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20 YEARS



RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S

OKLAHOMA!

STATE THEATRE · ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE



presents

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S
OKLAHOMA!

MUSIC BY RICHARD RODGERS
BOOK AND LYRICS BY OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II

Based on the play *GREEN GROW THE LILACS* by Lynn Riggs

ORIGINAL DANCES BY AGNES DE MILLE

*This season of Oklahoma! is dedicated
to the memory of*

TOM WARWICK

*A most generous sponsor and a great friend
Tom passed away on 8 May 2018*

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on behalf of R&H Theatricals, www.rnh.com



SIMON GLEESON • ANNA O'BYRNE • ROBYN NEVIN
ELISE McCANN • BOBBY FOX • BEN MINGAY
RICHARD PIPER • GRANT PIRO • GREG STONE

Glen Hogstrom • Glaston Toft • Greta Sherriff • Annie Aitken • Amy Berrisford
Embla Bishop • Jared Bryan • Zack Anthony Curran • Alex Given • Courtney Glass
Luke Haberecht • Melanie Hawkins • Georgina Hopson • Stefanie Jones
Andrew Kroenert • Elysha Manik • Joe Meldrum • Imogen Moore
Daniel Roberts • Sue-Ellen Shook • Jordan Turner
Chiara Alleva • Rachel Kipnis • Alannah Parfett • Lucia Schwerdt

Director **Chris Parker**

Musical Director **Guy Simpson**

Choreographer **Amy Campbell**

Set Designer **Dale Ferguson** Costume Designer **Isaac Lummis**

Lighting Designer **Matt Scott** Sound Design **System Sound**

Sound Design Associates **Peter Grubb, Kelvin Gedye and John Scandrett**

Assistant Musical Director **Anthony Barnhill**

Dance Captains **Jared Bryan, Melanie Hawkins**

Technical Director **David Miller**

Production Manager **Mel Robertson**

Company Manager **Michael Norman**

Stage Manager **Meg Deyell**

Head of Wardrobe **Kim Bishop**

Wigs by **Trent Whitmore**

Deputy Stage Manager **Jessica Frost**

Assistant Stage Manager **Jacob Gibson**

Sound Mix Engineer **Anthony Shaw**

Radio Mic Technicians **Carley Gagliardi, Luke Newman**

Costume Makers **Melinda Brodie, Jo Foley, Natalie Gillis, Joe Noonan,**

Tirion Rodwell, Tristan Seebohm, Susan Skinner and Alice Swing

Hats **Phillip Rhodes**

Wigs Assistant **Kate McLeod** Wigs Preparation **Silvana Mitkovski**

Chaperone **Deana Nuelant**

Fight Choreographer **Chris Kemp**

Dialect Coach **Anna McCrossin-Owen**

Set Construction **Malthouse and Showorks**

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

STATE THEATRE, ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE • 26 MAY TO 3 JUNE 2018

THE PRODUCTION COMPANY ORCHESTRA

THE PRODUCTION COMPANY GRATEFULLY APPRECIATES



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BEQUEST

Evan Robert (Bob) Taylor

ALL THE SOUNDS OF THE EARTH ARE LIKE MUSIC!

No wonder. We are celebrating our twentieth year and what good times we have had getting to this milestone. I am so proud of my company and the joy it brings Melbourne. To celebrate the opening of our 20th year, we have chosen one of the greatest musicals ever written. Seventy-five years ago *Oklahoma!* opened on Broadway and took New York by storm. 'Wonderful is the nearest adjective for this excursion' wrote the New York Times, a statement almost universally shared from that day to this. It revolutionised the American musical, won a Pulitzer Prize and set the standards for modern musical theatre.

Looking back, the word *wonderful* also sums up for me the last twenty years at The Production Company. I constantly marvel at the talent of our artists. So many had their first jobs with us and have gone on to fame and, hopefully, fortune! Many of *Oklahoma!*'s ensemble frequently appear in principal roles. How special it is to have these artists appearing in our 20th Birthday season.

We have seldom, if ever assembled a stronger cast. I doubt you will ever hear *Oh What A Beautiful Mornin'* sung better than by our leading man Simon Gleeson. Simon recently returned from London's West End, singing the role of Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables*. If you were fortunate enough to see him in TPC's *Chess* and *Curtains*, you will know how lucky we are to have him back. Simon is joined by Anna O'Byrne, recently seen here in Melbourne as Eliza Doolittle and who last appeared with us as Maria in *West Side Story*. The first lady of Australian drama, Robyn Nevin makes her Production Company debut as Aunt Eller. Elise McCann, who played another girl who just Cain't Say No last year in *Brigadoon*, is Ado Annie and Ben Mingay is Jud. Ben's first show ever was with us in *Hair*. As if that isn't enough, the stellar cast also includes four more gorgeous leading men Bobby Fox, Richard Piper, Grant Piro and Greg Stone.

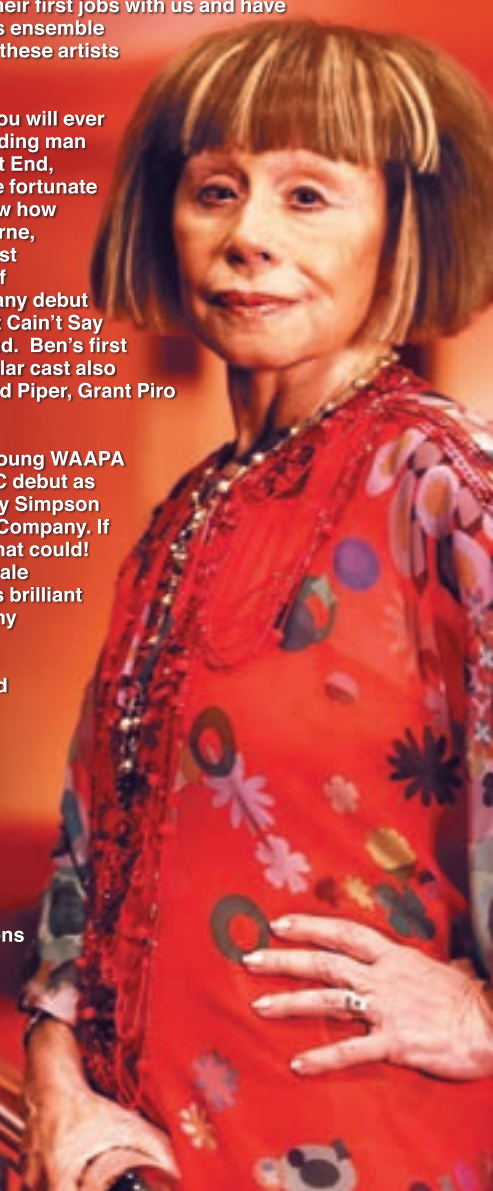
When we last presented *Oklahoma!* in 2005, Chris Parker, a young WAAPA graduate played the character of Will. Chris is making his TPC debut as Director of this production and founding Musical Director Guy Simpson conducts. *Oklahoma!* is Guy's 15th show for The Production Company. If that doesn't make him a member of the family I don't know what could! Old friends Costume Designer Isaac Lummis, Set Designer Dale Ferguson, Lighting Designer Matt Scott and John Scandrett's brilliant team from System Sound are back. This is choreographer Amy Campbell's debut with us. I hope it's the first of many.

None of this would happen without a dedicated, talented and surprisingly small staff. A million thanks to Ken Mackenzie-Forbes, Rachel Taylor, Simone Goodwin, Min McCallum and James Kempster. I am also blessed with a team of technical experts backstage in David Miller, Mel Robertson, Michael Norman, Meg Deyell and Kim Bishop. Our Publicist Julie Cavanagh and the marketing team at AKA Australia help us achieve great success at the box office and I would be lost without my PA Chris Gibbons and the support of my extraordinary Board of Directors.

Finally, may I say how grateful I am to the sponsors and patrons listed in this program? You keep the curtain up!

We're doin' fine *Oklahoma, Oklahoma, OK!*

Jeanne Pratt AC
Chairman • The Production Company



SCENES & MUSICAL NUMBERS

THE ACTION TAKES PLACE IN CLAREMONT, OKLAHOMA, (FORMERLY INDIAN TERRITORY), CIRCA 1907.

