



presents

"Call me madam"

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY Irving Berlin
BOOK BY Howard Lindsay
and Russel Crouse
CONCERT ADAPTATION BY
Charles Repole and Bill Russell

CREATED FOR CITY CENTRE ENCORES!
CALL ME MADAM IS PRESENTED THROUGH SPECIAL
ARRANGEMENT WITH WARNER/CHAPPELL MUSIC ON BEHALF
OF THE RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN THEATRE LIBRARY OF
NEW YORK CITY.

Gypsy

Starring
Judi Connelli

A Musical Fable

BOOK BY: Arthur Laurents

MUSIC BY: Jule Styne

LYRICS BY: Stephen Sondheim

Suggested by memoirs of Gypsy Rose Lee

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION BY David Merrick
& Leland Hayward

**ENTIRE PRODUCTION ORIGINALLY DIRECTED AND
CHOREOGRAPHED BY** Jerome Robbins

STARRING Judi Connelli

12, 14-15 July, 7.30pm • 15 July, 2pm | **STATE THEATRE**

Gypsies and Dolls

Starring
Marina Prior

BASED ON A STORY AND

CHARACTERS BY Damon Runyon

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY Frank Loesser

BOOK BY Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows

STARRING Marina Prior

16, 18-19 August, 7.30pm • 19 August, 2pm | **STATE THEATRE**

Chairman's Message



Dear Friends

I am very proud to present the second season of The Production Company's Broadway Musicals.

We did it all for the first time last year and couldn't have been happier with the result – Great shows, Great reviews, Great people and a fantastic base to grow and develop. This year we've brought you another series which shows the extraordinary talent we have available in Australia – Geraldine Turner, Judi Connelli and Marina Prior are the perfect beginning. With Gary Young, Nancye Hayes and Roger Hodgman directing, the companies are shaping up to be something very special!

Last year we worried about playing against wonderful shows tested in the global market. This year we know that we have some of the best people in the world right here at home.

The Production Company was established to showcase new and established talent and to stimulate the Melbourne and Australian theatre industry. It aims to do this through a concentration on excellence, Box Office Appeal and High Energy Entertainment

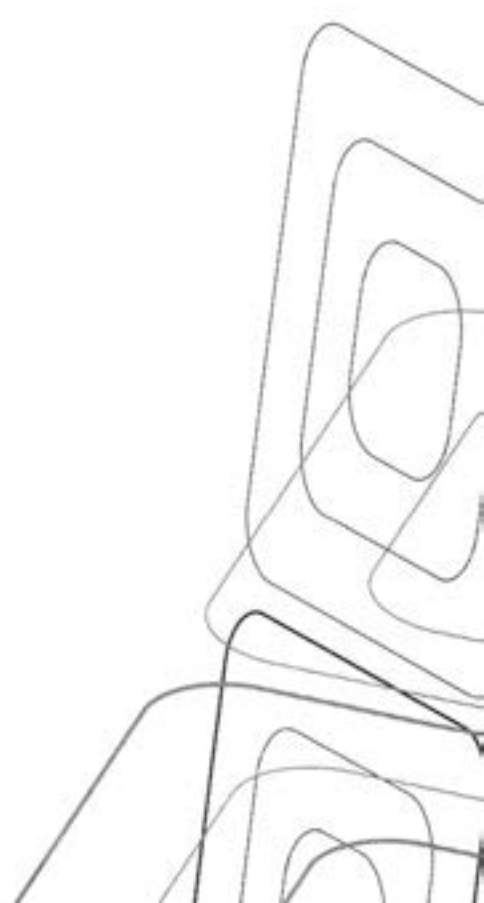
So we have clear goals and high ambitions but the best thing about running a theatre company is that to achieve them, you get to sit back, tap your toes and enjoy some of the best entertainment available. If our audiences leave with a song in their hearts we're well on our way to success.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped us to realise our dream and encourage you to keep coming back – we'll make it worth your while!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeanne Pratt".

Jeanne Pratt AO
Chairman

(Thanks again to the world's best Board)





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Director's Notes



CALL ME MADAM has resonance in the history of music theatre in Australia. It was last seen on our stages in 1964, starring Evie Hayes. The same production also provided Jill Perryman with a chance to play the lead and now thirty six years later Geraldine Turner makes the role of Sally Adams her own.

The piece, written and set in the 1950's, is based on the American socialite and diplomat, Perle Mesta (1889-1975). She was a member of the National Women's Party and became an effective lobbyist on behalf of the equal rights amendment. She established herself as one of Washington's leading hostesses. As an early patron of Senator Harry S. Truman, she helped with the elections of 1944 and again in 1948, when she served on the finance committee for the Democratic Campaign. In 1949, Mesta became U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg and held the post until 1953. She was a celebrated party-giver and some 'not so generous' souls have suggested that her appointment was a diplomatic event best remembered for providing *Call Me Madam* with a plot.

Nevertheless, political opinion to the side, it was Perle who inspired Irving Berlin to write *Call Me Madam* which starred Ethel Merman in 1950-52. The show is audacious, brash and funny and from a time that many regard as the golden years of musicals. A time when

'musical comedy' meant exactly that...theatre to entertain. It wasn't just for the music but for their extraordinary energy and spirit.

Berlin and his co-writers, Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse, wrote a love story. Two love stories in fact, set against a clash of cultures, ideas and ideals. Four characters find their paths to love through a minefield of foreign policies, traditions, manners, political entanglements and intrigues.

In *Madam* there is wonderful 'romance' to be had. One critic described it as "throwing a little stardust around", and romance, to me, in our ever-cynical world, seems to be a worthy thing to have on a theatre stage. There exists in the piece the story of a great love found later in life, and that adds a different emotional weight to the story of the young 'Romeo and Juliet' lovers. Both couples have to deal with the restrictions and expectations that the world places upon them. How can a princess love an ordinary man? How can a personal life be reconciled with a professional one? How can one culture learn from another? Heads and hearts must be open. It is these problems paralleled and explored through the piece that give it its warm and generous centre.

'Call me, madam'

It is wonderful to be working with Guy Simpson and Ross Coleman again and we are blessed to have this cast led by Geraldine, Grant, Rachael and Spencer. It is a great joy to find yourself in a rehearsal room with people who share a passion for music theatre, and exciting to have the chance, through this concert series, to bring to life shows that may not otherwise see the light of day.

It is unlikely that we will ever see another Irving Berlin as another era, another time, produced him. Musical theatre of today is different and so are the demands of the audiences but I believe that people will always love to sing and stories will continue to be told through music.

In a way Irving Berlin is Broadway of the fifties singing its heart out!

Tonight, I trust, *Call Me Madam* will entertain you, make you laugh, romance you and warm your hearts.

Gary Young



Geraldine Turner O.A.M. Mrs Sally Adams

Geraldine Turner is synonymous with Australian show business and has thrilled theatre going audiences in musicals like *A Little Night Music*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Into the Woods*, *Company*, *Chicago*, *Anything Goes*, *Cabaret*, *Kismet*, *Oliver!*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Noel & Gertie*, *Mack & Mabel*, *Ned Kelly*, *Grease*; operas and operettas like *La Belle Helene*, *HMS Pinafore* and *The Mikado*; and plays including *Present Laughter*, *Don's Party* and *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*. Her many concert and cabaret performances have taken her across Australia and to New York, Vancouver, San Francisco, Africa and most recently, in the birthplace of cabaret, Berlin where critics wrote 'Sensational ... an earthquake hits Berlin!'

Geraldine's television career has varied from dramatic roles in series and television specials to personal appearances like *Beauty and the Beast*. Her films include *Careful He Might Hear You*, *Summerfield* and most recently the record-breaking movie, *The Wog Boy* – all roles she has relished.

In the recording world Geraldine is recognised internationally as a Stephen Sondheim interpreter par excellence – being the first artist worldwide to record and release an all Sondheim album *The Stephen Sondheim Songbook*. Other albums include *Torch Songs – And Some Not So Torturous*, *When We Met*, *All the Colours of the Rainbow*, *Once in a Blue Moon* and cast albums of her stage hits like *Chicago* and *Anything Goes*.

Geraldine Turner has won several awards including two prestigious Green Room Awards (in 1984 for Nancy in *Oliver!* and again in 1989 for Reno Sweeney in *Anything Goes*) and two Mo Awards – for her performance as Mrs Lovett in *Sweeney Todd* and a Gold Mo for *Anything Goes*.

Grant Smith Cosmo Constantine

Grant Smith is one of Australia's most versatile and talented entertainers. His experience embraces all areas of the entertainment industry from opera and music theatre to cabaret, drama, film and television. Born in Western Australia, Grant trained at the Royal College of Music Opera School in London.

Performances in England included roles in *Sweeney Todd* directed by Hal Prince with Stephen Sondheim as Music Director at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, *Kiss me Kate*, *Barnum* at the London Palladium and *The Nightingale* at the Lyric Hammersmith. Grant's numerous cabaret seasons included performances at the London Room where he was guest soloist.

In 1985 he created the roles of Bustopher Jones and Gus the Theatre Cat for the Australian premiere of *Cats* which he continued in throughout the Sydney and Melbourne seasons. In 1989 he performed the role of Padre in *Man of La Mancha* for the Victorian Arts Centre Trust and Queensland Performing Arts Centre Trust.

