



ABB

Presents

FUNNY GIRL

Music by JULE STYNE, Lyrics by BOB MERRILL
Book by ISOBEL LENNART from an original story by MISS LENNART
Produced for the Broadway stage by RAY STARK
New York Production Supervised by JEROME ROBBINS
Original Production Directed by GARSON KANIN

Presented by arrangement with Tams-Witmark Music Library, INC 560 Lexington Ave, NY, NY 10022



Dear Friends

I am very proud to launch The Production Company (Australia) Ltd's first series of Broadway musicals.

The whole thing began over 12 months ago. A group of us wanted to encourage the performers and all others in the performing arts at a time when other companies were being forced to scale down. We decided to produce commercial shows that might not be seen here in another format, taking some inspiration from City Centre's Encores!® Series in New York. Great shows that don't need a huge production.

When Rhonda agreed to play *Mame*, we knew we had something special. When Pamela Rabe and Alan Fletcher came on board we had a diverse, electric mix of people that started the show with a fantastic base of talent, excellence and quality. We're sure you'll enjoy the night.

She Loves Me is loved by music theatre lovers the world over but has never achieved sustained commercial success. If you don't know *She Loves Me*, you may not realise quite how perfect Lisa McCune is for the role of Amalia. We are delighted that she is so keen to be involved but challenged to find the right "Georg" to star opposite her (if my latest news is correct we have a fantastic Georg).

Funny Girl with Caroline O'Connor! You don't just cast *Funny Girl*. It's too big and too coloured by history. What happens is that you talk to one of the best performers in the business after stunning notices for *Chicago* on the off chance she'll be interested. When you find she is, you pop the champagne. She is better suited to the role than anyone else we could imagine. With Caroline O'Connor as Fanny Brice, I personally guarantee shivers up your spines.

The company has some clear goals and high ambitions. To achieve them we want you to sit back, tap your toes and enjoy some of the best entertainment available. We have wonderful performers in Australia. We are privileged that they have joined us and trust that your experience of our three great shows will leave you wanting more. Because there's plenty more - we have some very exciting plans in the pipeline. Huge stars. Great shows. Serious entertaining.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped us realise our dream. From the sponsors to performers, to the audience, we are in a very real sense investors in an important industry.

In his play *An Ideal Husband* Oscar Wilde said "...Philanthropy seems to me to have become simply the refuge of people who wish to annoy their fellow-creatures". Special thanks must go to Richard, chief philanthropist and ideal husband.

JEANNE PRATT AO

PS - Thanks to the world's best board!

MAME

MAME

Starring RHONDA BURCHMORE

Director DAVID ATKINS

Conductor ANDREW GREENE

Book by JEROME LAWRENCE and ROBERT E. LEE

Music and Lyrics by JERRY HERMAN

Based on the novel by PATRICK DENNIS
and the play *Auntie Mame* by LAWRENCE and LEE

Dance and musical numbers for the Broadway Production
staged by ONNA WHITE and directed by GENE SAKS.

Produced for the New York stage by FRYER, CARR and HARRIS

By arrangement with Tams-Witmark Music Library, INC
560 Lexington Ave, NY, NY. 10022

SHE LOVES ME

Starring LISA McCUNE

Director ROGER HODGMAN

Musical Director JEAN McQUARRIE

Book by JOE MASTEROFF

Music by JERRY BOCK

Lyrics by SHELDON HARNICK

By arrangement with Warner/Chappell Music
exclusive representative of Music Theatre International

SHE LOVES ME

FUNNY GIRL

FUNNY GIRL

Starring CAROLINE O'CONNOR

Director IAN JUDGE

Musical Director GUY SIMPSON

Music by JULES STYNE

Lyrics by BOB MERRILL

Book by ISOBEL LENNART
from an original story by MISS LENNART



Caroline O'Connor is

FUNNY GIRL

CONCERT SPECTACULAR

♪ Don't Rain on My Parade ♪

Starring Caroline O'Connor
Directed by Ian Judge
Music Director: Guy Simpson
Set Designer: Dale Ferguson

MUSIC BY Jule Styne LYRICS BY Bob Merrill BOOK BY Isobel Lennart
FROM AN ORIGINAL STORY BY Miss Lennart
BY ARRANGEMENT WITH TAMS-WITMARK MUSIC LIBRARY, INC., New York

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ALLISON

Message from the Director

GARY YOUNG

I thought about writing on the history of the show but I figured that most of you would already be familiar with that and this seemed an appropriate place for a more personal note.

I have to tell you that taking on this production of *Funny Girl* with three days' notice seemed something of a daunting task but three factors seemed to suggest that it was a mountain that could be climbed.

First, this show has long been a personal favourite and *Funny Girl*, along with works like *Cabaret* and *Follies*, is set in and around life in the theatre and so the music has an honest and a legitimate reason for being here. The nature of the piece also suggests that the same 'honesty' be carried through with a sense of time and place.

Second, the story is a significant emotional journey, a tale of the human heart. The joys and the perils of loving, being loved and loving too much. It was this undeniable "heart" that struck me and as such I have tried to keep the warmth and humanity inherent in the text and score well to the fore. After all, unless we are brave enough to test the limits, how can we know the potential of the human heart? This is the path that Fanny Brice takes and we witness her efforts to balance the two great loves of her life. . . the Theatre and Nick Arnstein. She is inspirational, funny, courageous, fragile, vulnerable, fallible and familiar to us.

Third, and certainly the deciding factor to take



this on, was the pleasure of working with Guy Simpson and Ross Coleman, and a cast with Nancye Hayes, John O'May and Jack Webster and of course the extraordinary Caroline O'Connor. I am in a position to tell you how extraordinary and generous this cast is, as I have been in the rehearsal room with them and

witnessed it first hand.

Funny Girl has something of a history in that the world has a love affair with the women who take on this role and I assure you that as Caroline makes it her own tonight, it is a tradition that will continue.

Let us hope that this staged concert version is the first step to seeing *Funny Girl* back on our stages with Fanny Brice reminding us that. . .

"People who need people are the luckiest people in the world!"

GARY YOUNG

FUNNY
GIRL

CAROLINE O'CONNOR

Fanny Brice

Caroline was born in Oldham, Lancashire and subsequently raised and trained in Sydney, Australia, returning to complete her extensive training at the Royal Ballet School in London. In Australia she appeared with The Australian Opera and in productions of *OklaHoma!* and *West Side Story* before leaving for England in 1984.

Over a period of fifteen years Caroline's career has encompassed all areas of the entertainment industry, emerging as one of the most versatile and respected performers in England and Australia. Last year Caroline opened in the West End in the dual roles of 'Josephine' and 'Monica' in *Romance Romance* at the Gielgud Theatre to great personal reviews. For her performance in *Mack and Mabel* at the Piccadilly Theatre, she was nominated for the 1996 Laurence Olivier Award for Best Actress in a Musical and had the honour of performing 'Time Heals Everything' for the award presentation. She also performed at the 1995 Royal Variety Performance in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen.

In London's West End Caroline was a member of the original cast of *Me & My Girl* at the Adelphi Theatre, the revival of *Cabaret* at the Strand Theatre, playing 'Sally Bowles' on numerous occasions, 'Monica' in *Is There Life After High School*, 'Angel' in *The Fink*, 'Lu-Lu' in *Budgie*, 'Consuela' in *Matador* and a highly acclaimed performance as 'Queen Pasiphae' in *The Challenge* and the role of 'Julie' in Victoria Woods' play *Talent*.

Caroline was invited back to Australia in 1994 to play the role of 'Anita' in the Victoria State Opera's production of *West Side Story* directed by Ian Judge. For her performance she won the prestigious Australian Entertainment 'MO Award' and Melbourne's prestigious 'Green Room Award' for Outstanding Performance in a Musical. She returned again in 1996 for a return season in the same role, and won the 'MO Award' for a second time.

Caroline has performed in two West End productions simultaneously, 'Mavis' in *Hot Stuff* and Mac Jones in David Pountney's *Street Scene* for the English National Opera at the London Coliseum, which was subsequently filmed for BBC Television.



Her work in UK Repertory Theatre includes, 'Cassie' in *A Chorus Line*, 'Vera' in *Hold Tight It's 60s Night*, 'Roxie Hart' in *Chicago*, 'Lola' in *Damn Yankees*, 'Ellie May' in *Showboat* for the Royal Shakespeare Company and Opera North, 'Lizzie' in the European premiere of *Baby!*, *Chicago?*, 'Kay' in John Godber's play *Salt of the Earth* and 'Anita' in *West Side Story* at the Leicester Haymarket Theatre.