ACT 1

| | |
|---|---|
| OVERTURE | TPC Orchestra |
| OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNIN' | Curly |
| KANSAS CITY | Will, Aunt Eller, Slim, Ike and Male Ensemble |
| I CAIN'T SAY NO | Ado Annie |
| ENTRANCE OF ENSEMBLE | Will, Ado Annie and Company |
| THE SURREY WITH THE FRINGE ON TOP | Curly, Laurey and Aunt Eller |
| MANY A NEW DAY | Laurey and Female Ensemble |
| IT'S A SCANDAL! IT'S AN OUTRAGE! | Ali Hakim and Male Ensemble |
| PEOPLE WILL SAY WE'RE IN LOVE | Curly and Laurey |
| PORE JUD IS DAID | Curly and Jud |
| LONELY ROOM | Jud |
| OUT OF MY DREAMS | Laurey and Female Ensemble |
| DREAM BALLET | Dream Laurey, Dream Curly Dream Jud and Company |

ACT 2

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| ENTR'ACTE | TPC Orchestra |
| THE FARMER AND THE COWMAN | The Company |
| ALL ER NOTHIN' | Ado Annie and Will |
| PEOPLE WILL SAY WE'RE IN LOVE (Reprise) | Curly and Laurey |
| OKLAHOMA! | The Company |
| FINALE ULTIMO | The Company |

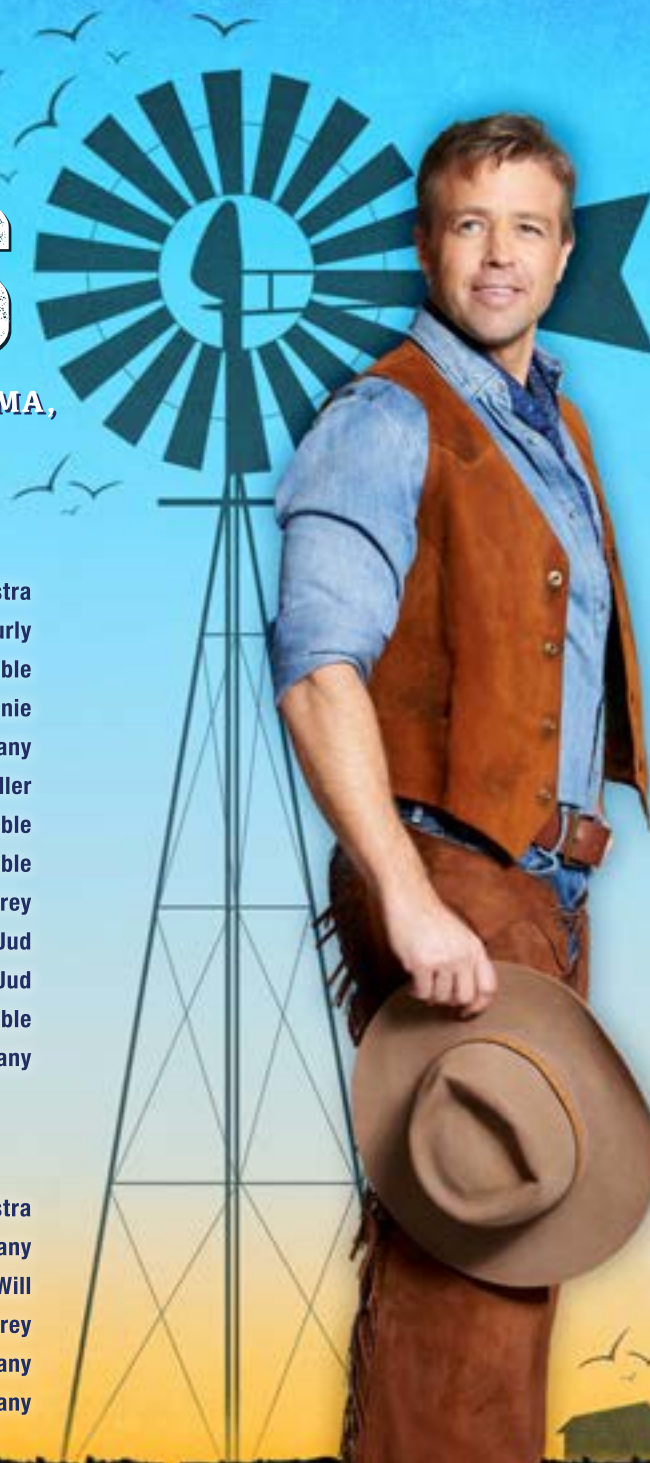
CAST OF CHARACTERS

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Aunt Eller Murphy | ROBYN NEVIN |
| Curly McLain | SIMON GLEESON |
| Laurey Williams | ANNA O'BYRNE |
| Jud Fry | BEN MINGAY |
| Will Parker | BOBBY FOX |
| Ike Skidmore | GREG STONE |
| Slim | GLASTON TOFT |
| Ado Annie Carnes | ELISE McCANN |
| Ali Hakim | GRANT PIRO |
| Andrew Carnes | RICHARD PIPER |
| Cord Elam | GLEN HOGSTROM |
| Gertie Cummings | GRETA SHERRIFF |
| Dream Laurey | STEFANIE JONES |
| Dream Jud | JARED BRYAN |
| Dream Curly | DANIEL ROBERTS |
| Ellen | ANNIE AITKEN |
| Fred | ZACK ANTHONY CURRAN |

ENSEMBLE

AMY BERRISFORD • EMBLA BISHOP • ALEX GIVEN
COURTNEY GLASS • LUKE HABERECHT • MELANIE HAWKINS
GEORGINA HOPSON • ANDREW KROENERT • ELYSHA MANIK
JOE MELDRUM • IMOGEN MOORE • SUE-ELLEN SHOOK
JORDAN TURNER • CHIARA ALLEVA • RACHEL KIPNIS
ALANNAH PARFETT • LUCIA SCHWERDT





Chairman **Jeanne Pratt AC**

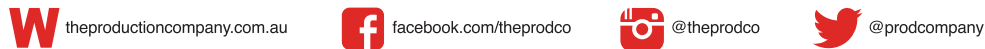
Artistic Director **Ken Mackenzie-Forbes AM**

Executive Director **Rachel D Taylor**

| | | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| Hon. Company Secretary | Don Maloney | Development Manager | Simone Goodwin |
| Directors | Deborah Beale Keith Beecher OAM Krystyna Campbell-Pretty Mark Gogoll John Hay-Mackenzie Garry Krauss AM David Mann OAM Ross Mollison | Associate Producer | Min McCallum |
| | | Technical Director | David Miller |
| | | Executive Consultant | James Kempster |
| | | Marketing AKA Australia | Vas Katos James Robertson Laura Arcudi Nadia Gianinotti Ebony Wood |
| PA to Jeanne Pratt AC | Chris Gibbons | 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

PO Box 7585
St Kilda Road
Melbourne Vic 8004

Telephone: (03) 9281 8000
Facsimile: (03) 9281 8282
Website: artscentremelbourne.com.au

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Arts Centre Melbourne extends heartfelt thanks to our Arts Angels, whose generosity, loyalty and commitment ensure as many Victorians as possible can experience the joy of the performing arts here in Melbourne.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

Arts Centre Melbourne welcomes everyone to visit our spaces and experience the performing arts.
Conditions of Entry are available on our website www.artscentremelbourne.com.au

THE PRODUCTION COMPANY ORCHESTRA

Orchestral Services Manager: JAMES KEMPSTER

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Violin 1 | ZOE BLACK - ORCHESTRA LEADER CLARE MILLER |
| Violin 2 | CAMERON JAMIESON MIRANDA MATHESON |
| Viola | MATTHEW LAING BEATRIX FRANCIS |
| Cello | BLAIR HARRIS ANNA POKORNY |
| Bass | BEN ROBERTSON |
| Flute/Piccolo | HELEN HARDY |
| Oboe/Cor Anglais | SUSAN BATTEN |
| Clarinet | LUKE CARBON TONY HICKS |
| Bassoon | HUGH PONNUTHURAI |
| Trumpet | GREG SPENCE DANIEL BEASY |
| Trombone | KIEREN CONRAU |
| Horn | DEBORAH HART DOREE DIXON |
| Percussion | GREG SULLY |
| Harp | JULIE RAINES |
| Guitar | TROY DOWNWARD |
| Keyboard | ANTHONY BARNHILL |
| Orchestra Manager | LAUREN JENNINGS |
| Orchestra Assistant | SABRINA YEHL |

THANK YOU

Photography - Colin Page and Tim Carrafa **Promotions Choreographer** - Tracie Morley
Saddle and Cowboy Hats - Saddle-Up, Chirnside Park
Fencing and Gates - Norton Livestock Handling Solutions



SIMON GLEESON

CURLY McLAIN

Simon is best known for his acclaimed interpretation of Jean Valjean in Cameron Mackintosh's national and international tours of *Les Misérables*, for which he received a 2015 Helpmann Award.

For The Production Company he has appeared as Anotoly Sergievsky in *Chess* (Green Room Award nomination) and Lieutenant Frank Cioffi in *Curtains*. Other stage credits include *Jolson, Shout, Mamma Mia!* (Helpmann Award nomination), *Eureka, Love Never Dies* (Helpmann and Sydney Theatre Award

nominations) and *Hipbone Sticking Out* (BighART).