In 1990 Grant played the lead role of Tito Merell on the national tour of the highly acclaimed *Lend me a Tenor*. Grant's performances in 1991 included *The Marriage of Fabio* for the Victoria State Opera, *Greek and Sweet Death* for Chamber Made Opera. Following the Melbourne season of *Greek*, Grant was asked to reproduce his role at the Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte in Italy. Also in 1991, Grant joined the cabaret show *Forbidden Broadway* which he toured to Hong Kong.



In 1992, Grant performed the role of Bialogusky in the world premiere of Michael Easton's *Petrov* as part of the Victorian Arts Centre's Summer Music series and performed in Chamber Made Opera's stage adaptation of Peter Weir's film *The Cars That Ate Paris*. Grant also made his Australian Opera debut performing the role of The Architect in the National Opera Workshop production of *The Eighth Wonder* by Alan John and Dennis Watkins. In the same year Grant appeared as Narrator in Mozart's *The Impresario* for Melbourne Symphony.

In 1993, Grant's performances included the role of Danilo in *The Merry Widow* for the Australian Opera, the world premiere of Liza Lim's *The Oresteia* with the Elision Ensemble, Pluto in the West Australian Opera production of *Orpheus in the Underworld* as well as Bustopher Jones and Gus the Theatre Cat in the Australian production of *Cats* in the South East Asian tour. In 1994 Grant travelled to Washington DC to perform in *Medea* with Chamber Made Opera. His engagements for 1995 included Danilo in *The Merry Widow* for Canterbury Opera in New Zealand.

Grant Smith created the role of Lumiere in the Australian premiere production of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, for which he received a Green Room Award nomination. He also performed the role of Eisenstein in *Fledermaus* for West Australian Opera in 1996, a role he repeated for Opera Australia in 1997.

1998 saw Grant perform the title role in the world premiere of *Dr Forbes will see you now* for Chamber Made Opera and *Love Burns* and *Trouble in Tahiti* for Company B/OzOpera in Melbourne (Melbourne Festival) and Sydney. He performed Eisenstein in *Fledermaus* for State Opera of South Australia in 1999.



Spencer McLaren Kenneth Gibson

Call Me Madam marks Spencer's return to the musical theatre stage after graduating from NIDA in 1999. Prior to his study, Spencer appeared for two years in *Beauty and the Beast* as the alternate Beast. He also performed the role of Munkustrap in *CATS*, Mouthpiece in the highly successful IMG/VSO production of *West Side Story* and appeared in the concert version of *Kismet*.

Whilst at NIDA, Spencer played the roles of Mal in *Don's Party*, Oliver Bell in *Making Noise Quietly*, Brutus in *Julius Caesar*, Uncle Touchwood in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, Williamson in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, #4 in *Twelve Angry Men*, Joshua/Edward in *Cloud 9* and Etherege in *The Libertine* directed by Richard Cotterell.

During his final year of study, Spencer launched *The Looking Glass theatre company* with a production of Stephen Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park with George* in which he played the role of George Seurat to much acclaim.

Currently Spencer can be seen as Kieran Fletcher in Channel 7's *Home and Away*. Other television credits include *The Damnation of Harvey McHugh*, *Chances* and various appearances on *Good Morning Australia*. Recently Spencer completed filming the telemovie *The Secret Life of Us* for Southern Star productions playing Richie, which will soon be seen nationally.



Rachael Beck Princess Maria

Rachael Beck is one of Australia's leading actors. She has had wide experience in musical theatre and television.

Most recently Rachael performed the roles of Donna, Chanelette and Amy Fisher in the production of *Big Hair In America* premiering at the HotHouse Theatre under the direction of Marion Potts. Prior to that Rachael created the role of Naomi in *Secret Bridesmaids Business* for Playbox. Other stage credits include the role of Fantine in the Cameron Mackintosh production of *Les Misérables*. Rachael played Rumpolester in *Cats*, also for Cameron Mackintosh, *Me And My Girl* which toured Australia and New Zealand for the Adelaide Festival, Fredrika in *A Little Night Music* and Lady Mortimer in *Henry IV*, both for the Sydney Theatre Company.

In 1992, Rachael performed the role of Judy Garland in her own one-woman show, *Young Judy* written by John Beck.

Rachael's television credits include *Stingers*, *Mercury*, *The Feds*, *This Man This Woman*, *G.P.*, *Flying Doctors* and *Hey Dad*, in which she appeared as Sam for two years. She has also appeared in the film *Ocean Boulevard*.

In 1996 Rachael received the ARIA Award for Best Australian Soundtrack/ Cast/ Show Release for *Beauty And The Beast* Cast Recording.



Adam Murphy Pemberton Maxwell

Adam was born in Sydney but has lived a large portion of his life in New Zealand. He studied Drama and Film Studies at the University of South Australia and trained at the Bay of Plenty Academy of Performing Arts in New Zealand.

Adam made his Australian performance debut in the 10th Anniversary production of *Les Misérables* playing the roles of Grantaire, Bamatabois and covering the characters of Thenardier and the Factory Foreman.

As a member of the Court Theatre Company in Christchurch New Zealand for two years, Adam played roles such as Don Everly in *Blue Sky Boys*, Eben Cabot in *Desire Under the Elms*, Adam Canning in *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*, Apollodorus in *Caesar and Cleopatra*, Eilif in *Mother Courage and her Children*, Prince Charles in *The Queen and I*, Richard Stockwell in *This Other Eden*, Chief Weasel in *The Wind in the Willows*, George Nowack in *She Loves Me* and various characters in *Travels With My Aunt*.

Other theatre credits include *Sordido in The Revenger's Tragedy*, various characters in the premiere of *Where Would A Songwriter Be Without Love* and Elwood Blues in *The Official Tribute to the Blues Brothers*.

Television credits include various characters as a core cast member of *The Trivia Company*, *Shortland Street*, *Eugenie Sandler*, *Good Morning Australia* and *Halifax f.p.*

Most recently Adam performed the role of Alex in *Life by Drowning*, a new Australian musical by Gary Young and Paul Keelan.



Reg Gorman Congressman Wilkins

Reg Gorman first started his show business career as a comic in the Sydney clubs at the age of 18. It wasn't long before he found the world of theatre. First there was vaudeville; The Tivoli in Sydney, The Theatre Royal in Brisbane with George Wallace Jnr, and touring New Zealand with *Tonight at 8:30*. In New Zealand, he was second comic to Johnny Lockwood and worked with the famous English straight man, Len Lowe. It was Len who told Reg to try acting, both in drama and in musicals. Back in Australia, Reg did just that, first in revue and farce at the Phillip Theatre, then drama at the Ensemble Theatre. He then worked in lots of pantomimes, films and TV, where his face became well known through his many guest appearances on TV shows and commercials.

He joined J.C. Williamson for four musicals and two comedies, then shows with Nimrod Theatre and the Sydney Theatre Company, following them with *The Sullivans* as Jack the barman for six years. Since then he has done more of the same, and also produced and directed. He is still doing his comedy routines, as well as touring his one man show and lecturing on comedy.

His next venture is to direct a production for the music theatre students at the Ballarat Academy of the Performing Arts. He is married to actress Judith Roberts and they have three children – Kate, Karl and Charmaine ... all in 'The Business.'



Clive Hearne Senator Gallagher

One of Australia's most versatile actor/singers, Clive began his career in J.C. Williamson's production of *Call Me Madam*. After more than 40 years in 'the business', he has played major roles in many productions including *Paint Your Wagon*, *Can Can*, *Irma la Douce*, *South Pacific*, *Showboat*, *Kismet*, *Carousel*, *Promises Promises*, *Man of la Mancha*, *Gypsy*, *Evita*, *Cabaret*, *Follies*, *Metropolis*, *Oklahoma*, *A Little Night Music*, *Dimboola*, *Forty Carats*, *Voyage Round My Father* and more.

He recently played the role of Cecil B DeMille in the Australian premiere production of *Sunset Boulevard* at the Regent Theatre.

A generous supporter of regional theatre, he has directed and played numerous roles with some of Melbourne's leading theatre companies.

He is also a skilled craftsman and has been often seen backstage with his well seasoned hammer and nail pouch, constructing sets and props.

In television, Clive started as a singer in popular shows including *In Melbourne Tonight*, *Sunny Side Up* and ABC variety shows. He has appeared in dozens of television drama series and recent shows include *The Man from Snowy River* on the Nine Network and *Blue Heelers* for the Seven Network.

An active sportsman, he is still working on his golf handicap and also has a passion for the sea where he spends most of his spare time aboard his yacht *Leading Lady* preparing for racing or just 'simply messin' about'.



David Ravenswood Senator Brockbank

David Ravenswood has appeared in film, television, opera, theatre and musicals for the major companies in Australia. He has worked for the Melbourne Theatre Company in over 21 productions including *Othello*, *School for Scandal*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*, *As You Like It* and *The Man Who Came To Dinner*. David has also worked with the South Australian Theatre Company, Tasmanian Theatre Company and St Martin's Theatre. David performed the role of Colonel Pickering for the VSO/IMG production of *My Fair Lady*, Lazar Wolf in *Fiddler On The Roof* and Max Detweiler in *The Sound of Music* which won him the Green Room Award for Best Supporting Actor. For J.C. Williamson, David starred in *Half-a-Sixpence*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *Pippin*, *La Cage Aux Folles* and *Me and My Girl*. For the Adelaide Festival Trust, David performed in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*, *The Gondoliers* and *HMS Pinafore* as well as *Cox and Box* and *Oliver!* In last year's premiere season for The Production Company, he played Florenz Ziegfeld Jr in *Funny Girl*.