Album recordings include 'Anita' from *West Side Story*, from the Leicester production, 'Ellie May' from *Showboat*, based on the RSC/Opera North production, 'Queen Pasiphae' from *The Challenge*, all for TER records as well as *Me & My Girl*, *Cabaret*, and *Budgie* cast recordings, *Among Friends*, a selection of original songs by Richard Kates, a guest appearance on Marina Prior's album, *Somewhere*, and the 1995 London Cast recording of *Mack & Mabel*. Her debut solo album *What I Did for Love*, recorded at the legendary Abbey Rd Studio for jay/TER records, has been critically acclaimed around the world.

Recent projects include the World Premiere of *Charlie Chaplin's Smile*, a concert performance of the musical compositions of Charlie Chaplin, in Amsterdam in 1998. Caroline then returned to Australia for a sell-out series of Gershwin Concerts at the Opera House with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. These concerts were so successful that Caroline returned for a second season in 1999.

Most recently Caroline has been playing the role of 'Velma Kelly' in the Australian production of *Chicago*. While the show was in Melbourne, Caroline was nominated for and won the 'Green Room Award' for 'Musical Theatre, Female Artist in a Leading Role'. The show then moved to Sydney. Caroline was then nominated for, and won the Australian 'MO Award' for 'Female Musical Theatre Performer of the Year'.

Caroline's next project is the new Baz Luhrmann movie *Moulin Rouge* in which she has the feature role of 'Nini', followed by a possible national tour of Australia with the State Symphony Orchestras.

John O'May

Nick Arnstein

The past 27 years have seen John in all forms of entertainment encompassing opera, concert, drama, comedy, cabaret, musicals, radio, writing and directing. Most recently he performed the role of Count Danilo Danilovich in Simon Gallaher's production of *The Merry Widow*. John also performed his two one-man shows *Oh Johnny, O'May Sings Mercer* and *Being Alive* for the Castemayne State Festival and the role of Mr Peachum in the West Australian Opera's production of *The Threepenny Opera* opposite Robyn Archer. Last year John won the Green Room Leading Male Performer Award for his performance in the Melbourne Theatre Company's production of *A Little Night Music*, played the distinguished impresario Bela Zangler in John Frost's production of *Crazy For You* and was also guest bad guy in *State Coroner* and in *Good Guys, Bad Guys*. His association with the Melbourne Theatre Company began in 1984 playing in *Pax Americana*, *Curse of the Werewolf*, *Shadow of a Gunman*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Too Young For Ghosts*, *Heartbreak House*, *The Servant of Two Masters*, *Daylight Saving*, *Woman in Mind*, *Assassins*, and writing and appearing in the fund-raising concert *Simply Sondheim*. For the Sydney Theatre Company John has starred in *Insignificance*, *Extremities*, *Company*, *The Normal Heart*, *Harold in Italy*, *Six Degrees of Separation* and *Falsettos*.

John began his career playing in *Godspell* for Kenn Brodziak and then worked as an actor and artistic director of Children's Arena Theatre for five years. He is



specially proud of his co-writing and producing credits for *Gershwin and The Twenties* and *All That Jazz* which toured nationally and internationally for two and a half years.

Other theatre credits include *No, No Nanette* for WA Theatre Company, *Blue Window*, *Beyond Therapy*, *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* and *The Ripper Show* for Playbox and *A Couple of Strangers* for Nimrod. John played M. André in the original Australian production of *The Phantom of the Opera* for three years, Che in *Evita* and, for the Victoria State Opera, Paris in *La Belle Hélène* and Captain Corcoran in *HMS Pinafore* with Paul Eddington. He also starred in and directed *Seven Little Australians, the Musical*.

John has performed in many television programs and mini-series including *Carson's Law*, *The Flying Doctors*, *The Lancaster-Miller Affair*, *Cluedo*, *Cop Shop* and *The Four Minute Mile* and many variety shows over the past 25 years.

In film, John appeared in *Between Wars*, *Starstruck*, *Rebel* and *Giorgia*. He has been a regular performer with the State Orchestra of Victoria and features on their recording *Morning Melodies IV*.



ROBIN CUMING

Tom Keeney



Robin has performed with state and commercial managements across Australia. Previous musicals include *Into The Woods*, *West Side Story*, *Kismet* (the concert version) and *Me and My Girl*. Working in Melbourne at La Mama, MTC, Playbox, Theatreworks he has appeared recently with the Keene Taylor Project in *Beneath Heaven* and *Kaddish*, which will go to the Sydney Festival in 2000. On TV his credits include *Hey Hey It's Saturday*, *Lano & Woodley*, *Frontline*, *Blue Heelers* and *Back Berner*. His recent film credits include *Road to Nowhere* and *Silent Partners*.

NANCYE HAYES

Mrs Brice



Actor, dancer, choreographer and director, Nancye Hayes (OAM) is a theatrical institution. She began her career in J.C. Williamson's production of *My Fair Lady* in 1961. However it was the title role of *Charity In Sweet Charity* in 1967 that established her name. Since then she has sung and danced her way through a cavalcade of musical successes including *Pippin*, *Irene*, *Annie*, *Chicago*, *Guys and Dolls*, which won her a Green Room Award (Vic), the Norman Kessell Memorial Award and the Sydney Theatre Critics' Award for Best Actress, *Sweeney Todd*, *Nine* and *42nd Street*, for which she received a Mo Award for Best Supporting Female Musical Performer. Other stage credits include *Same Time Next Year*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Stepping Out*, *Livingstone*, *Death Defying Acts*, *The Mourning After* and *Follies*. Most recently Nancye completed a very successful tour with the highly acclaimed musical *Showboat*. On television Nancye has had guest roles on *Blue Heelers*, *The Dismissal*, *The Last Bastion*, *The Sullivans*, *Carson's Law*, *Rafferty's Rules* and *GP* and hosted the ABC's *Once In A Blue Moon* special, featuring songs from Australian Musicians. Her choreographic credits include *Here Comes Showtime*, for Marian Street Theatre, *My Fair Lady* for VSO (Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane seasons), *Aladdin: The Pantomime*, *Falsettos* (STC) and *Guys and Dolls* for NIDA. Her directing credits include *The Fantasticks*, *For Gentlemen Only*, *Dames At Sea*, and *The Songs of Jack O'Hagan*. She is currently working as assistant director, alongside Judy Davis, on *Barrymore*, for the Sydney Theatre Company. Her first cabaret show, *Nancye with an E*, written and directed by Tony Sheldon, has played throughout Australia and is available on CD. In 1997, the Variety Club honoured Nancye Hayes with a Lifetime Achievement Award.



GLODEN MERCER

Mrs Meeker



Gloden Mercer's flourishing musical career is as impressive in its scope as its distinguished credits. She is one of Australia's most versatile and sought after musical performers, who has worked with The Australian Opera and international stars such as Luciano Pavarotti, Dame Joan Sutherland and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa. She was one of only five Australians chosen for the Sutherland/Williamson Grand Opera Season.

Gloden is equally at ease singing opera, operetta, musical comedy, Gilbert & Sullivan and cabaret. Known as "the girl with the golden voice" throughout Queensland, Gloden has been a guest soloist with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, State Orchestra of Victoria and Victoria Concert Orchestra.

Her roles with the Victoria State Opera and the Lyric Opera of Queensland have included Juno and Venus (*Orpheus in the Underworld*), Giovanna (*Rigoletto*), Martha (*Faust*), Olga (*The Merry Widow*), Rosalinda (*Die Fledermaus*), Nadina (*The Chocolate Soldier*), High Priestess (*Aida*), and Senta (*The Flying Dutchman*).

Gloden's many musical performances include Mrs Eynesford-Hill, Mrs Hopkins and Queen of Transylvania (*My Fair Lady*), Carrie Pipperidge, Mrs Mullens and Nettie (*Carousel*), Rose Maybud (*Ruddigore*), Isabel (*The Pirates of Penzance*), Giulia (*The Gondoliers*), Celia (*Iolanthe*), Peep-Bo (*The Mikado*), and Mrs Walshingham (*Half a Sixpence*). Television appearances include roles in the ABC's *Phoenix II*, *Boys From The Bush II*, *Zoo Family*, *Homicide*, and numerous other serials, variety shows and commercials. Film appearances include *The Craic*. Gloden has two professional recordings to her credit, *With A Song In My Heart* and *It's A Grand Night for Singing*.

Gloden completed a successful fourteen month season playing Madame De La Grande Bouche (*The Enchanted Wardrobe*) in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* at the Princess Theatre in Melbourne, was invited to play the role of the Auntie in Opera Australia's 1998 production of Janáček's *Jenůfa*, and toured with OzOpera in both the 1998 and 1999 seasons of *The Barber of Seville*, playing Berta.