Recently, for the MTC, Simon appeared in *Hay Fever*, having worked with them previously as an original cast member of *Rupert*, which subsequently toured to the Kennedy Center in Washington. For the STC, Simon appeared in *Harbour* and *The Republic of Myopia*.

Simon's UK credits include *The Far Pavilions* (West End, Whatsonstage Award nomination), *Imagine This* (West End), *Three Sides, The Silver Lake, Certified Male* (Edinburgh Festival), *Shoes* (Sadler's Wells) and *Southwark Fair* (Royal National Theatre).

Simon's film and television credits in Australia include *City Homicide, Blue Heelers* and *SeaChange*. In the UK, he played a regular role in *EastEnders* and was a member of the principal cast of *Kombat* (BBC2). Simon also appeared in the feature film *My Life In Ruins*.

ANNA O'BYRNE

LAUREY WILLIAMS

Australian born Anna O'Byrne has established an international career spanning opera, theatre, concert and film.

Australian audiences most recently delighted in Anna's performance of Eliza Doolittle in Opera Australia's *My Fair Lady*, for which she received the 2017 Helpmann Award for Best Leading Actress in a Musical. Following which, Anna returned to London's West End to perform the role of Laura Fairlie in the first revival of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Woman in White*.

Anna was cast by Andrew Lloyd Webber to create the role of Christine Daaé in *Love Never Dies*, his sequel to *The Phantom of the Opera*. She was nominated for Sydney Theatre and Green Room awards for her performance. *Love Never Dies* was filmed and released in cinemas internationally by Universal Pictures; the DVD and Blu-Ray release debuted at number one on the international music charts and number four on the overall charts.

Following the success of *Love Never Dies*, Anna made her West End debut as Christine in *The Phantom of the Opera* at Her Majesty's Theatre, London. She then created the role of Jenny Lind in Cameron Mackintosh's *Barnum*, the process of which was featured in a Channel 4 documentary *The Sound of Musicals*. Further West End credits include *Strangers on a Train, Kings of Broadway*, and playing Anne Eggerman in *A Little Night Music* as part of the show's 40th anniversary celebrations. Anna debuted with English National Opera in their landmark production of *Sweeney Todd*, starring Bryn Terfel and Emma Thompson. She became the first actor to perform as Christine in *The Phantom of the Opera* in Russia, a performance broadcast nationally from the Bolshoi Theatre as part of the Golden Mask Awards.

In 2015 Anna returned to her hometown of Melbourne to star in Gale Edwards' *West Side Story* for The Production Company. She then toured the UK and Ireland playing Sarah Brown in the Olivier-nominated production of *Guys and Dolls*. In July 2017, Anna appeared as Cunegonde in Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* in concert at Cadogan Hall, London.

Anna regularly performs internationally on the concert stage, and has sung for royalty and world leaders. She released her debut album, *Dream*, in May 2016.





ROBYN NEVIN AM

Aunt Eller Murphy

One of the greats, Robyn's career spans almost sixty years in theatre, film and television. She has played leading roles at all of Australia's major theatre companies, in London's West End and the US, including Carnegie Hall in New York. Her many roles include Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Mary Tyrone in *A Long Day's Journey Into Night* (opposite William Hurt), Lally Katz' *Neighbourhood Watch* and most recently Mrs Higgins in *My Fair Lady*.

Television credits include Jane Campion's *Top Of The Lake* and three seasons of *Upper Middle Bogan*. She will next be seen on television in *Back In Very Small Business*.

ELISE McCANN

Ado Annie Carnes

Elise is most well known for originating the role of Miss Honey in Australia in the RSC production of *Matilda*, for which she won the 2016 Helpmann Award, the 2015 Sydney Theatre Award and was nominated for a 2016 Green Room Award. Previously she featured in the Channel Seven miniseries *Peter Allen – Not The Boy Next Door*, playing Peter's sister, Lynne Woolnough.

A graduate of NIDA, Elise's theatrical credits include Lucille Ball in *Everybody Loves Lucy* for which she was nominated for Best Cabaret Performance at the 2015 Sydney Theatre Awards, Ali in the 10th Anniversary Tour of *Mamma Mia!*, Janet McGregor in the Australian tour of *South Pacific*, the world premiere of *Doctor Zhivago*, Fruma Sarah in the Australian Tour of *Fiddler on the Roof*, Cordelia in *Falsettos*, Florinda in *Into The Woods*, *Little Women*, *My Fair Lady*, *Camelot*, *Side By Side By Sondheim*, *Musical of Musicals the Musical*, *Stephen Schwartz in Conversation*, and as Sydney Carlton in *It's a Bird It's a Plane It's Superman*.

Her most recent appearance for The Production Company was as Meg Brockie in *Brigadoon*.

Elise's debut album *Dahlesque* was released nationally with ABC Music in June 2017, following which she premiered the concert version at the Adelaide Cabaret Festival. She most recently performed *Dahlesque* live with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.



BOBBY FOX

Will Parker



Bobby is an Irish born Australian actor who originated the role of Frankie Valli in the Australian production of *Jersey Boys*, which he performed over eight hundred and fifty times. He is a former four times World Irish Dance Champion and toured with dance productions *Riverdance*, *Dancing on Dangerous Ground*, *To Dance on the Moon* and starred in the revival of Australian musical *Hot Shoe Shuffle* as Spring.

On stage Bobby has also had lead roles in *Blood Brothers*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Leader of the Pack*, *Dusty – The Original Pop Diva*, *We Will Rock You*, *Spamalot* and The Production Company's *Sweet Charity* and *Damn Yankees*. In 2016 and 2017 he appeared in *Ladies in Black*, which toured nationally and for which he received a Green Room Award nomination. In late 2017 he performed in *Assassins* at The Hayes Theatre, which is having a return season at The Opera House later this year.

On screen Bobby's credits include *Upper Middle Bogan*, *It's a Date*, *Tricky Business* and *House Husbands*. He also appeared in the feature film *The Cup*.

Bobby is a captivating live performer, whether as a solo artist or in musicals, but he also has ambition to pursue further screen opportunities to build on the impressive credits he has already attained.



BEN MINGAY

Jud Fry

Ben Mingay is an actor, musician and international musical theatre performer. He was seen most recently in cinemas in Mel Gibson's *Hacksaw Ridge*, playing the role of Grease Nolan and on the small screen playing Alan Bond in Nine Network's *House of Bond*. Other television roles include Trystan Powell in *Home and Away*, three seasons as Rob Duffy in the Network 10 series *Wonderland* and as Buzz for Network 7's *Packed to the Rafters*.

In 2017 his stage credits included the role of Evan in MTC's *Vivid White*, Achilles in *Paris - A Rock Odyssey* (MTM) and numerous concerts around Australia with the hit singing group *Swing on This*, of which he has been a member since 2013. Other stage credits include Thomas in *Rolling Thunder Vietnam*, The Phantom in *The Phantom of the Opera* and Zack Mayo in the world premiere production of *An Officer and a Gentleman*. In 2011 Ben received rave reviews for his portrayal of Tommy DeVito in the award winning musical *Jersey Boys* at Sydney's Theatre Royal, which was his first Australian performance since he originated the role of Billy Kosteki in the world premiere of *Dirty Dancing* in 2004. In *Dirty Dancing*, Ben's unique vocal ability won him the same role in every English speaking production worldwide for almost six years, including the West End, Canada, Chicago, Boston and Los Angeles.





RICHARD PIPER

Andrew Carnes

Richard is particularly well known for his work on stage, having appeared in numerous productions for MTC, Malthouse, STC, Bell Shakespeare, Belvoir and the State Theatre Company of SA.

Recent performances include *Jack and the Beanstalk* for Australian Shakespeare Company, *The Black Rider* for Malthouse and *The Secret River* for STC and later the Adelaide Festival. Roles in musical theatre include *King Kong*, *Billy Elliot* and *The New Rocky Horror Show*. Screen highlights include *Wentworth*, *Australia on Trial - Myall Creek*, *Tangle*, *Underbelly:*

The Movie Files, *City Homicide*, *Satisfaction*, *Blue Heelers*, *Crashburn*, *MDA*, *Stingers*, *Blue Heelers* and *Neighbours*. Films include *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales* and *Mission Impossible*.

Richard received a Green Room Award (Best Actor in a Leading Role) for his solo performance in MTC's *The Daylight Atheist* in 2004.

GRANT PIRO

Ali Hakim

Grant Piro's vast experience over the past thirty-five years has allowed him to work in every facet of the industry. He has appeared 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 the age of sixteen in *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 include *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*, *The Odd Couple*, and *Hand to God*.