On the small screen, he has featured in many Australian series including *Homicide*, *Carson's Law*, *Prisoner*, *Matlock Police*, *Skyways*, *All the Rivers Run II*, *Neighbours*, *Adventure Island*, *Rafferty's Rules*, *Blue Heelers* and *Bellbird*. David's film credits include *Frog Dreaming*, *Bushfire Moon*, *Evil Angels*, *Raw Deal* and *Young Flynn*.

Ensemble

Gavin D Andrew

Gavin is a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). He was last seen in the workshop production of the new Australian musical *Life By Drowning*, in which he created the character of Bruce 'The Bang!' Knight. For Cameron Mackintosh he has understudied and performed the role of Roger in *Rent*, Enjolras in *Les Misérables* and Chris in *Miss Saigon*.

Other theatre credits include *Hello Dolly*, *South Pacific* (GFO/AFCT), *Madam Butterfly*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Carmen* (W.A. Opera) and *Tristan und Isolde* (Australian Opera). Gavin is also a professional photographer. Find out more about Gavin on his website – www.ozemail.com.au/~gavinda.

Jonathan Brooke-Densem

Jonathan has studied all forms of performance including drama, singing (classical, jazz and contemporary), piano and dance. He was a regular with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra and has performed in many productions at the Court Theatre in New Zealand, including plays by Shaw, Chekhov, Shakespeare and Stoppard. Jonathan has also worked in film and commercials.

His music theatre credits include the role of Freddie in *My Fair Lady* at the Aotea Centre, Eddie in *Blood Brothers*, Simon in *Jesus Christ Superstar* for Harry M Miller and understudy to the lead role of Chris in *Miss Saigon*. Jonathan was a member of the *Les Misérables* company and understudied the role of Enjolras. When not performing, he keeps busy with recording and teaching commitments.

Lisa-Marie Charalambous

Lisa-Marie graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts in 1997 with a Bachelor of Musical Performance majoring in classical voice. Her musical credits include the World Premiere of *Crusade – The Concert* for Picture This!

Productions and the 10th Anniversary production of *Les Misérables* for Cameron Mackintosh where she understudied and performed the role of Cosette. Lisa-Marie has compered for ABC For Kids and appeared in *West Side Story* as Maria, *The Sound of Music* as Baroness Elsa Shreeder, *My Fair Lady* and *Carmen*.

Lisa-Marie has also featured in various corporate and training videos for Acer, Red Rooster and VIC Roads as well as various television commercials.

Ziggy Clements

Awarded Most Promising Music Theatre Graduate of her year from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Ziggy was asked to perform her one woman show *100 Easy Ways* for the Melbourne Fringe Festival. Ziggy then went on to perform the role of Mary singing 'Day by Day' in *Godspell* at the Universal Theatre (also for the Melbourne Fringe). Whilst appearing in the recent Australian tour of *Les Misérables*, she played the Matchgirl in *The Happy Prince* by David Young and performed in *Mame* for The Production Company last year.

Ziggy has sung in various bands throughout Australia and New Zealand and has performed in venues as diverse as Crown Casino's Odeon and Palladium Rooms, the Melbourne Concert Hall and Cafe K.

Ziggy has appeared live on various television shows and still finds time to run her own performing arts school Artz Collective, which she just loves. Ziggy has just returned from Canada where she is currently working on her first original album.

Kevin Coyne

Kevin has worked extensively overseas and throughout Australia. His many impressive theatre credits include *Carrie – The Musical* on Broadway. Kevin has appeared on the West End in *Chess*, *Tap Dogs* and in *Hot Shoe Shuffle* (and Australasian Tour). He has also performed in many Australian musicals including *The Wizard of Oz*, *Anything Goes*, *Dancin' Man*, *Crazy for You*, *The Boy from Oz* and most recently *Chicago*.

Robin Cuming

The Grand Duke Otto

Robin has performed with state and commercial managements across Australia. Musicals include *Funny Girl* (Tom Keeney) with this company, MTC's *Into the Woods*, Doc in *West Side Story*, *Kismet* and Parchester in the premiere Australian production of *Me and My Girl*.

Working in Melbourne with most mainstream and fringe companies, he appeared recently in the Keene-Taylor production *Kaddish* which was a major success at the Sydney 2000 Arts Festival.

On TV, his credits include *Hey Hey It's Saturday*, *Lano & Woodley*, *Blue Heelers*, *Backberner* and work with the Comedy Channel. Recent films: Frank in *Road to Nhill* and Eric in the award winning short film *Silent Partners*.

Robin works also as a composer, most recently providing music for *Butcher* at Theatreworks.

Adam-Jon Fiorentino

Adam has had extensive training with Karen Curtis, The VCASS and Bartuccio Dance & Promotion Centre in the lead up to his non-stop professional career. Recently finishing up with the Australian tour of *The Boy from Oz*, Adam's career has covered all aspects of performing, featuring roles in both *Neighbours* and *Tribe*, a regular dancer on *In Melbourne Tonight* and various commercials for television. Adam has also performed in venues such as The Malthouse, Melbourne Tennis Centre and Crown Casino.

Adam would like to dedicate his performance to his mother, Bonnie.

Andrew Hallsworth

Andrew made his theatre debut in Helen Montague's original production of *42nd Street* and since then he has enjoyed a diverse career.

Born in Melbourne, he trained in all facets of dance with the late Lance

Davies and was also coached by Bev Palmer and Karen Jones, before receiving a scholarship at The Dance Factory.

Andrew is a resident choreographer and dance lecturer for the Colors Entertainment Network and Dance World 301 in Melbourne. He works regularly as a dancer for some of Australia's top choreographers on television and at various corporate events as well as choreography and stage management. In recent months, Andrew worked as a choreographer for SABA at the 1999 Style Aid, also assisting Alana Scanlan for Melbourne Fashion Week.

His theatre credits include *Me and My Girl* (Dance Captain), *West Side Story*, *Red Hot and Rhonda*, *Fiddler on the Roof* (Dance Captain/Resident Choreographer), The Production Company's concert version of *Funny Girl* starring Caroline O' Connor and most recently as Dance Captain for *Jolson the Musical*.

Sharon Hardy

Sharon's musical theatre credits include Cruella de Vil in Disney's *Magical Moments* at Sydney's State Theatre, *Annie*, *Anything Goes*, *Grease - the Arena Spectacular*, understudying the roles of Jan and Miss Lynch and *Happy Days*, understudying the role of Mrs Cunningham. She has also danced on the nationally televised *People's Choice Awards*.

Prior to taking up performing full time, Sharon owned and managed a successful dance school in Sydney for 12 years.

Sara Highlands

Sara has moved to Australia from her home country of England, where she trained at The Arts Educational School and Performers College.

Her musical debut was the lead role of Coral in the musical *Mermaid*. Further productions include *Mystique*, *Next Generation* (Scottish tour), *Dick Whittington*, *Tom Thumb* with Walt Disney (Hong Kong). Her TV credits include *The Good Friday Appeal* (Ch 7), *The Big Breakfast* (Ch 4), *Atlantis* (BBC)

and *The Rugby World Cup* (BBC).

Sara has recorded the original CD *The Tales of Mr Tod* and was a session singer in the UK for Music 2000.

Sara is very excited to be in Australia and making her Australian theatrical debut with The Production Company's *Call Me Madam*.

Melissa Langton

Melissa has been performing professionally since 1992, when she performed in *Jesus Christ Superstar - The Concert*. Since then she has performed in *Les Misérables*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*, and *HMS Pinafore*. Melissa also appears regularly in cabaret. Recent appearances include; *I Got The Music in Me*, *Peel Me A Grape* and *What's New Pussycat?* Melissa is also a part of the popular girl group, *The Fabulous Singlettes* whose recent performances include; *The 1998 Melbourne Grand Prix Ball*, a season at *The 1998 Melbourne International Comedy Festival* and a sellout season in February of this year at *The Bar Jeder Vernunft* in Berlin. The group plans a return season to Berlin in August and will also perform in Sydney during the 2000 Olympics.

Barry Mitchell

Prime Minister Sebastian

Barry's professional career spans more than 20 years in theatre, jazz, cabaret, comedy, radio and television. He is a graduate from the Victorian College of the Arts School of Opera during which time he sang the lead role Vaudemont in the Australian premiere of Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta*, Levko in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Maynight* and many more. Barry also appeared as the Mayor in Britten's *Albert Herring* and is a regular member of the Opera Australia chorus. Barry performed last year in The Production Company's *Mame* and his most recent appearance was the role of Harry in the world premiere of *Prodigal Son*.

Barry's television appearances include *Good Morning Australia*, *The Midday Show* and *Hey Hey It's Saturday*.

He has also written and performed comedy on the *Breakfast Show* on Radio 3XY as well as touring schools performing in children's theatre.

Simone Nyhuis

Simone began her training at the tender age of four. By the age of eight, she began professionally performing in a variety of commercials, cabarets, bands, modelling, theatre and television shows around the world.

