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PROUDLY PRESENT

MIAMIE

Book by
JEROME LAWRENCE
and **ROBERT E LEE**

Music & Lyrics by
JERRY HERMAN

Based on the novel by Patrick Dennis and the play,
AUNTIE MAME by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E 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 & Harris.

RHONDA BURCHMORE
ROBERT GRUBB NICKI WENDT LARA MULCAHY
GRANT SMITH KAENG CHAN ADAM MURPHY
ALEX RATHGEBER THOMAS NEW

ANA MARIA BELO LYALL BROOKS BEN BROWN ROHAN BROWNE BRENDA CLARKE
JOANNA FRIPP REBECCA GRENNAN ESTHER HANNAFORD JACK HEANLY
MATT HEYWARD KATIE HOUGHTON NICK JONES LAINE LAMONT LOREDO MALCOLM
DARREN NATALE KURTIS PAPADINIS TROY PHILLIPS EVE PRIDEAUX COLE RINTOUL
ANGIE STAPLETON TROY SUSSMAN BELINDA WOLLASTON

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Director **GARY YOUNG**

Musical Director / Conductor **PETER CASEY**

Choreographer **ANDREW HALLSWORTH**

Set Design **RICHARD JEZIORNY**
Costume Design **KIM BISHOP**
Lighting Design **GAVAN SWIFT**
Sound Design **KELVIN GEDYE** and **MARK BENSON** for **SYSTEM SOUND**
Hair and Make Up **CORRINE DAY**
Repetiteurs **BEN KILEY** and **SIMON WALTER**
Technical Director **DAVID MILLER**
Stage Manager **KIRSTEN MARR**

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Welcome to Mame

*It's a time for making merry
Tune the Grand up
Call the cops out
Strike the Band up
Pull the stops out
Hallelujah
It's today!*

Yes, in the words of Mame herself, it's time to celebrate. Ten years ago *Mame* launched The Production Company and now thirty shows down the track, she's back.

We have enjoyed many great musical successes over the decade and introduced some brilliant new talent to you. While celebrating this moment, we also realise that it's essential to continue making every effort to bring you the very best in musical theatre performances.

The Production Company has now produced three of Jerry Herman's best musicals and we owe him a great deal. They are *Mack and Mabel*, *Hello, Dolly!* and *Mame*.

Rhonda Burchmore was our original Auntie Mame and now more vibrant, glamorous and wonderful than ever, Rhonda returns to star in this production. I especially welcome all of the artists joining us for the first time and in particular Robert Grubb as Beauregard and Lara Mulcahy as Agnes Gooch.

Gary Young who directed *Funny Girl* in our very first season is a most welcome return to the company. What an added delight to have Andrew Hallsworth return to choreograph this production. Andrew performed with the company in its first season in *Funny Girl* and since then has established a fine reputation for his choreography. Musical Director Peter Casey has conducted several outstanding shows for us and we all welcome his return.

I want to thank **BlackBerry** for their sponsorship of *Mame*. Auntie Mame was into technology and made full use of her phone. If Mame were alive today, she would be singing the praises of a **BlackBerry**. I want to join Mame and sing the praises of all our sponsors and patrons for their continuing assistance.

Jeanne Pratt

Chairman
Jeanne Pratt AC





RHONDA BURCHMORE

Mame Dennis

From television to the big screen, musical theatre to opera, cabaret to the stage, there are few entertainment mediums that multi award winning Rhonda Burchmore has not embraced with her wide ranging talents.

Throughout her career Rhonda has made a distinctive impression on audiences with her dazzling dance steps, superb comic timing, effervescent personality and her unique and stunning voice. A role that showcased Rhonda's versatility was the Australian production of *Sugar Babies*, opposite Garry McDonald and Broadway legend Eddie Bracken. She so impressed the producers that she was invited to repeat her role opposite Mickey Rooney and Anne Miller in London's West End production in 1988. Whilst in the U.K. Rhonda also starred with Anthony Newley in the revival of *Stop The World I Want To Get Off*.

Other stage credits include *Song And Dance*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Lend Me A Tenor*, *Iolanthe*, *Die Fledermaus*, *An Evening With Sondheim*, and the title role of *Annie Get Your Gun*. David Atkins featured Rhonda in his 1987 hit *Dancin' Man*, and then went on to write a role specifically for her in his tap musical, *Hot Shoe Shuffle*. She has also starred in *Aladdin*, *Cinderella*, *Guys & Dolls*, Stephen Sondheim's *Into The Woods* and the The Production Company's 2000 production of *Mame*. Rhonda has also played lead roles in *Urinetown*, *Tomfoolery*, *RESPECT The Musical Journey of Women* and she will forever be remembered for her Green Room

nominated role of Tanya in *Mamma Mia!*. Since 1988 Rhonda has released 4 albums featuring her big band, *Rhonda Burchmore*, *Midnight Rendezvous*, *Live At The Melbourne Concert Hall* and most recently the acclaimed *Pure Imagination*.