She is also a regular guest artist on Bert Newton's *Good Morning Australia* on the Ten Network.

DAVID RAVENSWOOD

Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr



David Ravenswood has appeared in film, television, opera, theatre and musicals for the major companies in Australia. David studied for 10 years in New Zealand with Lazlo Rogatsy during which time he sang with the NZOpera. 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, Playbox, 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 JC Williamson's 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!*. 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*.

JOAN SYDNEY

Mrs O'Malley



Well known for her television work, Joan has also worked for many of Australia's major theatre companies. Her credits include *Secret Bridesmaids' Business* for Playbox, *Follies in Concert* at the Sydney Opera House; *The Shaughraun*, *I Hate Hamlet*, *A View from the Bridge* and *No Going Back* for MTC; *My Fair Lady* for VSO; *A Passionate Woman*, *Mrs Klein* and *Prin* for Marian Street Theatre; *Cabaret* for Music Theatre Co. of WA; *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* for STC; and *Backyard* for Nimrod. Television credits include seven years as Matron Sloan in *A Country Practice*, *Law of the Land*, *E Street* and *When We Are Married* for the BBC.

SUSAN-ANN WALKER

Mrs Strakosh



Susan-ann is one of Australia's favourite character performers. Roles include Martha in *The Secret Garden*, Jan in *Grease* (Chiang Mai, Thailand and the recent Arena Production), Jenny-ann-dots (Gumbie Cat) in *Cats* (over 1200 performances), Elizabeth in *Aspects of Love*, Madam Thénardier understudy in *Les Misérables*, Susan-ann in *Godspell* and *A Grand Night for Singing* and the Gorgeous Grandam Possum in *Possum Magic*.

Early performances include *Carmen*, *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *The Dragon and the Mandarin* (all VSO), *The Merry Widow*, *Tarantara Tarantara*, *Iolanthe*, *Under Milk Wood*, *Riders of the Sea*, *Sugar*, *On the Twentieth Century* and *Barnum* in 1987. Susan-ann was nominated for best actress for the Victoria Guild Awards.

She regularly appears on *Good Morning Australia* with Bert Newton and is seen in Morning Melodies Benefit Concerts such as *A One Night Stand*. . . and Cabaret around Melbourne and Sydney. Most recently her one woman show *Desperately Singing Susan* had a successful season as part of the Melbourne International Comedy festival.

Susan-ann holds a Bachelor of Education (Music and Drama) from Melbourne University and was the recipient of the Dame Nellie Melba Scholarship.

She runs her own business, The Voice Place, specialising in singing lessons and workshops. Susan-ann was very excited to play the role of Gooch for The Production Company earlier this year and will start rehearsals for *The Sound of Music* for GFO/SEL shortly.

JACK WEBSTER

Eddie Ryan



Born in England, Jack's career has taken him to many parts of the world. He established himself as a dancer/choreographer in Britain and on the Continent, performing in variety shows, pantomimes - including the London Palladium - and many TV specials in London, Amsterdam, Berlin, Munich and Madrid. He appeared in the movies, *Oliver!* and *Scrooge*, and the West End productions of *Promises, Promises* and *Mr & Mrs*.

Jack, now an Australian citizen, came here in 1970, and has performed in many musicals including *Anything Goes*, *The Carol Channing Show*, *No, No, Nanette* and *Irene*.

He branched out into acting and played major roles in *Gypsy*, *Man of La Mancha*, *A Chorus Line*, *Annie*, *Dames at Sea*, *Arturo Ui*, *Stepping Out*, *Black Comedy* and *Run for your Wife*. He has built a solid reputation as a character actor in roles ranging from Sergeant of Police in *Pirates of Penzance*, Sam Wurlitzer in Brecht's *Happy End* to Mary Sunshine in STC's highly successful production of *Chicago* - which toured to Hong Kong.

He has appeared in many Australian TV variety shows, mini-series, cabaret and movies, most notably, *Strictly Ballroom*.

Jack has directed productions of *Nunsense*, *Stepping Out*, *Three Postcards* and the Australian premiere production of *Sophisticated Ladies*. He directed and played the leading role of Julian Marsh in a pro/am production of *42nd Street* at the Hills Centre, Sydney and in Hobart. With Nancye Hayes he co-choreographed *Dames At Sea* and co-directed *Here Comes Showtime* for Northside Theatre Co.

Last year he performed with Toni Lamond in the revue, *Hollywood Bizarre*.

Jack will be remembered for his triple role performance in that phenomenal Australian musical success, *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, which played Australia, New Zealand, Japan and London's West End.

More recently he directed, choreographed and performed in *Oh Coward!* with Toni Lamond and Barry Quinn at the Marian Street Theatre.

Caroline O'Connor

WHAT I DID
for LOVE



Caroline's debut album features songs from FUNNY GIRL · CHICAGO · A CHORUS LINE · GREASE · SHOWBOAT · WEST SIDE STORY
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KELLY AYKERS

A native of Ballarat, Kelly Aykers most recently appeared in the Melbourne and Sydney seasons of the hit musical production of *Chicago*, where she was also Dance Captain. Prior to this she appeared in a production of *Zorba* at the Capitol Theatre and the Melbourne and Sydney seasons of *Sweet Charity* in the principal role of Helene. She has also toured David Atkins' *Dancin' Man* and *Dynamite!* and played the roles of Patty in the 1991-92 Australasian tour of *Grease*, Kirstie in *A Chorus Line* in 1993/94, a 'Silly Girl' in *Beauty and the Beast* and toured in the 1989 production of *Seven Little Australians*. Her many television appearances include *In Melbourne Tonight*, *The Logie Awards*, *Good Morning Australia* and *The Midday Show*. She has choreographed many corporate events and worked with Alexei Sayle on his Australian tour and has been assistant to choreographers David Atkins, Jason Coleman and Tony Bartuccio. Kelly has appeared with many dance groups including David Atkins' national tour of *Electric Legs*, *Gimme Five* at the Sydney Hilton and Alana Scanlan's contemporary dance company *Moving Pictures*. She recently completed filming on Dein Perry's forthcoming feature film *Bootmen*.

JON BODE

Jon is a graduate of the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts and has appeared in such musicals as *Me and My Girl*, *Snugglypot* and *Cuddles*, *South Pacific* and *Assassins*. For the State Theatre Company of South Australia Jon appeared in *Haxby's Circus* and he performed the role of Lelio in *The Venetian Twins*. Jon appeared in *Little Dream* for Opera Australia and *Natural Life* for Playbox for the Adelaide Festival in 1998. Most recently Jon appeared in The Production Company's second production, *She Loves Me*.

JONATHAN BROOKE-DENSEM

Jonathan has studied all formats of performance from 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 the understudy to the lead role of Chris in Cameron Mackintosh's *Miss Saigon*. Jonathan was a member of the Les Misérables company and understudied the role of Enjolras.

MEGAN BULLIVANT

Megan commenced her training with Donna Halloran School of Dance NSW, and was later accepted at the VCA. In 1993, she was awarded a scholarship at Dance World 301 for the full time dance course.

Upon completing her training Megan left to tour Australia and NZ with Adelaide Festival Trust's production of *42nd Street*. Since that point Megan has performed for the VSO in the productions of *My Fair Lady*, *West Side Story*, *Don Quixote*, *Risette* and *Mock & Mabel*. Her on stage career has continued with performances of Opera Australia's *Samson and Delilah* and the Colossal Theatre Company's *Sweet Charity* and

the launch of Dein Perry's new project *Steel City*. Most recently Megan completed a tour with the Gordon Frost production of *Crazy For You* and Simon Gallahers' *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*.

Being a resident performer for the Colors Entertainment Network ensemble Megan has performed at the Mirage Las Vegas, the Hyatt Ball, toured with Deni Hines, danced for the Australian Open Players party and numerous other commercial and corporate productions.

In television Megan has performed as a dancer in *Tonight Live* with Steve Vizard and *The Midday Show* with Ray Martin. She also appears in *Past To Present's* video clip *Slammin' on Rage* and *Video Hits*.

Megan performed as a dancer and assistant choreographer on GTV9's *In Melbourne Tonight*. More recently Megan danced in the 1997 Logies Opening Ceremony and as support to Human Nature.