Grant returns to The Production Company for the fourth time, seen previously in *Hello, Dolly!* in 2002, as well as *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* in 2008 and *Hello, Dolly!* again in 2017 alongside his wife Marina Prior.



GREG STONE

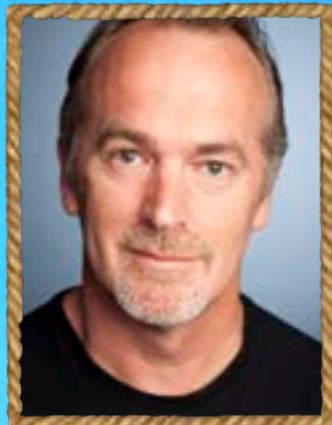
Ike Skidmore

Greg Stone is well known to theatre audiences around Australia. He has performed in over eighty productions for all the major theatre companies since graduating from NIDA in 1983.

Recent theatre credits include *Funny Girl* (The Production Company), *Hir*, *Hamlet*, *Babyteeth* (Belvoir), *Ladies in Black* (Queensland Theatre Company/Melbourne Theatre Company), *Once* (GFO Attractions), *The Weir*, *The Waiting Room*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* (MTC).

Selected film credits include *Boy Saviour*, *The Waterfall*, *The Sunset Six*, *Swerve* and *Oranges and Sunshine*. Recent television credits include *Glitch*, *The Doctor Black Mysteries*, *Newton's Law*, *Neighbours*, *Secret City*, *The Ex-PM* and *Offspring*.

Greg has been nominated for Sydney Theatre, Helpmann and Green Room Awards for various shows and won both The Helpmann and Green Room Award for Best Male Performer in *Stuff Happens*.



GLEN HOGSTROM

Cord Elam

In a career spanning more than twenty-five years, Glen has covered most aspects of live performance - writing and performing his own music, through acrobatics, stunt performance, puppetry and fencing, to an exciting myriad of musical theatre shows on the stage in Australia and internationally.

He has sung, flipped, acted in and directed shows ranging from Shakespeare's classics (*Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) to contemporary smash hit musicals including *Cats*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Miss Saigon*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Les Misérables*, *Wicked*, *Fiddler On The Roof*, and most recently playing the role of Zoltan Karparthy in the 60th anniversary of *My Fair Lady* directed by Dame Julie Andrews. With varied television and voice-over credits, Glen continues to explore all avenues of the performance industry.





GLASTON TOFT - Slim

Glaston graduated from WAAPA in 2005. Prior to this he studied Classical Voice at the Queensland Conservatorium. He has just completed a run in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* and was recently seen in *The Bodyguard* playing FBI agent Ray Court. He also created and performed the role of Athol Guy in *Georgy Girl - The Seekers Musical*. Glaston is best known for performing as Four Seasons member Nick Massi in the musical *Jersey Boys* amassing over 1300 performances.

Glaston's credits for The Production Company include *West Side Story*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Little Me* and *Camelot*. He has also appeared in Sondheim's *Passion for Life* for Like Touring, *Assassins* Touring with Watch This, TML Enterprises' production of *Shout!*, and Opera Australia's *My Fair Lady*.

GRETA SHERRIF - Gertie Cummings

Originally from Townsville, Greta graduated from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music with a Bachelor of Music majoring in classical voice. Greta's recent credits include the 60th Anniversary production of *My Fair Lady* directed by Julie Andrews, the arena tour of *Broadway to Oz: Hugh Jackman Live in Concert*, and the Australian tour of *Anything Goes* (Opera Australia/GFO).

For The Production Company, Greta has appeared in *Guys and Dolls*, *La Cage Aux Folles* and *The Pirates of Penzance*. She has also toured Australia and Asia with *Wicked* (GFO), appeared in the 2009 national tour of *My Fair Lady* (Opera Australia) and in *Titanic* (Seabiscuit Productions).



ANNIE AITKIN

Graduating from VCA in Music Theatre in 2014, Annie's professional credits include the title role in the world premiere of *Melba* (Hayes Theatre Co./New Musicals Australia), *Muriel's Wedding: The Musical* (STC/Global Creatures), *Sweet Charity* (Hayes Theatre Co./Tinderbox/Luckiest Productions), Chastity in *Anything Goes* (Opera Australia/GFO) and understudy Maria and Liesl in *The Sound of Music* (GFO/RUG/David Ian Productions).

Annie is looking forward to singing the lead role of Cunegonde in *Candide* at the Sydney Opera House later in the year with legendary co-stars Caroline O'Connor and Alex Lewis (Sydney Philharmonia Choirs) and is thrilled to be making her Production Company debut in *Oklahoma!*.

AMY BERRISFORD

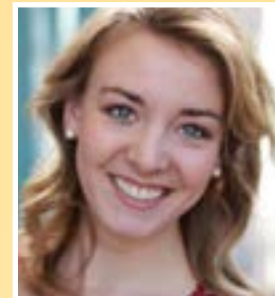


For The Production Company Amy has played Rosie in *Sweet Charity* and appeared in *Promises Promises*, *Funny Girl* and *Curtains*. Other theatre credits include the Asian tour of *We Will Rock You* (Louise Withers & Co), the Melbourne season of *Guys and Dolls* (ATG), *Chicago's* Australasian Tour in 2000 playing the role of June (GFO), *King Kong Live on Stage* (Global Creatures) and the role of Kathy in *Company* (Watch This).

In *Cats* she has played the roles of both Demeter and Bombalurina throughout Asia and Australia as well as being resident Choreographer for the recent South Korean Tour. Amy received a 2016 Green Room Award nomination for Bombalurina.

Amy's film and television credits include *Boytown*, Channel 7's *TV Turns 50* and Foxtel's *The Singing Office*. Currently Amy is producing, choreographing and performing in *Cheek to Cheek*, a tribute to *Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers*, with Ross Hannaford. www.astaireandrogers.com

Amy would like to thank her family for their ongoing love and support.



EMBLA BISHOP

Growing up in London in a Swedish speaking home, Embla's first professional appearance was in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* at the London Palladium. She went on to feature in two operas, *La Boheme* and *The Magic Flute* at Farrar Theatre, before moving to Sydney in 2009.

Embla graduated from WAAPA in 2016. Her television and film credits include Madisson in Ben Elton's feature film *Three Summers*.

In 2017 Embla made her debut with The Production Company in *Jesus Christ Superstar* and joined the company again last year in *Brigadoon*.

Most recently she performed in *Merrily We Roll Along* with Little Triangle and has been cast in of *Sleeping Beauty* as Princess Aurora for Bonnie Lythgoe's Pantomime later this year.

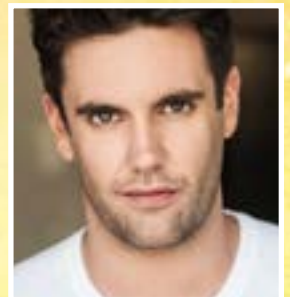
JARED BRYAN - Dance Captain

Originally from Hobart, Jared moved to Melbourne at the age of sixteen to train at Dance World Studios.

For The Production Company, Jared has appeared as Bobby Pepper in *Curtains*, John in *Funny Girl*, Action in *West Side Story* and most recently as an Apostle in *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Other credits include Opera Australia's *Carmen*, Jack Stone in *Reefer Madness* (Chapel Off Chapel), *Fiddler on the Roof* (TML Enterprises), *Grease* (GFO), *Madama Butterfly* (Opera Australia), *Anyone Can Whistle*, *Flinders St - The Musical*, *Hello, Dolly!* and *A Jerry Herman Triptych* (Magnormos), which he co-choreographed.

Commercially Jared has performed extensively on television, in live events and programs, and with artists including Guy Sebastian and Jess Mauboy. He has appeared in numerous music videos, television commercials and corporate events.





ZACK ANTHONY CURRAN

A graduate of WAAPA, Zack has appeared in numerous productions in Australia and internationally. Most recently he appeared in *Brigadoon* for The Production Company, *The 27 Club* tour and as a backing vocalist for *Adele* in her Etihad Stadium concerts.

Other projects include *Fiddler on the Roof* (TML), *My Fair Lady* (Opera Australia), *A Lie Of The Mind*, *Blood Brothers* (Harvest Rain), *It's Only Life* (Birdland NYC), *Hello, Dolly!* and *Anyone Can Whistle* (Magnormos), *Hello Again* (Gaiety Theatre) and *The Good Fight* (NYC Music Theatre Festival). Zack was a finalist at the Inaugural

Rob Guest Endowment Concert.

Zack is thrilled to be returning to The Production Company in *Oklahoma!* for their 20th year.