Rhonda has produced her own live casino shows including *Sings 'n Swings*, *Fever* and *My Funny Valentines* and these have been a triumph at Jupiters Gold Coast, Sydney's Star City Casino and Melbourne's The Palms. It was Rhonda who opened the Melbourne Casino in her show *Red Hot & Rhonda* that sold over 60,000 tickets.

Rhonda has performed for President Bill Clinton, sung the anthem at the Formula 1 Grand Prix, The Emirates Melbourne Cup and was Australia's entertainment ambassador at the 2004 Paralympic Games in Athens.

Her credits are many and with unstoppable energy she is delighted to return to the role of *Mame* for The Production Company.



ROBERT GRUBB

Beauregard Jackson Pickett Burnside

Since graduating from the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in 1978, Robert has worked extensively in theatre, film and television. His musical theatre credits include the 2001-2002 tour of *Mamma Mia!*, The Really Useful Company's 1996 production of *Sunset Boulevard* and the title role in Ken Hill's *The Phantom of the Opera* in 1995. Robert also appeared in the Melbourne season of the highly successful Ben Elton musical *We Will Rock You*, based on the music of rock band Queen.

Robert has starred in some of Australia's best loved films, including Bruce Beresford's *Paradise Road*, *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*, *Phar Lap*, Peter Weir's *Gallipoli* and Gillian Armstrong's breakthrough film *My Brilliant Career*.

However it was the role of Dr Geoff Standish in the popular TV series *The Flying Doctors* in the late 80s and early 90s that made Robert a familiar face in Australia and beyond. More recent television credits include McLeod's *Daughters*, *All Saints*, *Curtin*, *MDA*, *The Secret Life of Us*, *SeaChange* and *The Potato Factory*. Robert played opposite David Wenham in 2003's critically acclaimed CoxKnight miniseries *After the Deluge*. He will also appear in the Stephen King adaptation *Salems Lot*, from *Band of Brothers* director Mikael Salomon, scheduled to air on US television later this year.

Robert has a wealth of stage experience. A particular highlight was his tour de force performance in the central role of Rene Gallimard in the Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC)/Harry M. Miller co-production of *M. Butterfly*. Other MTC credits include *Company* and *Into the Woods* for director Roger Hodgman, and Brecht's *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, Stoppard's *Arcadia* and the French farce *A Flea in Her Ear* for director Simon Phillips. Robert has also worked for most of the other major Australian theatre companies including Nimrod, Playbox, the Queensland Theatre Company and the Sydney Theatre Company. He has appeared in some 25 productions for the State Theatre Company of South Australia for directors such as Jim Sharman, Nick Enright and Neil Armfield.

In 2000, Robert directed and performed in an adaptation of Tennyson's *Enoch Arden* for the Melbourne stage. The production was a critical and audience success and earned Robert a Green Room Award for his performance.

Robert has just completed a successful season of Opera Australia's *My Fair Lady*, delighting audiences in the role of Alfred Doolittle.



NICKI WENDT

Vera Charles

Since her graduation from WAAPA in 1987, Nicki has appeared in innumerable film, television and musical theatre productions throughout Australia.

While *Mame* is Nicki's 4th show with The Production Company after *42nd Street*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *Annie Get Your Gun*, she has appeared in more than twenty productions with the Melbourne Theatre Company, including *Company*, *Measure for Measure*, *Three Days of Rain* and most recently, *The Memory of Water*. Nicki has performed for Black Swan Theatre in productions of *Black Rock* and *Miss Bosnia*, and also with the Sydney Theatre Company (*Love For Love* and *Stiffs*), *Hole in the Wall* Perth (*Snoopy The Musical*) and W.A. Theatre Company (*The Sentimental Bloke*) among others.

Nicki has also worked extensively in both television and film, appearing in *Rush*, *City Homicide*, *The Society Murders*, *Halifax FP*, *Seachange*, *Acropolis Now*, *The Feds*, *Embassy*, and *MDA*. Her film credits include *Boytown*, *Stranded*, *Willful*, *Walk The Talk*, and *Two Girls and a Baby*.

Nicki also works extensively in radio and television voice-over advertising and has narrated for several documentary films.



LARA MULCAHY

Agnes Gooch

Born and bred in Perth, Lara graduated from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Theatre. Lara has gained wide recognition for her role as Rosie in the original Australian cast of *Mamma Mia!* playing to audiences in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney. After leaving the show Lara was invited by the London producers to reprise her role in the West End production. Whilst in London, highlights included a Royal Gala performance for HRH Prince Charles, the 5th Anniversary celebrations of *Mamma Mia!* and meeting ABBA.