LOUIE GEORGE

Born in Manila, Philippines, Louie started his career at an early age, touring South East Asia as a soloist for various Filipino vocal ensembles. Upon migrating to Australia, he pursued the development of his dance skills commencing at Bartuccio Dance Centre. Through the years he became quite prolific in the commercial dance industry and worked with Australia's leading choreographers for major television shows such as *Bert Newton Show*, *Mike Walsh Show*, *Countdown*, the acclaimed *Logie Awards*, *Australia Day*, *Commonwealth Games*, and *AFI Awards*. Most recently, Louie toured Australia and New Zealand with The Deni Hines *Imagination* tour appearing in shows such as *The ARIA Awards*, *The Simply Red Tour* and *Hey Hey It's Saturday*. He has extended his choreographic skills in various television commercials, variety shows, fashion parades and corporate events. Louie has taught jazz and musical comedy for numerous institutions in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide. At present, he is a senior lecturer at Dance World 301. He played the lead vocals for *Vicious Rumours* and released a debut album with the group entitled *Bodyrock*. He was also lead singer for the *Bert Newton & Friends Variety Show* that toured Australia and at present continues to appear as resident singer for *Good Morning Australia* (Channel 10). In film, Louie has appeared in *Glass Babies*, *Hunting and What The Moon Saw*. Louie also performed at the Victorian Arts Centre in *The Hundred Year Ambush* & VSO's *Faust*.

Upon completing the Sydney season of *Miss Saigon* he was invited to perform in New York and Los Angeles with the Leo Valdez Special. Louie returned to Australia to the role of Big Daddy in the Melbourne season of *Sweet Charity* which was followed by the roles of Butler/Grubman in the premiere production of *Sisterella*, and The Production Company's premiere production of *Mame*. Most recently he returned to the Philippines to record an album for release later this year. Louie is delighted to be back in Melbourne and to join the cast of *Funny Girl*.

JACQUI GREEN ATANASOVSKI

Jacqui started her professional career in dance at 14, first appearing alongside Ronnie Corbett and then progressing to become a regular performer with the Channel 9 Ballet on *The Don Lane Show*.

Jacqui's credits have since expanded to include choreography and singing with appearances on a number of television programs, including *The Midday Show*, *Hey Hey It's Saturday*, *Bert Newton Today Show*, *Ernie Sigley Tonight Show*, *The AFI Awards* and *The Logies*.

After pursuing drama studies in New York, Jacqui returned to Australia to star as Cassie in the Australian production of *A Chorus Line* for which she was nominated for a Mo Award as Best Female Theatrical Performer. Jacqui then took on the role of Resident Director for the recent touring company of *Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

Jacqui wishes to thank her family for their amazing support.

ANDREW HALLSWORTH

Andrew's musical theatre credits include *West Side Story*, *Red Hot and Rhonda*, *Me and My Girl* (dance captain) and *42nd Street* (the original) and Topol's *Fiddler on the Roof* (dance captain/cover) and is thrilled to join the cast of *Funny Girl*.

More recently Andrew has continued his expansion into choreography, direction, production and stage management, including staging for the Melbourne Comedy Festival performances of the *Fabulous Singlettes*. As Andrew is a resident choreographer and production manager for Colors Entertainment Network he has most recently worked on the Deni Hines Australian promotional tour, *The Good Friday Appeal* with Rhonda Burckmore and Australasian tours for Walt Disney to name a few.

Andrew looks forward to continuing his career on this path with the vision of choreographing and directing Musical Theatre.

CHRIS HORSEY

Christopher is a winner of the Fred Astaire International Tap and Jazz Championship in New York. His theatre roles include the role of Tip in *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, which toured Australia, New Zealand, Japan, London's West End and the USA and the original Australian cast of *42nd Street*. He also played the role of Big Deal in the Sydney and Melbourne seasons of *West Side Story*. Christopher appeared in the Frank Sinatra Concert at Sanctuary Cove. His television appearances include a tap clip on *Playschool* for the ABC, as well as two appearances on the *Jay Leno Show* and opening *The Best of MTV Live* with Stevie Wonder. Christopher was in the USA touring in *Tap Dogs* including six months off-Broadway. He also co-choreographed the original ABC short film of *Tap Dogs*. Christopher appeared in the Melbourne season of *Chicago the Musical* and most recently performed the role of Angus in Dein Perry's feature film *Bootmen* which is yet to be released.

ANGELA JOHNSON

A graduate of the Music Theatre course at WAAPA, Angela also received a BA in Music from the University of Canterbury. She was a soloist in *Love is in the Air* with the Christchurch Symphony and last year appeared in the Perth season of *The Phantom of the Opera*, after performing in the Sydney season between 93-95. For Gary Young and Guy Simpson she performed in *Crusade - The Musical*. Angela has appeared in many major musicals across the country and in New Zealand, including: *Chess the Musical*, *A Grand Night for Singing*, *The Secret Garden*, *Cats*,

Into the Woods, Fiddler on the Roof, The Wizard of Oz, A Little Night Music and The Man of La Mancha. Angela has made voice overs and also recorded two musicals.

MARY LAWREY

Mary Lawrey has an extensive background in singing, dance and drama. Her work has encompassed principal roles, cover roles and chorus work in opera and music theatre. She is a member of the Opera Australia Melbourne Chorus and appears regularly with them in their Melbourne season.

NAOMI MARSH

Naomi trained 1979-1993 at the Perry School of Dance in Port Macquarie before being awarded a full time scholarship at Dance World 301, graduating in 1996 with a Diploma in Dance.

Naomi's television experience includes Channel 7's *Talking Telephone Numbers* and *Good Friday Appeal* and a featured role on *Full Frontal*. She has also appeared in the Past to Present film clip *Crazy* and as a resident dancer on GTV 9's 1996 season of *IMT* under the direction of choreographer Pamela Apostolidis.

Naomi has performed in numerous commercial and corporate productions such as NBL, NAWIC, Tattersall's, Mary Kay, the Australian Army, including a tour to Bali as part of the Colors Entertainment Network ensemble for Norwich Insurance. Naomi has also worked as a dancer for *Past To Present* in support of International art *Earth Wind and Fire*. Theatrically, Naomi performed in the musical productions of *Sweet Charity* and the Gordon Frost production of *Crazy For You*. Most recently Naomi completed the Australian/New Zealand tour of *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way to the Forum*.

Naomi dedicates her performance to her mother, Jenny.

KATRINA O'CONNOR

Katrina studied dance from the age of 4 with her aunt Yvonne O'Connor, then at 15 moved to The Australian Ballet School. Katrina continued her work with The Australian Ballet Dancers Company performing as a soloist in the production of *Swan Lake, Summer Nights, Raymonda* and *Florestan*. She was also a principal dancer in *Papillon* and *Jarabina*. Katrina also performed with The Australian Ballet and in several productions with the Victoria State Opera and The Australian Opera. Other credits include *West Side Story, My Fair Lady* and *South Pacific*. She understudied and performed the role of Meg Giry in Melbourne and Sydney seasons of *The Phantom of the Opera*, followed by the Sydney season of *Beauty and the Beast*, as one of the 'Silly Girls'. Most recently, Katrina starred in the Sydney and Melbourne seasons of *Show Boat* in the principal role of Kim Raverall. Katrina is delighted to be part of The Production Company's third presentation, *Funny Girl*, having performed the role of Gloria Upson in their first production, *Mame*.

TYRAN PARKE

Tyran Parke is a 1998 graduate of the Musical Theatre course at WAAPA. He also studied at Theatre Nepean. Most recently he played the role of Guillaume in *Notodamus* for Stageworks and Mister in *Sunday in the Park with George* for

Looking Glass Theatre Company. Tyran appeared in several productions whilst at WAAPA including *Miracle City* directed by Nick Enright, *Carousel, The Seagull, Jonah, Follies, Assassins, The Magic Flute* and *Peer Gynt*.

DAVID ROGERS-SMITH

David Rogers-Smith is a versatile performer in classical and musical theatre styles. His career began as a chorister at a young age, and his solo tenor appearances include St Nicholas in the Britten work of the same name, Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and *Requiem*. He has appeared with Opera Australia in Verdi's *Requiem* as well as the Melbourne premiere of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Requiem*. David joined *The Phantom of the Opera* in 1993 and understudied the role of Valjean. David starred in *The Three Tenors - A Corporate Show* and wrote and starred in his own one-man show - *David Rogers-Smith - Unplugged!* at Cafe K in Melbourne. David is preparing a tribute to Leonard Bernstein and most recently performed the role of Kromov in Simon Gallaher's *The Merry Widow*.

JOLENE SLATER

Growing up in the country town of St Arnaud, Jolene started her training at the St Arnaud Dance Studios before moving to Melbourne to study full time dance at Dance Factory.

Jolene trained and completed her full time studies at Dance Factory in 1997 and successfully went on to be a scholarship winner in 1998.