ALEX GIVEN

Alex graduated in 2011 after completing the Performing Arts course and Musical Theatre course at Patrick Studios Australia. He has performed in various events, including the *TV Week Logie Awards*, *Opening of Hamer Hall with Caroline O'Connor*, *Adelaide Cabaret Festival Opening Gala* and *Trevor Ashley's Liza (on an E)*.

For The Production Company Alex has appeared as A-rab in *West Side Story*, Tom Springfield in *Dusty* and in *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, *Anything Goes*, and *Guys and Dolls*. Musical theatre credits include *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (TML Enterprises), *South Pacific* (Opera Australia), *Loving Repeating* (VTC), Baz Luhrmann's *Strictly Ballroom the Musical* (Global Creatures), *Georgy Girl: The Seekers Musical* (Richard East) and *My Fair Lady* (Opera Australia) directed by Dame Julie Andrews.

Television and film credits include *Holding the Man* (Screen Australia), *Weevil* (Lipkin Films) and *The Wrong Girl* and *Offspring* for Network 10.



COURTNEY GLASS

Courtney is delighted to be returning to The Production Company, having appeared in last season's *Brigadoon*. She appeared on Broadway in *The Woman in White* and in various regional theatres across the United States. Closer to home, recent credits include StageArt's *The Full Monty*, Music Theatre Melbourne's *Paris* and *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown* at The Alex Theatre.

LUKE HABERECHT

Luke is a 2017 WAAPA Music Theatre graduate. He discovered dancing early, training at Brent Street Studios in Sydney, and was a member of the original Australian cast of *Billy Elliot the Musical*.

Whilst at WAAPA, Luke played the role of Andy Lee in their production of *42nd Street* and was also Dance Captain alongside renowned choreographer Lisa O'Dea. Other WAAPA credits include *Chicago*, *Heathers*, *Bring It On* and *Rent*.

Luke is thrilled to be making his debut with The Production Company in *Oklahoma!*



MELANIE HAWKINS - Dance Captain

Melanie most recently returned from the Australian/Tokyo tour of *Singin' In The Rain*, playing the role of Zelda. Previously she performed alongside Hugh Jackman in the *Broadway to Oz* Australian arena concert tour and appeared in the original cast of the stage production of Baz Luhrmann's *Strictly Ballroom the Musical*.

Other theatre credits include the World Premiere of *King Kong Live on Stage*, *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum* starring Geoffrey Rush, the role of Constance in *Rock of Ages*, the role of the Witch's Mother in the original Australian cast of *Wicked*,

GFO's *Into The Woods* concert and *Shout! – The Legend of the Wild One*.

Melanie choreographed *Dedications*, John O'Hara's one-man show for the Adelaide Cabaret Festival and theatres around Australia. She has worked with Australia's leading directors and choreographers for live and televised events including *Countdown*, *Australia's Got Talent* and Ricki-Lee film clips and recently starred in a short film ad campaign *Take me where I want to go* for the new shoe collection for MIMCO.



GEORGINA HOPSON

Georgina Hopson is the 2017 winner of the Rob Guest Endowment Award and a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music. Most recently, she performed in the ensemble and understudied the role of Eliza Doolittle in the 60th Anniversary Production of *My Fair Lady* directed by Dame Julie Andrews (OA/John Frost). Later this year Georgina will be joining the cast of *Evita* (OA/John Frost).

Other theatre credits include *Cinderella* in *Into the Woods* (Harvest Rain), Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* (Essgee/Harvest Rain), Mary Poppins in *Mary Poppins* (Arts Centre Gold Coast), and Sue Snell in *Carrie* (Wax Lyrical/Brisbane Powerhouse).

On screen, Georgina played Wendy Hogan in the Paul Hogan biopic *Hoges* (Channel 7). In 2015, she received a Matilda Award for Best Emerging Artist for her work in Queensland Theatre.





STEFANIE JONES

Graduating from VCA in Music Theatre in 2011, Stefanie's credits include Liesl in *The Sound of Music* (RUG/GFO), *Dream Lover* (GFO), *Once The Musical* (MTC/GFO), *South Pacific* (Opera Australia/GFO), *Carmen Live or Dead* (Oriental Entertainment Group), as well as Young Eponine in Cameron Mackintosh's 10th Anniversary Tour of *Les Misérables* and Brigitta in *The Sound of Music* (SEL/GFO). In 2016 Stefanie was a finalist in the prestigious Rob Guest Endowment Award.

Stefanie's screen credits include *Molly* (M4Entertainment/7 Network), *The Divorce* (Princess Pictures/Opera Australia) and the role of Megan Dennison in *Neighbours*.

Stefanie made her Production Company debut playing Jean MacLaren in *Brigadoon* and is thrilled to be returning in *Oklahoma!*.

ANDREW KROENERT



For The Production Company, Andrew has appeared in *Brigadoon*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Show Boat*. Other stage credits include Jamie in *The Last 5 Years*, Angel/Musical Director for *Carmen Live or Dead* (Oriental Group), *Dream Lover* (GFO), Peter in *Company* (Watch This), Avram in *Fiddler On The Roof* (TML) Angel/City Tenor in *City Of Angels* (Life Like Company), Fisherman in *Pacific Overtures* (Watch This), *Chitty Chitty, Bang Bang* (TML), the title role in *Buddy; The Buddy Holly Story* (Showbiz Christchurch and LTPA), and the World Premiere of *Virgins; A Musical Threesome* (Echelon).

Andrew is proudly represented by Ian White Management and has been a member of Equity since 2008.



ELYSHA MANIK

Elysha completed her Diploma of Performing Arts at ED5 International and in 2014 made her Musical Theatre debut in *Dirty Dancing*, where she understudied the lead role of Baby.

She has also performed at The Venetian Resort and The Galaxy Resorts in Macau and has been a cast member of various Opera Australia productions including the critically acclaimed *Carmen*, where she was also Dance Captain and assistant to the choreographer, Kelley Abbey.

Elysha is a highly skilled aerial artist who has been featured at many special events and her acting talent has been showcased on screen in numerous advertising campaigns.

JOE MELDRUM



Joe made his professional theatre debut with The Production Company in *Curtains* after graduating from WAAPA's Music Theatre course in 2015. Other credits include starring in the Australian Tour of *A Fine Romance: The Magic of Fred Astaire*, *Just A Couple of Song and Dance Men* (JTM Productions), *The Long and Short of It* (Ding Productions), TVC's for Museums Victoria and the Sammy D Foundation, feature film *Beautiful* (KOJO Pictures) and dancing for various televised events including the International T20.

Joe is ecstatic to be returning to The Production Company for their 20th Anniversary season and to work with the incredible team on this Rodgers and Hammerstein classic. He is a proud member of MEAA and represented by the fantastic team at IWM.

IMOGEN MOORE



Imogen is thrilled to be back with The Production Company after making her debut last year as Minnie Fay in *Hello, Dolly!*

A VCA (BFA Musical theatre) graduate, other credits include *Anything Goes* (OA/GFO), *Disney Under the Stars* (Live Nation), *Antarctica* (Tasmania Theatre Company), *A Fine Romance – The Magic of Fred Astaire* (JTM Productions), *Follies in Concert* (Storyboard Entertainment), *Avenue Q* (Prince Moo Productions), *Scooby Doo Live!*, *Level Up* and *Musical Mysteries* (Lifelike Touring) and *Elevate* (The Dizzy Biz).

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

DANIEL ROBERTS



Daniel completed his high school education at VCA Secondary School before continuing his dance training and graduating from The Australian Ballet School in 2008. He has worked professionally with The Singapore Dance Theatre (2009-2010), The West Australian Ballet (2011-2014) and Sydney Dance Company (2015-2017).

Daniel has created two main stage ballets for West Australian Ballet and will return to Perth later this year to choreograph a work for students at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts.



SUE-ELLEN SHOOK

For The Production Company Sue-ellen has appeared as Dolores in *42nd Street*, Lorraine in *The Pajama Game* and in *Promises Promises*, *The Boy From Oz* in Melbourne and Sydney and *Sugar*.

Other theatre credits include Australian Shakespeare Company's *Tinkerbell and the Dream Fairies* in the role of Moth in Australia and London, Brenda in *Menopause The Musical*, Soap Star in the workshop of *King Kong the Musical*, Magenta in *Time Warp*, *A Rocky Horror Tribute*, Lola in *La Soire*, Tiger Lily in *Pan*, *Starlight Express* in Germany, *A Chorus Line*, the role of Acro Fairy in *A*

Midsummer Night's Dream (Moving Pictures), *Carmen* and *Aida* for Opera Australia and *Batman The Stunt Show* for Warner Brothers in Germany.

Sue Ellen would like to thank Peter and Naomi from Derrick Talent Elite/Smallfry for their continued support. She considers her best Australian/American co-production is with her husband - their three children, Coleman, Cameron and Cierra.