Simone completed a full time dance and theatrical course at the Dance Factory in 1994 and then went on to appear as a lead singer and dancer in the resident entertainment group 'Rock the Boat' on board P&O's *Fairstar*. Simone has also appeared in the musical *Smokey Joe's Cafe* and played the role of Patty Simcox and understudy to Sandy in *Grease, the Arena Spectacular*.

Television credits include *Good Morning Australia*, *Getaway*, *New Faces* and *In Melbourne Tonight*. Simone also teaches singing, dancing and drama in a variety of different training schools around Melbourne.

Simone would like to thank her parents, fiance Matt, family and friends for their constant love and support.

Jackie Rees

The Grand Duchess Sophie

Born in Wales, Jackie arrived in Australia to play Columbia in the original production of *The Rocky Horror Show*. Following this were roles in the musicals *The Happy Prince*, *One of the Boys*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Showboat* and *The Glitter Sisters* and the plays *The Shifting Heart* and *O' Flaherty V.C.*

With the formation of the Mo Award winning cabaret group the Ritz Company, Jackie toured Australia, Europe and Asia and recorded two albums, *Putting on the Ritz* and *Go into your Dance*. With the Ritz Company, she performed in *Side By Side By Sondheim*, the Australian premiere of Maltby & Shire's *Starting Here, Starting Now* and John Michael Howson's *Hooray for Hollywood*.

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Returning to theatre, Jackie appeared in *Me and My Girl, Nine*, the cast recording of which received an Aria award, the international production of *Aida*, *Stepping Out*, *Great Expectations*, *Chair in the Landscape* and the Sydney Theatre Company's *Threepenny Opera*. She took principal roles in *A Swell Party* and *Oscars Turn to Sing*, played Madame Giry in *The Phantom of the Opera* and recently played Heidi in *Follies*.

Television appearances include *Good Morning Australia*, *Hey Hey, It's Saturday*, *The Don Lane Show*, *The Midday Show*, *G.P.* and *Waterloo Street* and film work includes Columbia Pictures' *Call of the Wild*, telemovies *She'll be Sweet* and *Hunted* and the Logie winning *The Alternative*.

Jackie is currently working on her one woman show, *Love and other Peculiar Disorders*, premiering at Capers in May.

Graeme M Russell

Mr Gibson

In *Call Me Madam*, 32 year old Graeme continues his career of playing old men, with the role of Mr Gibson.

Graeme was a member of the original Australian casts of *The Phantom of the Opera* (understudying and playing Joseph Buquet and Don Attilio) and *The Secret Garden* (understudying Old Ben, the Gardener) and appeared in VSO/IMG's production of *My Fair Lady* and as Moose in GFO's *Crazy For You*. In 1997, he created the role of Terry Smythe-Higgins in Chamber Made Opera's *Doctor Forbes Will See You Now*. Most recently, Graeme appeared as Bogdanovitch in *The Merry Widow* for Essgee Productions.

Greg Shand

From Wollongong NSW, Greg made his professional theatrical debut as part of an Australia/New Zealand tour by British female impersonator Danny La Rue. Appearances in the Sydney Theatre Company's production of *Chicago* and a national tour of *Oklahoma* soon followed.

Greg travelled overseas to gain further experience and spent seven years living and working in the UK, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and The Netherlands,

performing in productions of *Amadeus*, *Me and My Girl*, *La Cage Aux Folles*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Cats*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Les Misérables*, *Side By Side By Sondheim* and *Elisabeth*, among others.

Television appearances in Australia include *The Young Doctors* and a cabaret show starring Jackie Love and in the UK, an appearance in the BBC drama *Wings*.

Greg appeared in The Production Company's 1999 production of *Mame* and is delighted to be working with the company again.

Lisa Sontag

Lisa began her training at the age of seven with Donna Halloran in NSW. She continued her study under Julie Cattach before going on to Dance World 301, from where she graduated in 1997 with a Diploma in Performing Arts. Professionally, Lisa has appeared as a resident dancer on *In Melbourne Tonight* and performed with Warner Bros pantomimes and as an NBL Tigers cheerleader. Lisa has also performed in support for Past To Present, Peter Andre, Tina Cousins, Joanne BZ, Ilanda and Tom Jones.

For the last couple of years, Lisa has toured as a member of the Australian premiere cast of *The Boy From Oz*.

Hester van der Vyver

Hester trained in New Zealand, performing in many amateur musicals before moving to Australia to study full time at the National Theatre Ballet School. Her professional experience includes cheerleading for the NBL, regular appearances on *In Melbourne Tonight*, performances at Dragon Fly Theatre Restaurant and at various corporate functions. She played the role of Suzie, a follies girl, in the Melbourne and Brisbane seasons of *Crazy For You* and last year appeared in The Production Company's *Funny Girl*.

Patricia Vivian-Lall

Born in England, Patricia began her career at age 12, singing in working-men's clubs. A scholarship took her to London at 16, to study voice and ballet at the Rambert School and drama at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

After playing repertory and a couple of West End musicals, she found herself playing Polly in *The Boyfriend*. She came to Australia in 1962 to play Eliza in *My Fair Lady* for JC Williamson then Carrie in *Carousel* and Henrietta in *Robert and Elizabeth* before studying at the Melba Conservatorium. She appeared in many operas with the Victoria State Opera over a ten year period and also performed the role of Madame Giry in the original cast of *The Phantom of the Opera* and the role of Sister Mary Hubert in *Nunsense* on its national tour.

Patricia appeared in *The Puccini Spectacular*, during 1999 in Simon Gallaher's production of *The Merry Widow*, *Tosca* for Opera Australia, The Production Company's *Funny Girl* and earlier this year, with the Melbourne Chorale Ensemble, supporting Barbra Streisand.

Rod Waterworth

Rod began his career in Melbourne when he first appeared in *Cats*. He has since performed in *Anything Goes*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Possum Magic*, *42nd Street*, *The Mack & Mabel Concerts*, *Me and My Girl*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *My Fair Lady*, *Red Hot & Rhonda*, *Crazy For You*, *Winnie The Pooh*, The Production Company's *Mame*, *She Loves Me* and *Funny Girl* and most recently *Jolson*. He has also appeared in several operas for the V.S.O. and worked extensively in fashion parades and conventions throughout Australia.

Rod was a member of vocal groups The Stage Door Johnnys and The New Fabulous Rhythm Boys performing at the Gold Coast Jazz Festival, Prior Engagements Supper Club and on *The Midday Show* and *Good Morning Australia*.

Something to Dance About

A happy half-century

by Frank Van Straten OAM

One sunny summer afternoon in 1949 Broadway producer Howard Lindsay stumbled on a magazine article about Perle Mesta and her appointment by President Harry S. Truman to the unlikely position of United States ambassador to the tiny European Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Miss Mesta was the daughter of one millionaire and the widow of another. She was indeed a Washington monument – a slightly out-of-place socialite and a thrower of legendary parties. She was in fact the city's 'Hostess with the Mostes'. She was, figured Lindsay, the ideal subject on whom to base a cheeky, up-to-date, all-American Broadway musical extravaganza.

'Who's Perle Mesta?' grunted Ethel Merman when Lindsay suggested she would be perfect in the leading role. She had worked with Lindsay in *Anything Goes* and *Red, Hot and Blue!* and she was soon persuaded. So was Irving Berlin. The legendary songsmith was still smarting from the failure of his most recent show, *Miss Liberty*. At sixty-two he was worried that people thought he was out of touch with modern audiences. He wanted to do one last show, a show with a contemporary setting that would prove that he could still deliver the goods. Not only would the proposed production let him leave Broadway in style, it would also re-unite him with Merman, who had starred so meteorically in his *Annie Get Your Gun* in 1946.

With Miss Mesta's bemused blessing, Lindsay and Russel Crouse set to work on the book, leaving the music and lyrics to Berlin. There was even a memorable dinner party for Miss Mesta to meet Miss Merman. Lindsay, Crouse and Berlin were there, with Margaret Truman, Ray Bolger and Ezio Pinza for good measure. As Berlin sat at the piano accompanying Perle's singing of his old hit 'Remember', Merman stage-whispered to Margaret Truman, 'If this dame's going into my racket, I'm going to ask your dad for a job in the diplomatic service.'



Billie North, Jeff Warren "You're Just in Love" – London Production

To finance the show, producer Leland Hayward negotiated an extraordinary deal with RCA. The recording giant agreed to underwrite the entire production cost, \$250,000; in return, the producers and principals agreed to take a 20% reduction in royalties until RCA had recouped its investment from sales of the show's cast album. The arrangement was all the more bizarre because Miss Merman was firmly contracted to Decca, who refused to 'lend' her to RCA. Eventually there were two albums: Dinah Shore – a strange choice – substituted for Merman on RCA, while Merman was joined by Dick Haymes and a studio cast on the Decca release. To RCA's chagrin the Decca disc stayed on *Billboard's* 'Best Selling Popular Album' chart for thirty-six weeks and reached number two position, while RCA had to be content with a thirteen-week run and a peak at number six.

Call Me Madam was Ethel Merman's eleventh Broadway musical. As a major star she could demand ten per cent of a show's box office gross, but for *Call Me Madam* she sagely settled for eight per cent – plus a ten percent stake in the property itself. This meant that she had a financial interest in this and every subsequent production.