Now working professionally, her experience in the industry includes various modelling and dance fashion parades at clubs and corporate events, television commercial work, the TV *Week Logie Awards*, Warner Bros pantomimes and cheerleading for Melbourne Storm Rugby League Team. Jolene has developed a rising career not only as a dancer but as a teacher and choreographer at several schools in Melbourne. This is Jolene's first musical, which she dedicates to her parents.

KEITH STUBLEY

Keith's career began in Victoria at the age of nine when he began a rigorous schedule of singing, tap dancing and acting classes. His stage credits include *Hello, Dolly!*, *Mack and Mabel*, *Oliver!* and *My One and Only*. Keith performed the role of The Baker/Issachar in RUC's production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* - throughout Australia, New Zealand and Asia. Most recently his stage work has included *Beadle* in Queensland Theatre Company's production of *Sweeney Todd*, the Gordon Frost Organisation's Sydney season of *Crazy For You* in the featured role of Moose, IMG's Sydney season of *My Fair Lady* and *The Prince of Egypt* for Lorry D'Ercole Productions in Singapore. Keith was most recently seen in The Production Company's first two productions, *Mame* and *She Loves Me*. He is delighted to be back "causing trouble" for the third time in *Funny Girl*.

SONALI VERSACE

Sonali has had a vast experience in theatre, television, film and radio. She has performed as a featured singer/dancer in productions of *Kismet* and *Solome*. She played the role of Marguerita in *West Side Story*, Carmen Miranda in *The Life of Carmen* and Cha Cha in the recent Arena Spectacular, *Grouse*.

Television highlights include *Hey Hey It's Saturday, The Midday Show, The Bert Newton Show*, and *GMA*. Sonali has performed in a variety of bands and toured up front with the dance band Bubbleman for *Vicious Vinyl*. She is currently involved with an outfit called Trigger who are about to release their first single, *Forces*. She has worked as a choreographer for high profile clients such as McDonalds, Ansett, L'Oreal and the like.

PATRICIA VIVIAN-LALL

Born in England, Patricia began her career, 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's then Carrie in *Carousel*, 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* and was most recently in the company of Simon Gallaher's *Merry Widow*.

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. Most recently she played the role of Suzie, a follies girl, in Gordon Frost Melbourne and Brisbane seasons of *Crazy For You*. Hester sings in a band and is currently studying voice at the Melbourne Conservatorium.

SONIA WARNER

Sonia began dancing at an early age, studying all facets of theatrical dance, singing and drama at Essendon Academy of Ballet and Dance Factory.

Throughout the years Sonia has performed in several pantomimes, corporate functions, fashion parades, television programs, nightclub promotions and six months in Japan, more recently cheerleading for Melbourne Storm. This is Sonia's first major production and she is very excited to be part of the *Funny Girl* cast.

ROD WATERWORTH

Rod began his career in Melbourne when he first appeared in *Cats*, and has since performed in *Crazy For You, Red Hot and Rhonda, My Fair Lady, Pirates of Penzance, Me and My Girl, 42nd Street* plus many more. He has performed in several operas for the VSO; also in many television and cabaret performances. He has also played in the television series *Blue Heelers* and *High Fliers* as well as many varied fashion parades and corporate performances. *Funny Girl* marks Rod's third appearance in productions for The Production Company in this its first year, after *Mame* and *She Loves Me*.

Just this side of Paradise

The backstage adventure of *Funny Girl*

Funny Girl celebrates the life and the talent of Fanny Brice, one of the legendary ladies of the American stage. The saga covers her discovery by producer Florenz Ziegfeld, her triumph in his glamorous Follies, her marriage to playboy gambler Jules (Nick) Arnstein, her tenacity during his imprisonment for stock swindling, and the break up of their marriage after his release.

Real-life Fanny had two children by Arnstein: a son William and a daughter Frances. In 1939 Frances married an up-and-coming Hollywood producer called Ray Stark.

Now read on. . .

Ray Stark's *Funny Girl* adventure began shortly after his mother-in-law's death in 1951. He commissioned author Norman Katkov to write an 'official' biography of Fanny, and supplied him with over three hundred pages of Fanny's notes about her life. The result, somewhat unfortunately titled *The Fabulous Fanny*, was serialised in the *Ladies' Home Journal* and published in book form by Alfred A. Knopf in 1952. Then Fanny's daughter Frances objected to some of the less pleasant material in the book - even though it was taken from Fanny's own notes - and Stark was forced to pay Katkov \$50,000 to remove *The Fabulous Fanny* from the market.

For some years Stark returned to his principal interest - movie production. Then, in 1961, he commissioned Isabel Lennart to write a treatment for a screenplay on the life of Fanny Brice, a film in the grand tradition of biographical movies such as *The Great Ziegfeld* (1936), *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (George M. Cohan, 1942), *The Jolson Story* (1946) and *Look for the Silver Lining* (Marilyn Miller, 1949). Interestingly there had already been two films based on Fanny Brice's life: the now-forgotten *Broadway Thru a Keyhole* (with Constance Cummings, Paul Kelly and Russ Columbo, 1933), and *Rose of Washington Square* (1939). In the latter, Alice Faye, as Rose Sargent, sang Brice's signature tune, 'My Man', and fell for a Nick Arnstein character played by Tyrone Power. Fanny and Nick sued Twentieth Century-Fox and settled out of court for \$40,000 and \$25,000 respectively.

Several experts suggested to Stark that Isabel Lennart's treatment would work splendidly as a Broadway musical. Stark had the contacts, expertise and initial finance, and went into partnership with producer David Merrick to get the show under way. At various times, three directors worked on the project - Jerome Robbins, Bob Fosse and Garson Kanin. Jule Styne was recruited to compose the score (his impressive credits included *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *Bells Are Ringing* and *Gypsy*, the stage biography of Gypsy Rose Lee), with Stephen Sondheim (also fresh from *Gypsy*) as lyricist. Coral Haney did the choreography.

Fanny Brice in 1910



The creative process took eighteen months. There was no attempt to use any of the songs Fanny Brice had made famous, but Jule Styne wrote several in period idiom, notably 'Sadie, Sadie'. The stand-out numbers, though, were more contemporary in feel: 'People', a poignant expression of the lonely life of a performer dedicated to making others laugh, and the ebullient 'Don't Rain On My Parade', a song strangely similar in style and sentiment to 'Before the parade passes By' from *Hello, Dolly!*. The latter show opened three months before *Funny Girl* and would pip it to the post as the biggest hit of the season.

The producers' thorniest problem was finding someone to recreate the legendary Fanny Brice, whose unique comedic, singing and dramatic talents were still warmly remembered. The Starks wanted Anne Bancroft, a fine dramatic actress, but with limited vocal capabilities.

'You'll never get anyone to sing those songs,' Bancroft lamented, and bowed out. Carol Burnett was offered the role but she considered herself incapable of projecting the ethnic subtleties of Brice's humour. What about Eydie Gorné, Kaye Ballard, Shirley MacLaine? The Starks felt that the show needed a big name in the lead. To Sondheim's amazement they sent the script to Mary Martin: 'Mary Martin? You've gotta have a Jewish girl! And if she's not Jewish, she at least has to have a nose!'

In the spring of 1962, Jule Styne discovered a girl with a nose. Her name was Barbra Streisand.

Aged only twenty-one, she had found success in a small scale musical called *I Can Get It For You Wholesale* and she was creating a sensation in cabaret in Greenwich Village. He took the Starks to see her. They thought her too unsophisticated to play the older Fanny Brice that they remembered. 'That girl will never play my mother,' said Fran. 'My mother was something special.'

Nevertheless Ray Stark was finally convinced of Streisand's potential. She was signed in July 1963. But Stark also recognised the risk. He told a friend that Bancroft would have guaranteed one million in advance sales, Burnett, two million and Streisand virtually nothing. 'But if she clicks, she could bring in five million. So we go with the kid.' Sydney Chaplin, son of the great Charlie and a dependable Broadway leading man, was cast as Nick Arnstein. Kay Medford played Mrs Brice.

By this time David Merrick, Jerome Robbins and Bob

Fosse had left the project, and Bob Merrill (*Carnival!* and *Hello, Dolly!*) had replaced Sondheim as lyricist - all victims of an incredibly tortuous pre-production process. The situation was not helped by the presence of the real Nick Arnstein, now in his eighties, whom Stark had judiciously invited in the hope of avoiding a potential lawsuit. As ever, Arnstein was conning money. Eventually Stark lost patience with him. The old man returned to California where he lived with Lew Brice, Fanny's brother. He died in 1965. He never saw *Funny Girl*.