JORDAN TURNER

Jordan Turner is a graduate of both Brent Street (with a Certificate IV in Performing Arts) and the Jason Winters Contemporary Dance Technique (Stage 6).

His stage credits include *Invisible Touch* choreographed by Michael Ralph, *Shake, Rattle and Roll* for Dion and Randall and the role of Gee-tar in *West Side Story* for The Production Company.

Television credits include *Dancing With the Stars*, *The Voice* and *X-Factor Australia*. Jordan was one of the top sixteen dance contestants on *So You Think You Can Dance Australia* in 2015.



ANTHONY BARNHILL

Assistant Musical Director

One of Australia's most promising young musicians, Anthony is a versatile pianist, composer and conductor. His credits span radio, national television and as guest soloist with symphony orchestras.

Anthony has worked for the Victorian State Schools Spectacular, Monash University, Opera Scholars Australia and on various theatrical productions, most recently *Dream Lover*. He toured China as Musical Director for Australian International Productions and served as Composer in Residence for Creative Innovation Global 2016-2017.

Anthony studied at Monash University, achieving the top performance result in each year of study. He was recently recipient of the prestigious Rob Guest Endowment Musician Award.

Anthony is thrilled to be working with The Production Company for the first time.



CHIARA ALLEVA

Chiara began dancing at the age of three and hopes to follow in her performing father's footsteps. She currently studies dance at Kelly Aykers casual dance and is grateful to all her teachers, including her dad Luke Alleva. As well as dance, they both share a love of musical theatre and singing. Chiara has performed at *Carols by Candlelight*, and *Masters of Choreography* alongside her father and brother Alessio.

Chiara is very happy and excited to be performing in her debut musical. She would like to thank The Production Company for this opportunity, and parents Luke and Sabrina, brother Alessio and all her supportive friends.



RACHEL KIPNIS

Rachel is twelve years old, is in Year 7 at Presbyterian Ladies' College and is represented by Ana Mitsikas of Stage Left Management.

Rachel learns dancing, singing and acting at May Downs School of Dance under the direction and guidance of Miss Renie Ann Martini.

Previous professional theatre credits include Young Eponine in *Les Misérables* in 2014 (Cameron Mackintosh) and Marta in *The Sound of Music* in 2016 (GFO).

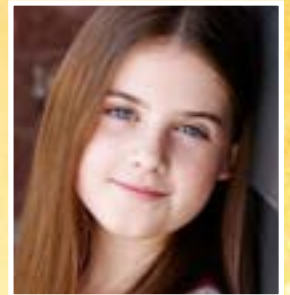
Apart from the performing arts, Rachel's other interests include styling hair, acrobatics, and logic puzzles.



ALANNAH PARFETT

Alannah made her professional musical theatre debut playing Matilda in the Melbourne season of *Matilda The Musical*. Alannah (along with her fellow Matildas) was nominated for a Green Room Award and share in a Helpmann Award win for Best Female Actor in a Musical. She has been training under the guidance of Natalie Pryor at Dancescape and Elise McCann and is represented by Mia Perry at MP Talent.

Alannah would like to thank Natalie, Elise and Mia for their dedication to her growth as a person and performer. She is thrilled to be a part of The Production Company's *Oklahoma!*



LUCIA SCHWERDT

Lucia has been involved in performing arts for six years, starting as a dancer at the age of four. She trains in ballet, jazz and tap at the Jane Moore Academy of Ballet. Lucia has received several scholarships and awards during this time, including first place at the Ballet Teacher's Workshop. As an actor, Lucia performed as Portly in the Australian Shakespeare Company's 2018 production of *Wind In The Willows*. This is Lucia's professional debut in a musical and she is absolutely delighted to be part of The Production Company's *Oklahoma!*





What became one of the great landmarks in the history of the American musical had a strangely inauspicious start.

On 26 January 1931 the Theatre Guild's presentation of Lynn Riggs' bucolic drama *Green Grow the Lilacs* opened on Broadway. The author, a part Cherokee, drew on his childhood memories of Oklahoma's transformation into statehood. It was not what Depression audiences wanted and it closed after 64 performances. If it's remembered today it's only because theatre doyen Lee Strasberg made one of his first stage appearances in it.

Fortunately lyricist Oscar Hammerstein saw the show and realised its potential as a musical. He discussed it with composer Jerome Kern but Kern was dispirited after the failure of their collaboration *Three Sisters*, and declined. Then the Guild's Theresa Helburn offered it to Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, who had scored an enormous success with *Pal Joey* in 1940. Bothered and bewildered, Hart equivocated. Perhaps, Helburn suggested, he and Hammerstein could work together on the lyrics. On 23 July 1942 the New York Times announced that Richard Rodgers, Lorenz Hart and Oscar Hammerstein II were to begin work on a musical version of *Green Grow the Lilacs*. Soon Hart dropped out altogether, making way for the first of the legendary Rodgers and Hammerstein creations.

Previously, Hart had crafted his witty lyrics to fit Rodgers' music, but now Hammerstein wrote the lyrics and sent them to Rodgers for setting. Hammerstein found inspiration in Lynn Riggs' original text, but it took him three weeks to transform *The kind of morning which, enveloping the shapes of earth – men, cattle in the meadow, blades of the young corn – makes them seem to exist now for the first time, their images giving off a golden emanation...* into the simple cowboy vernacular of *Oh, What a Beautiful Morning* – indeed he spent seven days agonising over whether he should begin the first two lines with the word 'Oh'. In contrast, Rodgers knocked off the melody in ten minutes. He later described the composition process as 'A lead-pipe cinch. I put Oscar's lyrics on the piano and the music wrote itself.' The result was the first Broadway show in which every song had a direct relation to the plot. It created, in effect, a new genre, the 'musical play'.

The Theatre Guild put together a brilliant production team. Their director was the experienced Rouben Mamoulian, though the rest were largely untested. The choreographer was a then unknown Agnes de

Mille; Lemuel Ayers and Miles White created the sets and costumes, and Robert Russell Bennett worked on the orchestrations. When it came to casting, Shirley Temple was to be the original Laurey, though Rodgers wanted his friend Mary Martin. In the end the cast were mostly newcomers: Joan Roberts as Laurey, Celeste Holm as Ado Annie, and a dashing handsome Alfred Drake as Curly. In the small role of Sam was Hayes Gordon, later, of course, to have a notable career in Australia – including a short stint in a revival of *Oklahoma!* in 1953.

Not surprisingly, the Guild had trouble raising money for the show, and Walter Winchell's dire prophecy 'No legs, no jokes, no chance' didn't help. Eventually 28 backers scraped together the \$83,000 needed to get the production up and running.

Uninspiringly titled *Away We Go!*, it premiered in New Haven in March 1943 to a polite but encouraging reception. During its second try-out, in Boston, two songs were cut, *When I Go Out Walking With My Baby* and the appealing *Boys and Girls Like You and Me* – which had the dubious distinction of later being dropped from the films *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* and *Meet Me In St Louis* as well. More significantly, a duet about the land for Laurey and Curly was transformed into a show-stopping Act II chorale called *Oklahoma*. It was so successful that by the time the company headed for Broadway it became the show's title – with a cheeky exclamation mark added for good luck.

The presale was poor but *Oklahoma!* opened at the St James Theatre on 31 March 1943 to an ecstatic audience and enthusiastic reviews. The New York Times said, "*Wonderful is the nearest adjective*" and the Herald Tribune called it, "*A jubilant and enchanting musical*". The 'House Full' sign went up at the box office – and stayed there. It was the right show at the right time. Its sunny optimism and inherent nostalgia for a simpler time appealed to a war-worried nation, and its score resonated with the burgeoning interest in American folk music. It was honoured with a special Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Oklahoma! notched up 2212 performances on Broadway, establishing a record that stood until *My Fair Lady* beat it 1961. More than 4½ million people saw it during its five-year run. A national tour set off in October 1943 and criss-crossed the country for an unprecedented 10½ years, visiting 250 cities and playing to more than 10,000,000 people. In 1945 Reginald and Ted Hammerstein (Oscar's brother and cousin) toured a special production for US armed forces in the Pacific.

Next it was London's turn. On 29 April 1947 *Oklahoma!* opened at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. The leads were again unknowns: Harold (later Howard) Keel and Betty Jane Watson. And again it broke records: its 1548-performance run was the longest in the theatre's 267-year history. And again it was eventually surpassed by *My Fair Lady*.