Co-starring with Merman were Paul Lukas as Cosmo Constantine, Lichtenburg's Prime Minister; newcomer Russell Nype as Sally Adams' egghead aide, Kenneth Gibson; and Galina Talva as Princess Maria of Lichtenburg. Raoul Pène du Bois designed the sets and costumes – for everyone except Miss Merman. Her wardrobe was sensationally extravagant. 'Under those wonderful gowns,' she quipped, 'I was a kind of sexy Tugboat Annie gussied up by Mainbocher'. Mainbocher (Main Rousseau Bocher), the legendary French-born society couturier, excelled himself with a series of stunning creations that were almost capable of stopping the show by themselves.

Under the experienced guidance of director George Abbott and choreographer Jerome Robbins, rehearsals began in New York in August 1950. All went well until the first try-out in New Haven. The second act was slow and dull. Two songs created the problem. One was an anthem to democracy called 'Free'; the other was 'Mr Monotony', an old Berlin song that had already been dropped from two previous shows. Out it went again, along with 'Free'. To replace them Berlin speedily created a bright number called 'Something to Dance About' and one of his famous

'Call me, madam'

of Call Me Madam

counterpoint duets for Merman and Nype. It was 'You're Just In Love'. When she heard it, Merman predicted, 'We'll never get off stage'. Ever the thrifty recycler, Berlin later rewrote 'Free' as 'Snow' for the 1954 film *White Christmas*.

There were more changes and refinements – then refinements of refinements. Eventually Merman rebelled. 'Boys,' she said, 'as of right now, I am

Miss Birdseye of 1950. I am frozen. Not even a new comma.'

Opening Night

Despite public concern about the progress of the war raging in Korea, interest in the new show was enormous. The Imperial Theatre announced a Broadway record box office advance sale of approximately \$1 million, and tickets for the gala first night – 12 October 1950

– changed hands for \$200 – instead of the official \$7.20! *Call Me Madam's* premiere was the most glittering of the season. Autograph hunters jammed West Forty-fifth Street to see the celebrities arrive. Among them was General Dwight D. Eisenhower, reportedly there to check out the show's 'They Like Ike' production number. He must have approved; later, retitled 'I Like Ike', it became his presidential campaign song.

The first night patrons chuckled at two tongue-in-cheek 'disclaimers' in the programme: 'The play is laid in two mythical countries. One is called Lichtenburg, the other the United States of America' and 'Neither the character of Mrs Sally Adams, nor Miss Ethel Merman, resembles any other person alive or dead.' Seconds before Jay Blackton led the orchestra into the overture, Russel Crouse asked Merman if she were nervous. 'Nervous?' she drawled. 'No. The audience has paid their money. They're the ones that should be nervous.'

If they were nervous, there was no need. *Call Me Madam* was an instant hit. 'You're Just In Love' was encored seven times. The *New York Times* critic Brooks Atkinson said, 'It throws a little stardust around the theatre and sets the audience to roaring.' Atkinson commended the show as 'genuine comedy because the leading character grows and develops in the course of the play, and because Merman puts into it good will as well as swaggering self-confidence.' *Newsweek* called it 'A rowdy delight'. The *Herald Tribune* was succinct: 'The Berlin songs and a superb production make *Call Me Madam* the gala it promised to be.' Even Perle Mesta enjoyed herself. She told reporters, 'I only hope that someday I become as great a diplomat as Ethel Merman is an actress.' Now, *that's* diplomatic!

After just nineteen weeks, *Call Me Madam* chalked up its first million dollars at the box office. It went on to garner two Tony Awards – Best Actress in a Musical



Bobby Mack, Richard Webb, Alec Kellaway 'They Like Ike' – Australian Production

Something to Dance About

'Call me, madam'

for Miss Merman (her only Tony) and Best Featured Actor in a Musical for Mr Nype. *Guys and Dolls*, which opened a few weeks later, won Best Musical and several other Tonys. It was probably the competition provided by *Guys and Dolls*, *South Pacific* and, later, *The King and I*, that limited the Broadway tenure of *Call Me Madam* to 644 performances – not in the same league as *Annie Get Your Gun's* 1147, but very a satisfactory run just the same.

Across the Atlantic

Typically, gutsy, iron-lunged Ethel Merman never missed a show, much to the frustration of her understudy, Elaine Stritch. Eventually Miss Stritch got her chance when she was chosen to head a road company that set out in May 1952 for an eleven-month tour. Before this, though, Jack Hylton presented the show at the vast London Coliseum, where it opened on 15 March 1952. Featured as Sally Adams was Billie Worth, a veteran American with a suitably sassy style. She'd toured Australia in 1937, working here with her husband, Donald Burr, in the musicals *Swing Along* and *Over She Goes*. In *Call Me Madam*, Burr played Pemberton Maxwell. Film star Anton Walbrook brought Continental suavité to the role of Cosmo and Shani Wallis was disarmingly charming as Princess Maria. Jeff Warren, a handsome young American, was Kenneth Gibson. Warren had played the role on Broadway after Russell Nype left the cast. Ten years later Jeff Warren came to Australia to star unforgettably as the King in Garnet H. Carroll's production of *The King and I*. He has since made this country his home.

It's worth recording that when Anton Walbrook left the cast, Donald Burr ascended to the role of Cosmo, thereby allowing a young Australian called Frank Wilson to take over as Pemberton Maxwell. Mr Wilson's later career on Australian stage and television is too well known to need detailing here.



Rene Paul, Evie Hayes – Australian Production

There were other notable names in *Call Me Madam's* London cast. Arthur Lowe, later of *Dad's Army* fame, was Senator Brockbank; Australian George Carden was a brilliant principal male dancer; and the dual roles of the United States Secretary of State and the Lichtenburg Court Chamberlain were played by Mayne Lynton – he was the husband of Australian actor Nancye Stewart and, therefore, son-in-law of the legendary Nellie Stewart, perhaps this country's most beloved theatrical personality.

Because Jack Hylton was concerned that the contemporary American politics portrayed in *Call Me Madam* might bewilder or alienate British audiences, Irving Berlin wrote 'A Letter From Uncle Sam' which was slipped into the Coliseum programmes. It read, in part, "You should not forget that the

appointment of a wealthy Washington hostess to the post of American ambassador would be quite possible in our diplomatic set-up. Over in the States we have less rigid censorship than you folks; we can present actors made up as living public figures, so when "Mr Secretary" comes to Madam's party, you may be sure that he is meant to be none other than Dean Acheson, and when Mrs Adams calls up "Harry" and inquires about "Betsie's bridge" and "Margaret's concerts", don't be in any doubt – she is talking about the Trumans! At one time there was talk of attempting to simplify, or even to remove entirely, the political references in the show. Personally I think the decision not to do so was right. All the same, we hope that you will laugh at us as we laugh at ourselves!"

'Uncle Sam' need not have worried. The audience was ecstatic, and so was the press. In the *Daily Express* John Barber confessed 'I thought the cheering gallery would fall into the applauding stalls. It's a big, joyous show.' The *Daily Mail's* Cecil Wilson welcomed 'The gayest show since *Oklahoma!* and certainly the wittiest. It's a show that sends us away with a rare glow of satisfaction'. That 'rare glow' warmed the London Coliseum for 485 performances.

The film rights to *Call Me Madam* were acquired by Darryl F. Zanuck for 20th Century-Fox. Irving Berlin's share was \$75,000. At the same time he negotiated a further \$600,000 for another movie, *There's No Business Like Show Business*, the score of which would recycle dozens of Berlin's early hits. Although she was hardly a guaranteed screen attraction, Ethel Merman somehow persuaded

Zanuck to let her star in both films. With her in the *Call Me Madam* movie were George Sanders as Cosmo, Donald O'Connor as Kenneth and Vera-Ellen as the Princess. Walter Lang directed. The film was released in March 1953.

Call Me Madam Down Under

Judiciously J.C. Williamson's delayed the Australian stage production of *Call Me Madam* until after the film had been seen here. It was probably inevitable that the lead would go to the ebullient Evie Hayes. Seattle-born Evie had come to Australia with her husband, star vaudevillian Will Mahoney, for the Tivoli Circuit in 1938. She had been remarkably successful as Annie Oakley in Williamson's production of Irving Berlin's earlier triumph, *Annie Get Your Gun*. Evie used to say proudly that it ran so long she 'wore out three leading men'. Berlin

himself suggested that Sally Adams would be an ideal role for her.

As was the custom of the time, the other two leads went to imports. Rene Paul, a tall, handsome Swiss-American was Cosmo, and ex-GI Sid Lawson was Kenneth Gibson. Neither could boast much in the way of meaningful Broadway credits, though Mr Lawson had made a tiny contribution to Irving Berlin's flop *Miss Liberty*, and had been seen briefly a revival of *Diamond Lil* with Mae West (which he enigmatically described as 'a wonderful experience').

The lesser roles went to Australians, many of them JCW 'regulars': Alec Kellaway (Congressman Wilkins), Bobby Mack (Brockbank), Charles McCallum (Secretary of State), Richard Webb (Senator Gallagher), William Rees (Sebastian), John Huson (Grand Duke Otto) and Alton Harvey (the Butler). There was some notable new talent, too: Coral Deague had her first major role as Princess Maria, as did Graeme Bent, as Pemberton Maxwell. The singing and dancing ensemble was a miniature 'Who's Who' of future stars: Jill Perryman, Billie Fowler, Kevan Johnston, Garth Welch – and Clive Hearne. Clive was a member of the show's 'singing ensemble' – and he's back tonight, forty-seven years later – playing the role of Senator Gallagher!