On the first day of rehearsals the new star came close to being fired after an altercation with Milton Rosenstock, the musical director. Streisand was nervous, awkward, explosive. Lack of a firm directional hand cruelly exposed her inexperience. The pre-production roller coaster led to the Shubert Theatre in Boston, where the first out-of-town try-out was scheduled for 13 January 1964. A snowstorm delayed the start by an hour and by the time the curtain finally fell at 1am half the indifferent, unresponsive audience had left the theatre. The notices were terrible. Isabel Lennart was reduced to tears and Ray Stark seriously considered closing there and then. Obviously *Funny Girl* was too long - twenty minutes were cut for the next performance - but it was also rambling, flat, unfocused. Worse, Barbra Streisand showed only flashes of the brilliance of which she was capable. Her understudy, Lainie Kazan, recalled that Stark immediately started looking for a replacement. And "there were hirings and firings and accidents. There were a lot of power struggles. It must have been overwhelming for Barbra. But she got through it because she was a strong-willed feisty little thing."

The show limped on to Philadelphia. Jerome Robbins was brought back as 'production supervisor' to strengthen the uncertain hand of director Garson Kanin. Most of Carol Haney's dance numbers were completely reworked. There were innumerable script changes, then changes to the changes. And rumours. Rumours that something special was emerging from chaos. Streisand, knowing the importance of *Funny Girl* to her burgeoning career, worked desperately, honing, refining, perfecting. Stark prudently postponed the New York premiere five times.

Finally, on 26 March 1964, *Funny Girl* opened at the Winter Garden on Broadway - and, as Shana Alexander wrote in *Life* - 'the entire gorgeous, rattletrap show business establishment blew sky-high.' The reviews were unanimously ecstatic. 'If New York were Paris,' mused the *Times*, 'Broadway could temporarily consider renaming itself the Rue Streisand. She sets the entire theatre ablaze. She is theatre's new girl for all seasons.' *'Funny Girl'*, added the *World Telegram and Sun*, 'is just this side of Paradise.'

As *Funny Girl* hurtled happily on, Streisand and Stark were locked in negotiations. Finally Stark agreed to release her from the Broadway run provided she would star in the London production. With her eyes on Hollywood, Streisand said she'd play London, but only if she could do the movie. . . Eventually all was settled and on 26 December 1965 Barbra gave her last Broadway performance as Fanny. It was one of the most memorable nights of her career. She told the packed house, 'I'd like to pay tribute to a great performer, the woman I play in the show. Oddly enough I'm standing on the same stage where she did her last Broadway Show. So as a tribute to her I'd like to sing this song that she made famous.' She then sang 'My Man'.

When she finished she was crying, and so was everyone else. As the audience held hands and sang 'Auld Lang Syne' no-one could know that Barbra Streisand would never return to the Broadway stage.



The finale of the Australian production of *Funny Girl* with Jill Perryman 1966 - 1967
Photograph by John Hearder

The marathon 1,348-performance Broadway run continued with Mimi Hines and Johnny Desmond succeeding Miss Streisand and Sydney Chaplin. A national tour began in October 1965 and trundled around the United States for twelve months. Marion Michaels was Fanny with Anthony George as Nick.

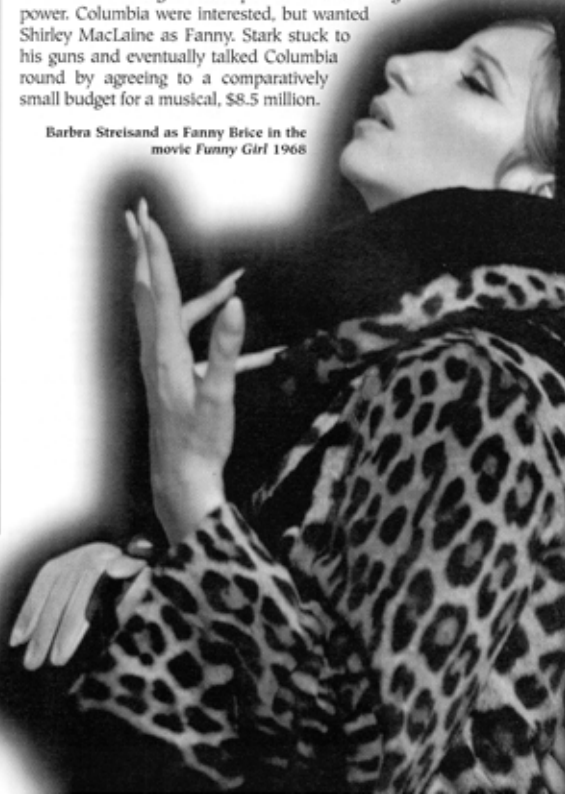
The carbon-copy London production, with Michael Craig as Nick, opened at the Prince of Wales Theatre on 13 April 1966. Barbra found English audiences quiet and undemonstrative. With Princess Margaret and the Earl of

Snowdon in the house the reaction was even quieter. Afterwards the Princess told Barbra how much she'd enjoyed the show. Barbra looked her in the eye and said, 'You should come back some night when you're not here.'

After the West End premiere Barbra discovered she was pregnant. She continued with the show as long as she could, but it was becoming increasingly tedious. Despite the success of Lisa Shane as her deputy, the show did not survive Miss Streisand's departure. The London *Funny Girl* folded after only 112 performances.

Streisand signed a four-movie deal with Ray Stark, guaranteeing her the film version of *Funny Girl* for a salary of \$250,000 and a small percentage of the box office. Stark found that the major studios were reluctant to take a punt on the film if Streisand were to star. True, she had been a success on Broadway and on television, but she had neither big screen experience nor drawing power. Columbia were interested, but wanted Shirley MacLaine as Fanny. Stark stuck to his guns and eventually talked Columbia round by agreeing to a comparatively small budget for a musical, \$8.5 million.

Barbra Streisand as Fanny Brice in the movie *Funny Girl* 1968



Barbra insisted that she wanted a 'non-musical' director. This was probably astute as the book was the musical's weakest component. Columbia suggested William Wyler, who'd won an Academy Award for *Ben Hur*. 'Charlotti' said Barbra. 'How is he with people, like women?'

With Barbra set to repeat her Broadway portrayal, who would be her screen Nick Arnstein? Tony Curtis? Sean Connery? Gregory Peck? Streisand fantasised about Marlon Brando. Styne wanted Frank Sinatra. In turn, Sinatra demanded \$750,000, new songs and top billing. Then someone jokingly suggested Omar Sharif. Stark discovered that the handsome Egyptian actor could sing - and signed him for \$20,000.

Days later, the Arab-Israeli war erupted. The investors in the film were Jewish, so were director William Wyler and, of course, the female star. There was panic on the set. Would Sharif be sacked? Wyler was adamant: 'Not hiring an actor because he's Egyptian is outrageous. If Omar doesn't make the film, I don't make it either!'

Sharif stayed, but the Egyptian press objected to a publicity still of him and Barbra kissing and began a campaign to strip him of his Egyptian citizenship. Sharif stayed calm. 'I've never asked a girl her nationality before kissing her,' he said. Barbra chimed in with, 'You think Cairo was upset? You should have seen the letter I got from my Aunt Rose!'

The stage musical's best songs were retained for the film but the score was supplemented by three of Fanny Brice's successes: 'I'd Rather Be Blue Over You', 'Second Hand Rose' and, of course, 'My Man'. Miss Streisand's screen debut won her an Academy Award. Leonard Maltin commented: 'Bad as biography, but first-rate as a musical.'

The success of the *Funny Girl* movie tempted Stark to produce a sequel, *Funny Lady*, in 1975. Streisand and Sharif were back, with James Caan as Brice's new love, flamboyant producer Billy Rose. Herbert Ross directed. There were some new songs by John Kander and Fred Ebb and a generous helping of old numbers by Billy Rose himself. *The New Yorker* was acerbic: 'As Fanny Brice, Streisand is no longer human; she's like a bitchy female impersonator impersonating Barbra Streisand.' *Funny Lady* was not a success.

Before this, however, *Funny Girl* had come to Australia. J.C. Williamson's managing director, Sir Frank Tait, had seen Streisand in *Funny Girl* in New York in 1964 and had scribbled his thoughts on casting in a program, now preserved in the Performing Arts Museum at the Victorian Arts Centre. Against 'Mrs Brice' he wrote 'Fifi Banvard type'; he thought Frank Ward would be suitable for 'Eddie' and Letty Craydon for 'Mrs Strakosh'. And against the character of 'Fanny Brice' he wrote, simply, 'Import'. Clearly he thought that, in the JCW tradition, an unknown American would be preferable to an Australian, no matter how talented. Sir Frank died in 1965 and it was his successor, John McCallum, who acquired rights for *Funny Girl* for 'The Firm'. The deal was confirmed on 19 January, 1966: \$6,000 on signing and 10% of the gross, plus \$575 on signing and \$20 per week for the use of the original scenic and costume designs.