Oklahoma! came to Australia under the auspices of J.C. Williamson Theatres Ltd, the theatrical entrepreneurs still basking in the success of their production of *Annie Get Your Gun*. After Williamson director E.J. Tait saw the show in New York he decreed it called for talent that was not available locally. Consequently no fewer than nine principals were imported from the United States. Though they were talented and personable, none had a meaningful Broadway pedigree. Other imports were Gemze de Lappe who recreated Agnes de Mille's choreography, and Ted Hammerstein, who directed. Among the local recruits were Frank Wilson, Richard Bradshaw and several star dancers from the Borovansky Ballet.

Oklahoma! opened to a rapturous reception at His Majesty's Theatre in Melbourne on 19 February 1949. It went on to tour Australia and New Zealand for many months, including second visits to the larger capitals. After the tour the American principals returned home, mostly to theatrical obscurity,

although our Laurey, Carolyn Adair, did get to play the role for a few months with the US touring company, and our 'balletic' Curly, Matt Mattox, had some success in Hollywood musicals. That original Australian production of *Oklahoma!* had a final fling at His Majesty's Theatre in Perth in June 1953, with Hayes Gordon as Curly and Evie Hayes as Ado Annie.

Resplendent in the glories of wide screen and colour, the film version of *Oklahoma!* was released in 1955. James Dean and Paul Newman were considered for the role of Curly, as was Joanne Woodward for Laurey. Eventually the leads went to Gordon MacRae and Shirley Jones. Rod Steiger was a chilling Jud Fry and Gloria Grahame played Ado Annie, a role foolishly turned down by a fading Betty Hutton. Because Oklahoma was heavily farmed and developed, the exteriors were shot at Nogales in Arizona. Two songs were cut and some of the more saucy lyrics of Kansas City were judiciously rewritten. *Oklahoma!* garnered two Academy Awards and is now regarded as one of Hollywood's great movie musicals.

The first major revival of *Oklahoma!* was mounted by New York's Lincoln Centre in 1969 with Bruce Yarnell as Curly and Lee Berry as Laurey. William Hammerstein, one of Oscar's sons, directed a major revival that opened in Los Angeles, played across the United States, and reached Broadway in December 1979. Laurence Guittard and Christine Andreas had the leads. London saw a new Cameron Macintosh production in September 1980. John Diedrich was brought from Australia to play Curly, and another notable Australian, Madge Ryan, was featured as Aunt Ella. Another of Oscar Hammerstein's sons, James, directed, and Gemze de Lappe reproduced the de Mille choreography, as she had in Australia more than 30 years earlier. In 1982 the pair came to Australia to restage the London production for the MLC Theatre Royal Company, Michael Edgley International and the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust. John Diedrich was again Curly, with Sally Butterfield as Laurey, Donna Lee as Ado Annie, Peter Bishop as Will Parker and Henry Szeps as Ali Hakim.

The most recent major revival of *Oklahoma!* was presented by Cameron Macintosh and mounted by Britain's Royal National Theatre. With direction by Trevor Nunn and choreography by Susan Stroman, it opened at the National's Olivier Theatre in July 1998. Hugh Jackman and Josefina Gabrielle won praise as Curly and Laurey, and Maureen Lipman made a memorable Aunt Ella. The production was filmed for international television and DVD release. Patrick Wilson replaced Hugh Jackman when the production reached Broadway in March 2002.

Oklahoma! entered The Production Company's repertoire in 2005 with a shimmering production directed by Terence O'Connell. Ian Stenlake and Lucy Durack played Curly and Laurie, with Nancye

Hayes as Aunt Eller. The following year, six decades after its Australian premiere there, it returned to Her Majesty's in Melbourne. Bursting with youthful exuberance, the production was presented by the State Government's 'Joining the Chorus' program. The cast of 40 and the 30-piece orchestra were recruited from schools across Victoria. Mark Laguerre was artistic director and Rowena Wallace acted as dialogue coach.

The *Oklahoma!* phenomenon continues. The show has been translated into dozens of languages, over 30,000 productions have been licensed worldwide, and in the USA and Canada there are usually more than 600 every year. In 1990 the Rodgers & Hammerstein organization agreed to allow the title song to become the official anthem of the State of Oklahoma – for an annual royalty of just \$1! The show's 50th anniversary was honoured with a commemorative US postage stamp. In 1993 *Oklahoma!* received a special Tony Award. And to cap it all, the New York Drama League voted it 'Best Musical of the Century'.

Oklahoma! set the stage for a new type of Broadway musical. Years later James Hammerstein wrote: 'I don't know for sure why *Oklahoma!* holds up so well. I think it is its apparent effortlessness that keeps it evergreen. It tries to capture a time and place in American history where hope and innocence were actualities – and it succeeds with total unpretention. But how deceptive that apparent effortlessness is! The lyrics may forgo cleverness for simplicity and the music takes its cue from an untutored folk idiom, but every word and every note is obviously well chosen with painstaking care and, yes, sophistication – theatrical sophistication.'

Oh, and what of those 28 brave backers who risked \$83,000 to get the curtain up? Well, to date, they have enjoyed a 2500% return on their investment. A beautiful feeling indeed!

©FRANK VAN STRATEN AM

Frank is a theatre historian, author, broadcaster and former director of the Arts Centre's Performing Arts Museum. His books include *Tivoli*, a history of the much loved Australian variety circuit, and *Huge Deal*, a biography of controversial entrepreneur Hugh D. McIntosh. His latest, a history of Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne, will be published in September.



Oklahoma!
The Production Company 2005

Richard Rodgers & Oscar Hammerstein II

Music, Book and Lyrics

After long and highly distinguished careers with other collaborators, Richard Rodgers (composer) and Oscar Hammerstein II (librettist/lyricist) joined forces to create the most consistently fruitful and successful partnership in the American musical theatre.

Prior to his work with Hammerstein, Richard Rodgers (1902-1979) collaborated with lyricist Lorenz Hart (1895-1943) on a series of musical comedies that epitomised the wit and sophistication of Broadway in its heyday. Prolific on Broadway, in London and in Hollywood from the 1920s into the early 1940s, Rodgers and Hart wrote more than forty shows and film scores. Among their greatest were *On Your Toes*, *Babes In Arms*, *The Boys From Syracuse*, *I Married An Angel* and *Pal Joey*.

Throughout the same era Oscar Hammerstein II (1895-1960) brought new life to a moribund art form: the operetta. His collaborations with such pre-eminent composers as Rudolf Friml, Sigmund Romberg and Vincent Youmans resulted in such operetta classics as *The Desert Song*, *Rose-Marie* and *The New Moon*. With Jerome Kern he wrote *Show Boat*, the 1927 operetta that changed the course of modern musical theatre. His last musical, before embarking on an exclusive partnership with Richard Rodgers, was *Carmen Jones*, the highly acclaimed 1943 all-black revision of Georges Bizet's tragic opera *Carmen*.

Oklahoma!, the first Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, was also the first of a new genre, the musical play, representing a unique fusion of Rodgers' musical comedy and Hammerstein's operetta. A milestone in the development of the American musical, it also marked the beginning of the most successful partnership in Broadway musical history and was followed by *Carousel*, *Allegro*, *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, *Me and Juliet*, *Pipe Dream*, *Flower Drum Song* and *The Sound of Music*. Rodgers and Hammerstein wrote one musical specifically for the big screen, *State Fair* and one for television, *Cinderella*. Collectively the Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals earned thirty-five Tony Awards, fifteen Academy Awards, two Pulitzer Prizes, two Grammy Awards and two Emmy Awards. In 1998 Time Magazine and CBS News cited Rodgers and Hammerstein as among the twenty most influential artists of the 20th century. In 1999 they were jointly commemorated on a US postage stamp.

Despite Hammerstein's death in 1960, Rodgers continued to write for the Broadway stage. His first solo entry, *No Strings*, earned him two Tony Awards for music and lyrics and was followed by *Do I Hear A Waltz?*, *Two By Two*, *Rex* and *I Remember Mama*. Richard Rodgers died on December 30, 1979, less than eight months after his last musical opened on Broadway.



CHRIS PARKER

Director

Chris is a WAAPA graduate in Musical Theatre. After graduation, he played Sky in *Mamma Mia!*, Johnny Slocum in *Summer Rain* at the STC, and Alec for the World Premiere of the Helpmann Award winning musical *Sideshow Alley*.

Chris' directing credits include *Blood Brothers*, *Sondheim on Sondheim*, and *Bad Blood Blues* for Manila Street Productions, *The Last Five Years* and *The Gathering* at 45 Downstairs for Vic Theatre Company and he recently went back to WAAPA to direct *The Matchmaker*. Chris also staged an award-winning concert of Matthew Robinson's musical *Atlantis*.

Chris was the Resident Director for the Australian productions of *Avenue Q*, *The Graduate*, *Moonshadow – the Musical*, *Georgy Girl – The Seekers Musical*, *The Bodyguard* and Geoffrey Robertson's *Dreaming Too Loud* Australian tour.