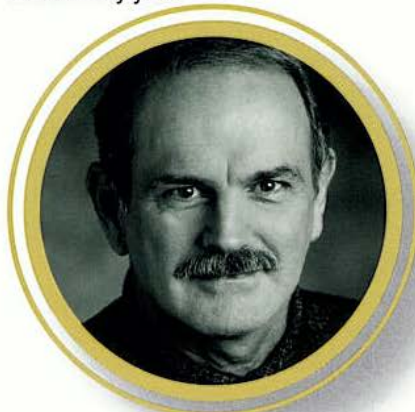
Other theatre credits include Madame Thenardier in *Les Misérables* (Cameron Mackintosh), *Sweet Charity* (David Atkins), *Teechers* (Riverina Theatre Company), *The Adventures of Snugglypot and Cuddlepup* (Company B) and hosting *Babies Proms* (Sydney Opera House).

Lara's screen credits include *All Saints*, *Murder Call*, *After The Beep*, *Hits and Memories*, *Stingers* as well as appearances on *Rove*, *GMA*, *Denise*, *Today Show* and in the UK BBC *Kids In Need* and *The Sound Of Musicals*.

Feature film performances include the Baz Luhrmann award winning *Moulin Rouge* (Mome Fromage) and *Strictly Ballroom* (Natalie) as well as *Turning April* and more recently *The Eternity Man*.

Lara won the Green Room Award and was nominated for a Helpmann Award for her role of Rosie in *Mamma Mia!*

Lara is delighted to be making her Production Company debut in this special 10th Anniversary year.



GRANT SMITH

Dwight Babcock

Grant Smith trained in music and dance in Western Australia and subsequently at the Royal College of Music Opera School in London. Early experience in Gilbert and Sullivan, Concert and Oratorio was later followed by several years' full time experience in the West End in music theatre and cabaret including roles in *Sweeney Todd* at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, *Barnum* at the London Palladium and *Nightingale* at the Lyric Hammersmith.

Australian audiences will remember Grant's standout performances as Gus the Theatre Cat and Growltiger during the premiere season of *CATS*. A return to the Opera stage in the 1990s saw Grant work with the National company and most of the State Opera companies but especially with Chamber Made Opera in Melbourne in their productions of *Greek*, *Sweet Death*, *The Cars that Ate Paris*, *Medea* (at the Kennedy Centre in Washington D.C.) and *Dr Forbes Will See You Now*.

In 1995, Grant received rave reviews for his performances as Lumiere in the Walt Disney musical *Beauty and the Beast* for which he was nominated for a Green Room award.

In July 2000 Grant performed the role of The Architect in *The Eighth Wonder* for Opera Australia for which he received the inaugural Sir Robert Helpmann Award for Best Male Performance in an Opera.

Grant appeared in the 2001 Australian Ballet season in the role of The Swan in *Carmina Burana*. Engagements for 2002 included *Sweeney Todd* for State Opera Of South Australia, performances of *The Ghost Wife* at The Barbican (London) and performances with Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, the Australian Pops Orchestra and Opera in the Vineyard.

Engagements in 2003 included *The Merry Widow* for West Australian Opera, concerts with Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, Proms concerts with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, and *Sweeney Todd* for Opera Queensland. He also played the role of Baron Ferdinand von Mueller in the music drama *Love, Death, Music and Plants* to critical acclaim. For the 2005 Sydney Festival he sang the role of Arthur Stace in the Australian Opera production of Jonathan Mills' *Eternity Man*.

Grant has recently finished a run of the successful production *Sleeping Beauty* at the Maltouse theatre in Melbourne directed by Michael Kantor.



KAENG CHAN

Ito

Singapore born and Perth raised, Kaeng initially trained as a classical vocalist at the W.A. Conservatorium of Music. Kaeng furthered his training at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), graduating in 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Theatre. Upon graduating, Kaeng made his television debut co-hosting the popular pre-school program *Playhouse Disney* for three successful seasons with Monica Trapaga and Colin Buchanan. The show aired on both the Seven Network and

Foxtel's Disney Channel, premiering in May 2003. Between seasons of *Playhouse Disney*, Kaeng returned to the stage where he was involved with productions such as *Bye Bye Birdie* for The Production Company and Ruth Wolff's play *The Empress of China* for Belvoir Street's B Sharp season playing the lead role of Shen Tai. Kaeng also played the role of the lovable pirate Captain Feathersword for the *Taiwanese Wiggles!*. Never one to shrug off a challenge, Kaeng shot both the English and Mandarin versions of their *Big Red Car* and *The Wiggles Show* DVD's. Making his way back to the stage once again, Kaeng was part of the recent Australian touring production of Boublil and Schonberg's *Miss Saigon*. Most recently, Kaeng took part in the workshop production of Guy Noble's *Karaoke the Musical* playing the role of Flynn.