To direct, Williamson's chose John Casson. The son of the illustrious Dame Sybil Thorndike and Sir Lewis Casson, he was far more at home in the 'classical' theatre. He had directed only one other musical – a short-lived revival of *Kiss Me, Kate* with Hayes Gordon and Evie Hayes. George Carden came from London to recreate the dances, assisted by the ever reliable 'ballet mistress' Betty Pounder. Leo Packer was musical director.

Call Me Madam hurtled into Australian theatrical history at Her Majesty's in Melbourne on 5 September 1953. The gala premiere – described somewhat unfortunately by the *Age* as 'A gay opening' – was attended by the Prime Minister, Mr R.G. Menzies, and Mrs Menzies. She wore 'a gown of pewter grey stiffened Chantilly lace made with a gracefully draped bodice and matching jacket.' They took their seats in the dress circle to 'a round of spontaneous applause'. Among the other dignitaries were the United States Consul General and the US Army Attaché, both there with their fashionably gowned wives.



Souvenir cover (Evie Hayes) – Australian Production

Something to Dance About

'Call me, madam'

After the show Evie Hayes and the principals were guests of honour at a party at the St Kilda home of Mrs Percy Henry, then Melbourne's 'Hostess With the Mostes'. Assisting her were William P. Carr of the National Theatre, and her daughters, Margot and Patricia (Mrs Charles Norman).

The reviews were somewhat muted. The *Age* critic thought that though 'this production is carried along pleasantly enough, it never seemed to get on top of the given material' and the *Herald's* H.A. Standish wondered, 'how do you put on a musical show and make it lively and enjoyable, without a single good voice among the principals?' Darrell Symmons in the *Sun* complained that 'the music is merely tuneful and sparse' and the *Argus's* Frank Doherty agreed: 'Mr Berlin's musical numbers are attractive enough but, apart from one or two, lack the catchy, whistleable quality one associates with most of his tunes.' Everybody, though, thought that Evie Hayes was wonderful. Said Frank Murphy in the *Advocate*: 'As Sally Adams she is supreme. She throws herself wholeheartedly into the role and is never dull.'

After a thoroughly respectable four and a half months, *Call Me Madam* transferred to the Theatre Royal in Sydney, where it opened on 30 January 1954. This time the gala opening lacked the extravagance of Melbourne's. 'With the Royal Tour now only days away,' explained *Truth*, 'most women who attended the premiere of *Call Me Madam* said that they were keeping their most glamorous gowns until after the Queen arrived. Although few of those present last night will attend either the State Banquet or the Lord Mayor's Ball, most are hoping to be present at the Royal Artillery Ball or the Red Cross Ball, both to be held during the Queen's visit.'

So enthusiastic was the Sydney first night audience that Evie invited them to join in the chorus of 'You're Just In Love' while she executed some unscheduled

somersaults and splits. 'I knew it was pretty risky,' she told the *Telegraph* reporter, 'but I just felt the audience was with me.' Indeed they were – by now the show was thoroughly run in and the reviews were kinder. W.A. O'Carroll in the *Mirror* announced that Evie had improved on Ethel Merman's performance in the film. In the *Sun* John Kardoss praised her 'sparkling humour' and described the show as 'eye-filling with its opulence, light, gay and refreshing, with a big number of notable assets – rapturous score, witty dialogue, colourful costumes, impressive scenery – all resulting in an enchanting performance.' There was one dissenting voice. Perhaps echoing Jack Hylton's concern for his London audiences' reaction, 'L.B.' in the *Sydney Morning Herald* complained, 'So many of the political jokes are out of date that the show's authors ought to have complimented their Australian audiences by writing fresh material for them. Perhaps they were too lazy, too cynical, and too rich for that.'

Probably to the annoyance of the carping 'L.B.', *Call Me Madam* ran in Sydney for almost as long as it had in Melbourne. Then the entire company set off for a marathon tour of New Zealand. They opened in Auckland on 15 June and concluded in Wellington on 2 September. In between they played eleven other centres, big and small, including arduous one night stands at Wanganui, Napier, Masterton and Oamaru. Then it was back to Australia for a three-week season at Her Majesty's in Brisbane. By now there had been some cast changes. Sid Lawson had returned to America and Graeme Bent had replaced him as Kenneth Gibson; and Clive Hearne had been promoted to the roles of Supreme Court Justice and Court Chamberlain. After three weeks in Brisbane, the final curtain fell on 16 October 1954, bringing to a close a happy 57-week run.

In 1956, according to Evie Hayes's biographer, John Crampton, Irving Berlin offered Evie the lead in a new touring production of *Call Me Madam*. She played eleven United States cities, including her hometown, Seattle, where the local paper welcomed her with the headline 'Return of the Native'.

In 1967 *Call Me Madam* was in the news again. A television version was

announced and for it Irving Berlin came up with two new numbers – 'You Got to Be Way Out to Be Way In' and a title song. The last songs that he ever wrote, they were, from all reports, sadly lacklustre. They, and the television production, disappeared without trace. Ethel Merman rarely took her shows on tour but, probably because of her vested interest in it, she headed a touring production of *Call Me Madam* in 1968. Another tour was proposed for 1972, but failed to materialise.

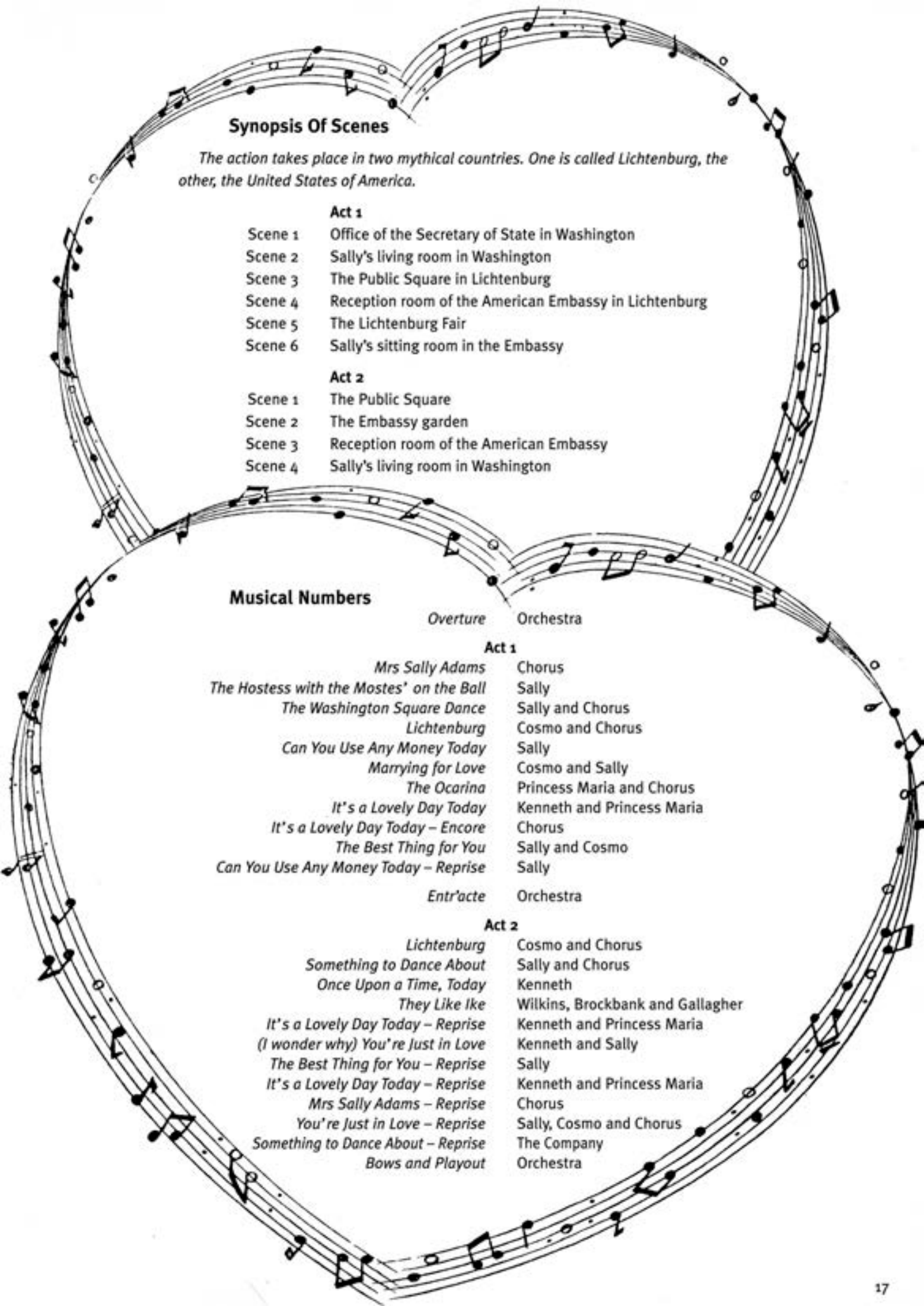
In London, a new production of *Call Me Madam* opened at the Victoria Palace on 14 March 1983 with Noele Gordon, Basil Hoskins, Veronica Page and William Relton. Two years later there was another revival, this time in Australia – perhaps appropriately in Canberra, considering the musical's 'diplomatic' theme. Directed by Ken Boucher, this joint production by the Canberra Philharmonic Society and the Canberra Theatre Trust opened at the Canberra Theatre on 17 October 1985. In an inspired piece of casting, the role of Sally Adams went to the beloved June Bronhill. The programme carried a message from Evie Hayes: 'It was a great show to appear in and will bring me many happy memories. I know June Bronhill will be wonderful in the role of Sally Adams'. And, indeed she was.