He is Artistic Director for Stonnington City Council's annual concert *The Classics: Broadway*, and Creative Director for the increasingly popular charity concert *Twisted Broadway*. Led by Producer Kate Macdonald, *Twisted Broadway* has raised over \$200,000 for Oz Showbiz Cares/Equity Fights Aids.

Chris has previously performed for The Production Company as Will Parker in *Oklahoma!* and as Bobby Childs in *Crazy For You*. *Oklahoma!* is the first production he has directed for the company.



GUY SIMPSON

Musical Director

Guy is currently Musical Supervisor of the international remounting of the original production of *Evita* (currently touring Asia) and *The Phantom of the Opera* (in Brazil).

Recent projects in Australia include Musical Supervision of *Muriel's Wedding*, *The Wizard of Oz* and *Dream Lover*. *Oklahoma!* is Guy's fifteenth show for The Production Company. His engagements for TPC include Musical Director for *Funny Girl*, *Call Me Madam*, *Mack and Mabel*, *The Music Man*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Carousel*, *Oklahoma!* (in 2005), *Camelot*, *Little Me*, *Follies*, *Promises Promises*, *Gypsy*, *Guys and Dolls* and *West Side Story*.

He was the Musical Director of the 60th anniversary production of *My Fair Lady* directed by Julie Andrews. As an orchestrator, recent projects include the musicals *Ladies in Black* and *Dream Lover*.

As a producer of cast recordings he has produced the albums of *Muriel's Wedding* and *Dream Lover* for Sony. He has also produced two cast recordings of *The Phantom of the Opera* in Korea. Guy's work on *The Phantom of the Opera* began in Australia in 1990 and has continued for the past twenty-five years with productions in fourteen cities around the world. He has had a similar long association with *Miss Saigon* since the original production, conducting or supervising productions in Australia, Manila, Hong Kong, Singapore, Brazil, Seoul, The Netherlands and Japan. Other international productions include *Cats* (Australia, New Zealand), *Chicago* (Australia, Hong Kong) and *We Will Rock You* - the QUEEN musical (Australia, Japan). Other productions in Australia - *Prima Donna* - the opera by Rufus Wainwright, *Passion*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* starring Geoffrey Rush and *Love Never Dies* - the sequel to *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Misérables*, *Cabaret*, *Company*, *Into the Woods*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Snoopy*, *Seesaw* and *Zorba*.

AMY CAMPBELL

Choreographer



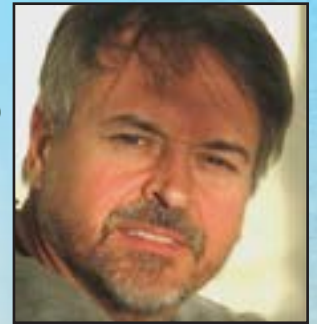
Amy Campbell is one of Australia's most accomplished dance talents with a career spanning all areas of the entertainment industry. Her extensive list of credits as one of the country's top choreographers include the Australian Premiere of the critically acclaimed *Violet*, for which she won the Broadway World Australia award for her work, ATYP's sell out season of *Spring Awakening*, *Side Show* and *Hispanic Attack* for the Hayes Theatre (for which she was also the co-creator), the original Australian work *Guilty Pleasures* for Blue Saint Productions, *Dance Academy*, *The X Factor*, ABC's *Giggle and Hoot* and most recently Amy was assistant director on Sydney Symphony Orchestra's *Porgy and Bess*.

Amy's theatre credits include dance captain and role cover in the Australian tour of *Dirty Dancing*, *Xanadu*, *Fame The Musical*, *Saturday Night Fever*, the world premiere of *King Kong Live on Stage*, principal dancer in Opera Australia's *Carmen* and most recently the Resident Choreographer of *The Bodyguard*.

In 2018 Amy will choreograph *An Act Of God* for The Darlinghurst Theatre Company, *In The Heights* for Blue Saint Productions in association with The Hayes Theatre Co and *Funny Girl The Musical* for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

DALE FERGUSON

Set Designer



For The Production Company Dale has designed *Jerry's Girls*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and our inaugural 1999 season. His recent work for MTC includes *Di and Viv and Rose*, *Skylight*, *The Weir*, *The Speechmaker*, *The Crucible*, *Top Girls*, *God of Carnage*, *The Sapphires* and *August: Osage Country*, which received the Helpmann Award for Best Set Design. For Malthouse, productions include *Away*, *Timeshare*, *Night on Bald Mountain*, *Dance of Death*, *Exit the King*, and *Nightfall*. For STC he has designed *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The Convicts Opera*, including the UK Tour, *Summer Rain*, *Howard Katz* and *A Cheery Soul and King Lear* for Bell Shakespeare. The production he designed of *The Judas Kiss*, which originated at Belvoir, went on to the Hampstead Theatre and later to West End.

Recent Opera designs are *The Magic Flute* for The Lyric Opera Chicago, *The Riders* for Victorian Opera/Malthouse, *Otello* for Cape Town Opera, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Houston and Chicago Opera, *Ariadne of Naxos* for Welsh National Opera and Canadian Opera, *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Eugene Onegin* for Opera Australia. Musical theatre designs include *An Officer and a Gentleman* (GFO), *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (Dainty) *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and *The Drowsy Chaperone* (MTC). Dale has received five Green Room Awards, including one in 2018 for *Away*, and Tony and Drama Desk nominations when *Exit the King* transferred to Broadway in 2009.



ISAAC LUMMIS

Costume Designer

Isaac graduated in 2005 from Curtin University with a Bachelors degree in Fashion and Textile design. For The Production Company his design credits include *Brigadoon*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *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 & 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 where he has designed the costumes for ten *Victorian State Schools Spectaculars*. He also designed the costumes for their 2009 production of *Barnum*.



MATT SCOTT

Lighting Designer

Matt is one of Australia's leading lighting designers with twenty-three years experience in the industry designing more than two hundred productions for theatre, opera, dance and music theatre. His most recent work includes *The Pearl Fishers* (SOSA), *Madame Butterfly* (Seattle Opera), *The Pearl Fishers*, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Opera Australia), *Anything Goes* (GFO/Opera Australia),

The Riders, (Western Australia Opera), *Aida* (Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour/Opera Australia), *The Flying Dutchman*, *Banquet of Secrets*, *Voyage to the Moon* (Victorian Opera), *The Rover*, *Jasper Jones* (Belvoir), *Minnie & Liraz*, *Born Yesterday* (MTC), *Once in Royal David's City* (Queensland Theatre and Black Swan State Theatre) and *Angels in America* (Black Swan State Theatre).

For The Production Company Matt has designed the lighting for the 2005 production of *Oklahoma!*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *42nd Street*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Grey Gardens*, *La Cage Aux Folles*, *Jerry's Girls*, *Curtains* and *Brigadoon*.

Matt has received and been nominated for numerous awards, including a 2017 Green Room Award for *The Pearl Fishers* and a 2005 Helpmann Award for his lighting on *Urinetown the Musical* which followed his 2003 Helpmann Award for *The Blue Room*. Both productions were with the Melbourne Theatre Company.



SYSTEM SOUND ASSOCIATES

PETER GRUBB



Peter joined System Sound in 1981 as Sound Supervisor for original productions of *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 Misérables*, *Miss Saigon*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Rent!* and *Matilda the Musical*.

He was Associate Designer for *Les Misérables*, *Spamalot*, *Mamma Mia!* and *Matilda the Musical* and designed the sound for *Cats*, *Witches of Eastwick*, *Oliver*, *Avenue Q*, *Miss Saigon*, *Mary Poppins*, *Moonshadow* and *Strictly Ballroom*.

Other credits include *Into The Woods*, *A Little Night Music*, *Sweet Charity*, *Company* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. For The Production Company, he co-designed sound for *She Loves Me*, *Call Me Madam*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Follies*, *Chess*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Jerry's Girls* and *Brigadoon*.

KELVIN GEDYE



Kelvin's first worked with System Sound in 1982, mixing *Candide*, *Oliver!*, *Oklahoma!*, *Cats*, *Les Misérables* and *The Phantom of the Opera* before joining System Sound full time in 1991, supervising and designing for touring productions such as *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats* and *Wicked*.

His Sound Design credits include *West Side Story*, *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Mother and Son*, *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*, *Dusty*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Brigadoon*.

JOHN SCANDRETT



John founded System Sound in 1979. Since then its teams have engineered the original Australasian production tours of *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*, and *Once*.

System recently completed world tours of *Les Misérables*, *The Phantom of The Opera*, *Matilda The Musical*, *Kinky Boots* and currently are touring *The Book of Mormon*.

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