McCallum determined that the leading role should be cast locally. This put him into conflict with the rest of the board and was one of the reasons that he and 'The Firm' parted company later that year.

John McCallum's announcement that Australia's Fanny was to be Jill Perryman was greeted with amazement and enthusiasm. At thirty-two Jill was already a music theatre veteran. She had understudied Evie Hayes in *Call Me Madam* and had played second female lead in *Hello, Dolly!* *Funny Girl* premiered at Her Majesty's Theatre in Sydney on 4 March 1966. Jill's success was sensational. McCallum reminisced: 'I knew that Jill could play the part better than anyone



Jill Perryman in the 'Rat Tat Tat Tat' routine in *Funny Girl* 1966-1967
Photograph by John Hearder

that I had auditioned in New York. When the lights went up for the interval on the first night I knew that we had a success.'

Fred Hebert, the highly experienced American director, cast Bruce Barry as Nick Arnstein. The supporting cast included Bill Yule, Leslie Baker, Jeanne Battye, Neville Burns, Walter Sullivan, Tommy Dysart and Beverley Dunn. The great favourite Evie Hayes - best remembered as the star of Australia's *Annie Get Your Gun* - played Fanny's mother, Mrs Brice. Evie's husband, sprightly vaudeville veteran Will Mahoney, had the character role of Tom Keeney, a small time impresario who had failed to recognise young Fanny Brice's potential. Will was a living history book. Not only did he remember the real Tom Keeney, he'd known Arnstein, Ziegfeld and Fanny herself.

The Sydney critics were unanimous in their praise. In *The Australian Mungo MacCallum* said, 'Jill Perryman is nothing short of brilliant. It is next to impossible to imagine anyone, including Barbra Streisand, in the part.' And the *Telegraph's* Griffin Foley hailed 'A night of theatrical enchantment.'

Funny Girl transferred to Sydney's Theatre Royal in May and played there until it transferred to Her Majesty's Melbourne in August. Sadly, during the heat of the Melbourne summer, Will Mahoney collapsed on stage. He was forced to leave the company and died in February 1967. Evie bravely stayed with the tour: Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and back to Adelaide, where the final curtain fell on 6 May 1967 - a splendid fourteen-month tour of packed, happy houses.

In reality there have been only two truly memorable *Funny Girls*: Barbra Streisand and Jill Perryman. I'm sure that tonight Fanny Brice is peering cheekily down from the Green Room in the sky, ready to greet a third. Welcome, Caroline O'Connor!

© Frank Van Straten OAM
Theatre historian and presenter of
3LO's popular Sunday 'Nostalgia' Show



Jill Perryman as Fanny Brice in the Australian production of *Funny Girl* 1966-1967

FUNNY GIRL

Orchestra

THE AUSTRALIAN THEATRE ORCHESTRA

<i>Leader</i>	Rob John
<i>First Violins</i>	Mark Zorz (<i>Principal</i>) Claire Sterling Jason Bunn
<i>Second Violins</i>	Suzanne Ng (<i>Principal</i>) Asha Stephenson
<i>Cello</i>	Leah Hooper (<i>Principal</i>) Alison Both Amanda Rowarth
<i>Bass</i>	Gary Costello (<i>Principal</i>)
<i>Reed 1</i>	Lachlan Davidson
<i>Reed 2</i>	Penny Stevenson
<i>Reed 3</i>	Martin Corcoran
<i>Reed 4</i>	Cheryl Clark
<i>Reed 5</i>	Paul Williams
<i>Trumpets</i>	Norm Harris (<i>Principal</i>) Shane Hughes Greg Spence
<i>Trombones</i>	John Courtney Ian Bell Simon Scerri
<i>French Horn</i>	Joanne Montesano
<i>Guitar</i>	Gary Norman
<i>Percussion</i>	Sergei Golovko
<i>Drums</i>	Dean Cooper
<i>Piano</i>	Greg Roberts

Synopsis of Scenes

The Time: Shortly before and after World War I

Act I

- Scene 1: Fanny's Dressing Room
— The New Amsterdam Theatre
- Scene 2: Backstage — Keeney's Music Hall
- Scene 3: In Front of Keeney's Music Hall
- Scene 4: Backyard — Fanny's Neighborhood
- Scene 5: Onstage — Keeney's Music Hall
- Scene 6: Backstage and Chorus Dressing Room
Immediately following
- Scene 7: Mrs. Brice's Kitchen
- Scene 8: Backstage — The New York Theatre
- Scene 9: Onstage — The New York Theatre
- Scene 10: In Front of Follies Curtain
Immediately following
- Scene 11: Henry Street
- Scene 12: Interior of Mrs. Brice's Saloon
- Scene 13: A Private Dining Room — Baltimore
- Scene 14: Baltimore Railroad Terminal

Act II

- Scene 1: The Arnstein Long Island Mansion
- Scene 2: Mrs. Brice's Saloon
- Scene 3: Backstage — The New Amsterdam Theatre
Circa 1920
- Scene 4: Onstage — The New Amsterdam Theatre
- Scene 5: Fanny's Dressing Room
Immediately following
- Scene 6: Study — The Arnstein House
- Scene 7: Backstage — The New Amsterdam Theatre
- Scene 8: Onstage — The New Amsterdam Theatre
- Scene 9: Fanny's Dressing Room
— The New Amsterdam Theatre

Production Credits

<i>Technical Director</i>	David Miller
<i>Production Co-ordinator</i>	Rachel D. Taylor
<i>Stage Manager</i>	Annie Reid
<i>Assistant Stage Manager</i>	Katherine Muller
<i>Head Mechanist</i>	Dave Clark
<i>Wardrobe Supervisor</i>	Anne Smith
<i>Wardrobe</i>	Micky Savage Paul Flanagan Lila Stojanovski Julian Spink Lachlan Carrick Nigel Hodson and Pul Hitchen
<i>Wigs and Hair</i>	
<i>Sound Production</i>	
<i>Mix Engineer</i>	
<i>Radio Microphones</i>	
<i>Sound Equipment</i>	
<i>supplied by</i>	System Sound
<i>Lighting equipment</i>	
<i>supplied by</i>	Bytecraft Theatrical
<i>Scenery constructed by</i>	ALM Pty Ltd
<i>Rehearsal répétiteur</i>	Greg Roberts
<i>Publicity</i>	Howie & Taylor Publicity
<i>Marketing</i>	Mollison Consulting Pty Ltd

GARY YOUNG

Director



Associate Director for *Les Misérables*, 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 recently directed the new musical *Crusade in Concert* at the Melbourne Concert Hall. Original written work includes lyrics and book with co-writer and composer Tony Rees for Tilly, presented at the Buxton Musical Quest in Britain, their project *Jeckyll*, a major musical based on Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jeckyll and Mr Hyde* which, after a season at the Churchill Theatre, Britain, starring Dave Willetts, is to be produced by The Apollo Leisure Company. Other works include *Jogger Jimmy Saves the Day* for the VSO and WA Opera Company's Education Programs and *The Solution to Pollution*.

Current works with composer Paul Keelan include *Life By Drowning!*, *A Woman's Eyes*, *Oscar*, and *Black Widow*, a new musical commissioned for Colette Mann.

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 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 *Midday Show*.

Guy is currently Musical Director of *Chicago*, Musical Supervisor of *Cats - Run Away to the Circus* and Musical Coordinator for the Regent Hotel in Sydney. In 2000 he will be the Musical Director of the Australian production of *Saturday Night Fever*.

ROSS COLEMAN

Choreographer



Ross has choreographed countless productions and events in cabaret, television, fashion, corporate concert and special event areas in Australia and overseas. He wrote, choreographed and directed *Klien Review* with Oleg Timourchine for Friedrichstadtpalast in Berlin. Shortly after Ross returned from Berlin he choreographed *Cabaret* for the Gordon Frost Organisation and also *Grease*, which toured nationally, also for the Gordon Frost Organisation. Ross then went on to work as Associate Director for the Company B productions of *Love Burns* and *Trouble in Tahiti*. Most recently Ross choreographed the opera *Damon* at the Opernhaus in Zurich. He has previously worked with Sydney Theatre Company on *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Miracle City*, *Summer Rain*, *Company*, *Jonah Jones*, *The Conquest of Carmen*, *Miranda*, *The Stripper*, *Chicago* and *I'm Getting My Act Together*. His other theatre credits include *The Threepenny Opera* (STC), the national tour of *High Society* (MTC), *Friedrichstadtpalast* (Berlin), *World's Greatest Dance Spectacular*, *Austorizon* (Australian Dance Theatre), *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying* and *Jerry's Girls* (Gordon Frost Organisation), *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (Wilton Morley Productions) and *Side By Side By Sondheim* (Northside). His film credits include *Confidence*, *Emerald City*, *Goodbye Paradise* and *Rebel*.