In 1995 Tyne Daly headed an acclaimed concert version in New York City Center's *Encores!* Series. This triggered a flurry of revivals including a production at New Jersey's Papermill Playhouse starring Leslie Uggams.

So here we are, just a few months short of fifty years after that memorable Broadway premiere, ready for another trip to Lichtenburg via Washington, D.C. I'm sure that somewhere up there in that great Green Room in the sky, Perle and Ethel and Irving and their friends are smiling in anticipation, waiting, with us, to welcome an exciting new Sally. Greetings, Miss Turner – our own 'Hostess With the Mostes'. And if that's not 'Something to Dance About', I don't know what is!

© Frank Van Straten OAM

Theatre historian, presenter of ABC Radio's popular 'Nostalgia' Show and former director of the Performing Arts Museum, Victorian Arts Centre.



Synopsis Of Scenes

The action takes place in two mythical countries. One is called Lichtenburg, the other, the United States of America.

Act 1

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Scene 1 | Office of the Secretary of State in Washington |
| Scene 2 | Sally's living room in Washington |
| Scene 3 | The Public Square in Lichtenburg |
| Scene 4 | Reception room of the American Embassy in Lichtenburg |
| Scene 5 | The Lichtenburg Fair |
| Scene 6 | Sally's sitting room in the Embassy |

Act 2

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Scene 1 | The Public Square |
| Scene 2 | The Embassy garden |
| Scene 3 | Reception room of the American Embassy |
| Scene 4 | Sally's living room in Washington |

Musical Numbers

Overture Orchestra

Act 1

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| <i>Mrs Sally Adams</i> | Chorus |
| <i>The Hostess with the Mostes' on the Ball</i> | Sally |
| <i>The Washington Square Dance</i> | Sally and Chorus |
| <i>Lichtenburg</i> | Cosmo and Chorus |
| <i>Can You Use Any Money Today</i> | Sally |
| <i>Marrying for Love</i> | Cosmo and Sally |
| <i>The Ocarina</i> | Princess Maria and Chorus |
| <i>It's a Lovely Day Today</i> | Kenneth and Princess Maria |
| <i>It's a Lovely Day Today - Encore</i> | Chorus |
| <i>The Best Thing for You</i> | Sally and Cosmo |
| <i>Can You Use Any Money Today - Reprise</i> | Sally |

Entr'acte Orchestra

Act 2

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <i>Lichtenburg</i> | Cosmo and Chorus |
| <i>Something to Dance About</i> | Sally and Chorus |
| <i>Once Upon a Time, Today</i> | Kenneth |
| <i>They Like Ike</i> | Wilkins, Brockbank and Gallagher |
| <i>It's a Lovely Day Today - Reprise</i> | Kenneth and Princess Maria |
| <i>(I wonder why) You're Just in Love</i> | Kenneth and Sally |
| <i>The Best Thing for You - Reprise</i> | Sally |
| <i>It's a Lovely Day Today - Reprise</i> | Kenneth and Princess Maria |
| <i>Mrs Sally Adams - Reprise</i> | Chorus |
| <i>You're Just in Love - Reprise</i> | Sally, Cosmo and Chorus |
| <i>Something to Dance About - Reprise</i> | The Company |
| <i>Bows and Payout</i> | Orchestra |

Creative Team



Gary Young Director

This is Gary's second production with The Production Company following last year's *Funny Girl* with Caroline O'Connor.

Gary has had a varied career as a performer, writer and director and has worked all over the world in theatre, cabaret and television with the Mo Award winning Ritz Company. Theatre productions include *Side by Side by Sondheim*, *Starting Here*, *Starting Now*, *Showboat*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Les Misérables*.

He was Resident Director for the Australian productions of *Miss Saigon* and the original *Les Misérables* for the Cameron Mackintosh Organisation, *Aspects of Love* for The Really Useful Company, *Scrooge* at the Princess Theatre, *Tales of Hoffmann* for the Victoria State Opera and staged *The Student Prince* for the VSO at the State Theatre. He became Associate Director for the 10th Anniversary production of *Les Misérables* and directed the new musical *Crusade in Concert* at the Melbourne Concert Hall in 1998 which he will re-direct this August at the Edinburgh Festival.



Guy Simpson Musical Director

Guy was born in England and grew up in Sydney. He is a graduate of the NSW Conservatorium of Music. Since graduation, he has worked extensively as a conductor in theatre, concerts, television and recording.

Theatre credits include *Chicago*, *Miss Saigon*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Misérables*, *Cats*, *Divine Metropolis*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, *My Fair Lady* and *Seesaw*. Concert credits include the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, *Zorba* and *Funny Girl*. Recording credits include Anthony Warlow, Marina Prior, Peter Cousens and *Chicago* and *Miss Saigon* casts. TV credits include *Class Acts* and *The Midday Show*.

Guy is currently the Musical Supervisor of *Cats Run Away to the Circus* and Musical Co-ordinator for the Regent Hotel in Sydney.



Ross Coleman

Choreographer

Ross has choreographed professionally since the age of 14, working in every facet of the industry. His first musical was the original Australian production of *Grease*, staged in Melbourne in 1972 for Harry M Miller. Since then his musicals include, for the Sydney Theatre Company, *I'm Getting My Act Together and Taking It On the Road*, *Chicago*, *The Stripper*, *The Conquest of Carmen Miranda*, *Summer Rain*, *Jonah Jones*, *Company*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Merrily We Roll Along* and *Miracle City*. For other production companies, *Side By Side* by Sondheim, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Jerry's Girls*, *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, the Australian tour of *High Society* and *Cabaret*.

Ross has choreographed internationally since he was 18 throughout Asia and more recently in Europe. Since 1994, he lived in Berlin and choreographed and directed at the Friedrichstadtpalast and Metropole Theatre. He choreographed the Russian opera *The Demon* at the Bregenzer Festspiele in Austria in 1998 and again in 1999 at the Zurich Opera House in Switzerland, the English national tour of *High Society*, *Pomp, Duck and Circumstance* in New York, *Revue* in Paris and *The St Petersburg Music Hall* in Russia.

Ross choreographed *Follies*, *Love Burns* and *Trouble in Tahiti* for the Melbourne Festival, as well as the highly acclaimed *Grease – the Arena Spectacular*, one of his most loved projects. For the Melbourne Theatre Company, *High Society* and this year, *Company* with Simon Phillips.

Ross was the first person invited by the Peoples Republic of China to teach jazz and tap. *Call Me Madam* is Ross' second musical for The Production Company, the first being *Funny Girl* in 1999. His priority in life is his family and his garden, which he shares with his partner, Oleg.



Dale Ferguson

Set Designer

A graduate of The National Institute of Dramatic Art, Dale was the resident designer with the Queensland Theatre Company from 1990 to 1994 and with the Melbourne Theatre Company 1995 to 1998.

Dale's design credits include for The Production Company's *Funny Girl*, *Mame* and *She Love Me*, for the Melbourne Theatre Company, *The Chairs*, *Piaf*, *Trelawney of The Wells*, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *Amy's View* and *Navigating*, for Playbox, *Nightfall* and *Burning Time*, for the Sydney Theatre Company, *Sylvia* and *The Girl Who Saw Everything*, for the Queensland Theatre Company, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Summer Rain* and *The Marriage of Figaro*.

In 1999, Dale was nominated for a Victorian Green Room Award for *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*. He received a Green Room Award in 1998 for *Molly Sweeney* and the same award for *Dealers Choice* and *A Cheery Soul* in 1997. Dale was awarded the Loudon Sainthill Memorial Scholarship in 1993. Later this year, Dale will redesign *The Marriage of Figaro* for Belvoir Street Theatre at the Sydney Opera House Drama Theatre for the SOCOG Olympic Festival.



Leon Salom Set Design Adaptation

Leon completed a Diploma of Performing Arts (Production and Design) majoring in design at the WA Academy of Performing Arts in 1995. After graduating Leon was invited back to WAAPA to design set and costumes for *The Magic Flute* directed by John Milson. Leon designed set and costumes for *Madame Butterfly – In Modd* – produced by The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Melbourne Theatre Company, The Australian Ballet and the Victoria State Opera. This production was performed at the State Theatre and the Victorian Arts Centre and directed by Suzanne Chaundy. Other work includes set and costume design for *Into The Woods* for The Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music (directed by Kris Stewart) and set and costume design for *Thieving Boys/Like Stars In My Hands* for the Playbox Theatre (directed by David Bell) which subsequently enjoyed a return season, toured to Belvoir Street and received a Greenroom Nomination for Best Design. Leon's recent designs include set and costumes for a touring Jacobsen Group Production, *The Journey Girl* for Particular Productions (director Kris Stewart) at the Athenaeum Theatre, *The Dog's Play/A Few Roos Loose in the Top Paddock* (director David Bell) for the Playbox Theatre and *Diving For Pearls* for the Melbourne Theatre Company. He has just completed an engagement as set and costume designer for *Elegies for Angels, Punks and Raging Queens* for the Victorian AIDS Council and as costume designer for *Aqua Nova* with the West Australian Ballet.



