maria Mercedes (Left Bauer Productions), *Gaybies* (Darlinghurst Theatre Co) *The Dust and Us* (Human Animal Exchange) and *Wael Zuater: Unknown* (Creative Nonfiction/Next Wave). He is currently designing the upcoming national tour of *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Egg* for MTC/Terrapin Puppet Theatre.

Owen's work has been nominated for multiple Green Room Awards and a Sydney Theatre Award and in 2015 he was a recipient of the Australia Council's ArtStart grant, allowing him to travel to Europe to attend the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space and to work with designer Michael Levine on Complicite's *The Encounter* for Edinburgh Festival.

Owen is a graduate of NIDA.





# NATALIE GILHOME

## Assistant Director

Natalie has been involved in numerous theatrical productions in Australia, Asia, Europe and New York and most recently assisted Gale Edwards on *West Side Story* for The Production Company. Prior to this, she assisted Helpmann-award winning choreographer Andrew Hallsworth on the new production of *Anything Goes*. She was seen in the 2015 tour of *Sweet Charity* and before this, was the Resident Director/Choreographer on the successful tour of *Grease* for GFO. She was Assistant Director for The Production Company on *La Cage Aux Folles* in 2014 and Assistant Choreographer for their critically acclaimed production of *Gypsy* in 2013.

In 2011, Natalie joined the team of the West End/Broadway hit show *Priscilla Queen of the Desert – The Musical* as Associate Choreographer. Previously, she performed in and was Associate Choreographer for the Australian tours of *The Secret Garden*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *The Sound of Music* (GFO). Natalie was Resident Choreographer for *The Full Monty* in 2003 and Assistant Director for *South Pacific* in 2004. Her performance credits also include *Fiddler On The Roof* starring Topol, *The Wizard of Oz* and *Cats*. For The Production Company Natalie performed in *She Loves Me*, *Mack and Mabel*, *South Pacific*, *Anything Goes*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* and *Annie Get Your Gun* between 1999 and 2004.



# SYSTEM SOUND

Incorporated in 1979, System Sound (John Scandrett MD) has engineered many productions throughout Australasia including *Les Miserables*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Spamalot*, *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* and currently *Matilda The Musical*, *Les Miserables*, and *The Phantom World Tour China*.

## Peter Grubb

Company Director, Peter joined System Sound in 1981. His engineering credits include *We Will Rock You*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Starlight Express*, *Aspects Of Love*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Five Guys Named Mo*,

*Cats*, *Les Miserables*, *Miss Saigon*, *Sunset Boulevard* and *Rent!*

Peter has been Associate Designer for *Les Miserables*, *Spamalot* and *Mamma Mia!* and is currently Associate Sound Designer for *Matilda*. Peter has designed the sound for productions of *Cats*, *The Witches of Eastwick*, *Oliver*, *Avenue Q*, *Miss Saigon*, *Mary Poppins*, *Moonshadow* and *Strictly Ballroom*.

Other sound design credits include *Into The Woods*, *A Little Night Music*, *Sweet Charity*, *Company* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. For the Production Company Peter has designed *She Loves Me*, *Call Me Madam*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Follies*, *Chess*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Guys & Dolls*.

## David Tonion

With System since 1995, David has engineered productions including *West Side Story*, *Sweet Charity*, *The Boy From Oz*, *Popcorn*, *Cats*, *Miss Saigon*, *Oliver*, *We Will Rock You*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Billy Elliot*, *Mary Poppins* and *Anything Goes*, *Kismet*, *Chess* and *West Side Story* for The Production Company.

David was Associate Sound Designer for *Strictly Ballroom*.

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