Ross Received the 1989 Mo Award for Choreographer of the Year.

DALE FERGUSON

Set Designer



In 1989 Dale Ferguson graduated from NIDA with a Diploma of Dramatic Art/Design before becoming resident designer for the Queensland Theatre Company (1990-94) and Melbourne Theatre Company (1995-98). Dale's design credits include *The Marriage of Figaro* (QTC), *Sylvia* (Sydney Theatre Company/MTC), *Amy's View*, *Navigating* (MTC/QTC); and *Fresh Ghosts* (Chamber Made Opera). He was the Design Assistant on the Channel Nine and Film Australia co-production *The Girl From Tomorrow* and illustrated the television production of *Round the Twist*. Dale received a 1998 Victorian Green Room Award for *Molly Sweeney* and the same award for *Dealer's Choice* and *A Cheery Soul* in 1997; the Loudon Sainthill Memorial Scholarship in 1993 and the 1994 Brisbane Theatre Critics' Matilda Award for *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Shaughraun* - an award he also received in 1990 for *Top Silk* and *A Month in the Country*.

BOB MURPHY

Costume Designer



Bob Murphy has designed and made costumes for major Australian and overseas musicals for the past 25 years. His connection with *Funny Girl* originates with Betty Pounder and the original Australian production when he was invited to re-design some of the costumes. Since then he and his company Bob Murphy Costumes have worked on *Barnum*, *A Chorus Line*, *Annie*, *Sugar Babies*, *42nd Street*, *Jupiters Casino*, *Anything Goes*, *The King and I* (Australia and Broadway), *The Wizard of Oz* and *The Boy From Oz*. Bob Murphy Costumes designed and made costumes for British ice-dancing legends Torvill and Dean over a fourteen year period including shows that toured Australia, England and Russia. Bob is currently making the costumes for the Fox Studio's Theme Park Show in Sydney.

DAVID MURRAY

Lighting Designer



David has worked as a musician, stage manager, production manager, technical director, set and lighting designer, production electrician and theatre and architectural lighting consultant.

He has designed the lighting for more than two hundred productions including *Hair*, *Follies*, *Seesaw* (FEIP Award for Set and Lighting Design), *The Wizard of Oz*, *George M*, *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, *Carmen*, *The Snow Queen*, *The Magic Flute*, *Don Carlos*, *Così fan tutte*, *Into the Woods*, *Heretic*, *Amadeus*, *Follies in Concert*, *Theme and Variations*, *Barbara Cook In Concert* and her *Better With A Band*, *Michael Feinstein*, *Dudley Moore*, *Betty Buckley in Concert*, *Theme and Variations*, *Dancin' Dynamite*, *The Puccini Spectacular*, *Greek*, *Sweet Death*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *Improvement Don Leaves Linda*, *The Burrow*, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, *Joel Grey and Red Hot and Rhonda*, *Tear from a Glass Eye* and *Piccadilly Bushman* for Chamber made Opera.

David was also responsible for lighting the Gala Opening of Southgate and the *River Spectacular* which opened the Melbourne Festival last year. Other event and architectural work includes *Lighting Up Melbourne with Laughter*, the Arts Centre Spire Launch, the site lighting for Expo 88, King George Square and the Southbank Redevelopment in Brisbane.

His designs for the national and international tours of *Tap Dogs* (nominated for a green room award), the *New Rocky Horror Show*, *Hot Shoe Shuffle* and *Circus Oz* all received critical acclaim.

David has lit many productions internationally in countries including India, Singapore, China, Japan, Malaysia, Korea, North and South America, Italy, Scotland, England, Ireland and Holland.

At the last Entech Awards David was voted Lighting Designer of the Year.

JULIAN SPINK

SYSTEM SOUND

Sound Designer



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

Julian Spink has operated for performers such as John Farnham, Warren Zevon, Christopher Cross and toured with bands including Crowded House (Aust and NZ tour) and Little River Band (Aust, US and European tours).

Julian joined System Sound in 1993 as head of Development and Operator for shows such as *Les Misérables*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *West Side Story* and *Five Guys Named Moe*. Julian is the Assistant Sound Designer on *Chicago* and currently supervising the Australian tour.

System Sound's other credits include the Hong Kong Farewell Concert and the official Handover Ceremony, concerts throughout Australasia with Kiri Te Kanawa, José Carreras, and Plácido Domingo and productions including *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats*, *Rent*, *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Starlight Express*, *Miss Saigon*, *Aspects of Love*, *The Puccini Spectacular*, *Aida* and the arena tour of *Swan Lake*.



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About The Production Company

The Production Company (Australia) Ltd is a not for profit company started by Jeanne Pratt in 1998. It aims to provide work opportunities and stimulate the live theatre industry with a concentration first on box office appeal and high energy entertainment.

Its Board of Directors boasts people with a proven track record in the complementary fields of business, the arts and politics. Ken Mackenzie-Forbes gave TPC the guidance it needed to establish itself and create its first series. Garry Krauss wrote TPC its first cheque.

TPC owes much to Jeanne Pratt, Ken Mackenzie-Forbes, Garry Krauss, Sir Rupert Hamer, Felicity Beale, Brett Randall, Ross Mollison and Stephen Bolton. It needed the talent and commitment of these people to create a new theatre company in Australia. Now it is done, the possibilities are endless and exciting.

TPC believes that if it can achieve box office success then the other purposes of its existence flow from there. This creates two challenges. The first is that box office success is extremely difficult to achieve in a market saturated with fantastic shows and great talent. It is now a truly global market so the alternative shows will always be truly world class. TPC does not underestimate the difficulty of achieving box office success. What it relies on is the wealth of talent available. We have people of international standing here and if a local company can give them another forum to excite a local audience then we are on the way.

The second is that TPC knows that to achieve box office success requires innovation and excitement. Audiences are extremely sophisticated and need to be thrilled and surprised. TPC's focus on box office recognises the importance of artistic excellence.

TPC will present three performances of three shows in 1999. This will be a start. It plans to do the same again next year. We may also start to diversify with a few additional projects. Some may generate revenue. Some may just fill a perceived need in the industry.

In the longer term we may even have a show extending to touring. This isn't our primary focus but if it happens, what better way to provide work opportunities? And if we provide some sort of platform for shows to be sourced here instead of London and New York, so much the better.

This gives some background to TPC. Any further discussion would have to understand that TPC is the sum of the people it is involved with. As well as the Board, it is the directors, the music directors, the creative teams, the performers, the technical crew, the agents, the suppliers, the audience and the sponsors. Even companies who, in a strict analysis, might be seen as competitors. TPC is the sum of their energy, generosity, discipline, hard work and focus. To all of you, thanks. We hope that this series starts to return the good faith that has universally been entrusted in us. We look forward to returning it further and to the different times we might be able to express our gratitude and justify your support.



NICK GALLOWAY

General Manager - The Production Company

Nick Galloway began his musical education in utero and since then he has played the violin on a professional basis, practised as a lawyer for five years and completed an MBA at the Melbourne Business School. His practical experience as a musician gives him an appreciation for talent and an understanding of the discipline required to excel in the Performing Arts. This drives much of what he does and, to some extent, drives The Production Company (Australia) Ltd.

He is very excited about The Production Company's first series and the establishment of the company in general. He asked that the following notes be included.

Sincere thanks to:

- All our sponsors - you may not realise the extent to which you keep the industry alive
- The performing arts industry itself. Everyone. Thank you. I hope I can make this company what you want and what it deserves given that it is built on foundations of generosity, support and hard work
- My Board who have guided this project since before it was a project
- In particular, Ken Mackenzie-Forbes who must be credited as the driving force behind this series.
- Particular thanks must also go to Jeanne Pratt. The company began with some Pratt family capital but Jeanne's warmth, vision, drive and generosity cannot be measured in mere financial terms. She is an inspiration and it has been a pleasure to manage a company with Jeanne Pratt at the helm.

Finally, thank you to Sally, my wife. I'm not capable of phrasing adequate words of thanks but her support of me and this company has been so unflinching and strong that she is, as much as anyone, a founding sponsor.

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Chairman	Mrs Jeanne Pratt AO
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	Mr Garry Krauss AM
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	Mr Ross Mollison
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