Victoria Rowell Costume Designer

London born Victoria Rowell began her career at the National Theatre of Great Britain working in the wardrobe department and was eventually put in charge of the artwork on all costumes. In this capacity, she interpreted the designs of leading theatre designers such as Franco Zeffereilli, Ralph Koltai, Enrico Job and Jocelyn Herbert and worked on costumes for a vast number of actors including Sir Laurence Olivier, Dame Diana Rigg, Paul Schofield, Sir Anthony Hopkins and Geraldine McEwan.

Married to the well known painter and designer, the late Kenneth Rowell, she has lived and worked in Australia for many years. Her credits as specialist textile designer include painting the costumes for the musicals *Cats*, *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Sunset Boulevard* and the ballets *Rites* and *Dark Lullaby*. Victoria was her husband's design associate for many years, making models, doing artwork and contributing to the overall design of productions including *Madama Butterfly*, *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser*, *Aida* and *The Sleeping Beauty*.

In designing and painting her own fashion garments – scarves, swimsuits and bodysuits – she has drawn on techniques developed in her work for theatre and has achieved success with her own label *Victoria Rowell Originals* in Australia. She recently supplied two collections of scarves and wraps to both Harvey Nichols and Joseph in London. In 1998, she organised and curated *Double Act – The Art of Kenneth Rowell* for the Melbourne Festival.



Chris Paterson Lighting Designer

During a professional career spanning seventeen years, Chris Paterson has worked as a Lighting Designer and Production Manager in theatre, and as a Producer, Director and Production Manager in television and corporate events.

He now operates Picture this! Productions. His recent credits include *The Melbourne Cup Carnival* for Network 10, *Qantas Australian Grand Prix 1998 – 2000*, *The Qantas Spirit of Australia Day Concert 2000*, *Trackside* for Network 10 and various projects for the Victorian Arts Centre.

His Lighting Design credits include work for Melbourne Theatre Company, The Australian Ballet, The Melbourne International Festival of the Arts and the Victorian Arts Centre, as well as the recent Australian premiere of *Crusade*.

Chris is a graduate of NIDA and has lectured in technical production and lighting design at The Victorian College of the Arts.



Peter Grubb System Sound Sound Designer

Since incorporation in 1979, System Sound has designed and engineered the sound for many top quality musicals, theatrical and contemporary events and productions.

Peter Grubb joined System Sound in 1981, operating shows such as *They're Playing Our Song*, *Barnum*, *Oklahoma!*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *Nine* and *Cats*.

As Sound Supervisor for System Sound, Peter's credits include *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Starlight Express*, *Aspects of Love*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Cats*, *Les Misérables*, *Miss Saigon*, *Sunset Boulevard* and *Rent*.

His recent design credits include *A Little Night Music*, *Into the Woods*, *Company*, the Sydney season of *Sweet Charity*, the Brisbane season of *Little Shop of Horrors* and the Australian tour of *Cats Run Away to the Circus* and the upcoming production of *Miss Saigon* in Manila.

System Sound's other credits include the *Hong Kong Farewell Concert* and the official *Handover Ceremony* as well as concerts throughout Australia, Asia and New Zealand with Kiri Te Kanawa, José Carreras and Plácido Domingo and productions including *West Side Story*, *The Puccini Spectacular*, *Aida* and the arena tour of *Swan Lake*.

Current productions include *The Sound of Music*, *Chicago*, *Pan* and *Les Misérables* in Buenos Aires.

Orchestra State Orchestra Of Victoria

Violin

Mara Miller (Acting Concertmaster), Susan Pierotti (Acting Associate Concertmaster), Lubino Fernandes (Principal Second Violin), Iseult Stephenson (Associate Principal Second Violin), Antje Hinke, Ceridwen Lever, John Noble, Lesley Qualtrough

Viola

Hannah Forsyth, Martin Pierard

Cello

Diane Froomes, Andrea Taylor

Bass

Matthew Thorne.

Guitar

Gary Norman

Flute

Paula Rae

Oboe

Michael Pisani

Reed I

Tony Hicks

Reed II

Grania Burke

Reed III

Robert Burke

Reed IV

Martin Corcoran

Reed V

Ian Godfrey

Horn

Deborah Hart

Trumpets

Robert Smithies, Anthony Pope, Paul McConkey

Trombones

Scott Evans, Anthony Gilham

Drums/Percussion

David Hicks

Production Credits

Technical Director

David Miller

Assistant Musical Director

David Piper

Production Co-Ordinator

Mark D Wheeler

Stage Manager

Annie Reid

Assistant Stage Manager

Katherine Muller

Wardrobe Supervisor

Kim Bishop

Wigs, Hair and Make Up

Corinne Day

Sound Supervisor

Shelly Lee

Sound Operator

Colin Telfer

Radio Technicians

Don Eickhoff

Paul Hitchens

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Special Thanks/ Acknowledgements

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The State Orchestra of Victoria acknowledges generous financial support from the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, and the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria – Department of Premier and Cabinet.



ARTS VICTORIA GRACE



Formed in 1969 to accompany performances of opera and ballet in Melbourne, The State Orchestra of Victoria is the resident orchestra of the Victorian Arts Centre. The Orchestra performs for 360,000 people each year with Opera Australia and The Australian Ballet in the State Theatre, in addition to regular, national tours with both companies. In addition, the Orchestra regularly accompanies OzOpera on tours through regional Australia, taking opera to locations as remote as Broome in Western Australia. In 2000, the Orchestra will perform in a season with The Australian Ballet as part of the Olympics Festivities.

In February 2000 the Orchestra was honoured with a prestigious Green Room Award for Contribution to the Artistic Life of Melbourne.

Talent Passion Innovation

In addition to its work in the pit, the Orchestra has a lively and expanding life in the concert arena. The ESSO Concert in the Sidney Myer Music Bowl has become one of Melbourne's summer highlights, attracting audiences of up to 25,000. The Orchestra regularly appears in the Melbourne International Festival of the Arts, with programs ranging from Shostakovich to Cole Porter, and in regional festivals such as the Port Fairy Arts Festival and Cobram's Peaches 'n' Cream Festival.

The State Orchestra of Victoria is achieving national and international recognition through its growing catalogue of fine recordings. The Orchestra's *Morning Melodies* Recording Series has received wide acclaim from critics and the public. The series, released on the Arts Centre label, consists of four volumes: *Popular Classics*, *A Morning in Vienna*, *The Romance of the Violin* and *Broadway Classics*.

Available on the ABC Classics label are the acclaimed *Madame Butterfly* ballet music and the music from the popular ballet production *The Sentimental Bloke* – both scores arranged and conducted by John Lanchbery. Also released during 1999 were Graham Koehne's evocative score from the Australian Ballet's production of *1914* and the spirited ballet music from Franz Lehar's *The Merry Widow*.

The music from The Australian Ballet's film of *Don Quixote*, co-directed by Rudolf Nureyev and Robert Helpmann, was released in mid 1999. This CD holds particular significance for the Orchestra as it recorded the 1966 soundtrack after Nureyev commissioned a new arrangement and orchestration of the score from John Lanchbery for the making of the film. John Lanchbery conducted both the original soundtrack and the CD released in 1999.

These recordings are available from the Arts Centre Shop and fine music stores. The SOV also features in numerous opera and ballet videos on sale at ABC shops.

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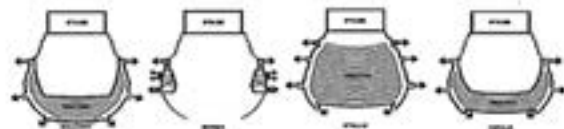
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For Your Information

- The management reserve the right to add, withdraw or substitute artists and to vary the programme as necessary. The Trust reserves the right of refusing admission. Please check your tickets for the correct starting time.
- Latecomers will not be admitted until a suitable break in the programme.
- Babies or children in arms are not permitted into State Theatre, Playhouse, George Fairfax Studio or the Melbourne Concert Hall during performances unless tickets are purchased for them. In the interests of other patrons, it is recommended that children under the age of three not attend performances unless the programme is specifically for children.
- Cameras, tape recorders, paging machines and portable telephones must not be brought into the auditorium.
- In the interests of public health, the Victorian Arts Centre is a smoke free area.
- Patrons expecting emergency calls may leave their seat numbers with the House Supervisor.
- In the unlikely event of a fire or emergency, the many exits in the Theatres and Melbourne Concert Hall allow these venues to be cleared quickly. Please observe the exit sign nearest your seat. Staff are trained in emergency procedures and will assist and direct you should an occasion arise.

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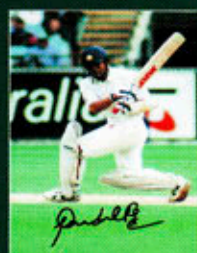


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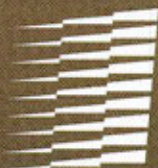
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