Kaeng is thrilled to back with The Production Company for this production of *Mame!*



ADAM MURPHY

M. Lindsay Woolsey

Adam has appeared in *42nd St*, *Little Me*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *The Pajama Game*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Carousel*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *The Gilbert and Sullivan Show* and *Call Me Madam* for The Production Company as well as the Pratt Prize workshop of *Sideshow Alley*.

Other stage credits include *Guys and Dolls*, *Urinetown*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Les Misérables* and the multi award winning cabaret *The Beautiful Losers*.

His many productions in New Zealand include *Guys and Dolls*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Blue Sky Boys*, *Desire Under the Elms*, *Someone Who'll*

Watch Over Me, Caesar and Cleopatra, Travels With My Aunt, Mother Courage and her Children, The Queen and I, This Other Eden, The Wind in the Willows, She Loves Me, The Revengers Tragedy and The Official Tribute to the Blues Brothers.

Television credits include *The Trivia Company* (NZ), *Shortland Street* (NZ), *Eugenie Sandler*, *Halifax f.p.*, *Neighbours*, *Blue Heelers* and *The Forest*, a feature film.



ALEX RATHGEBER

Patrick Dennis

Alex is one of Australia's fastest rising young leading men, having spent the past year on London's West End playing the role of Raoul in the 21st Anniversary Cast of Andrew Lloyd Webbers *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Raised in country Victoria, Alex scored a place direct from secondary school in the Bachelor of Arts (Music Theatre) course at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). Credits at WAAPA include the role of Black in Andrew Lipka's *The Wild Party*, Eddie Perfects *UP*, the Frank Loesser revue *Perfectly Frank*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, Stephen Sondheim's *Pacific Overtures*, *The Pajama Game* and Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*.

After graduating from WAAPA, Alex was cast in The Production Company's *Annie Get Your Gun*, followed by Gremio in *Kiss Me, Kate*, he then played alongside Topol in *Fiddler on the Roof* as a cossack and understudying the lead role of Fyedka before going back to study full-time dance with Robert Sturrock at The Space. At the end of that year Alex was cast by George Ogilvie as Lancelot in The Production Company's *Camelot*. His last

Australian appearance was as Billy in The Pratt Prize and Helpmann Award-winning *Sideshow Alley* by Gary Young and Paul Keelan.

Alex has featured in a number of benefit concerts including *OzShowbiz Cares / Hats Off*, *Sydney's Light The Night*, the Brian Stacey tribute *The Stacey Night*, and the recent La Mama Theatre *Big Benefit Bash*. Alex has been a proud member of Equity since 2004.

Alex is thrilled to be back home on the Australian stage with The Production Company to re-create this classic production.



THOMAS NEW

Young Patrick Dennis

Thomas is currently a Year 7 student at Mentone Grammar. He has studied all styles of dance at the Jane Moore Academy of Ballet for the past 7 years, under the tutelage of Miss Jane and his mother Helen. His hobbies include acting, singing, dancing, hockey, windsurfing and watching movies. Thomas has appeared in *Dirt Game*, *Pacific*, and *Knowing* on television. Film and stage experience includes an ensemble role in *Annie* for PLOS Musical Productions in 2006, Young Peter in *The Boy from Oz* with CLOC Musical Theatre in May 2008 and Louis in *The King & I* with Mentone Grammar in August 2008. *Mame* marks his professional debut and he is thrilled to be chosen to play the role of Young Patrick. He would like to thank Smallfry / DTM and his family for their continued support and dedicate his performances to them.

we are most grateful for the generous support and assistance of our patrons

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Note from the Director

Mame has always been an irresistible character, colourful, eccentric and flamboyant she appeals to all that is theatrical and generous in our natures.

This musical is filled with wit and heart and is wrapped in a package that is so much the traditional old Broadway flavour. The combination is intoxicating and exhilarating as it celebrates the human spirit and heart and the discovery of love.

Mame is a story of rescue...the boy Patrick comes into *Mame's* life and saves her from the trap of hedonism and self indulgence. She learns what it is to love unconditionally. In the second act the coin is reversed and *Mame* is able to rescue Patrick from the trap of babbity and prejudice.

Patrick Dennis's book about his irrepressible Auntie *Mame* is a delight, described as:

"An hilarious, glamorous bible, where, among other wise lessons, one learns that true sophistication and innocence are the two halves of the same glittering coin."

"Mame Dennis is the grande dame of grande dames...hilarious, sparkling and utterly indestructible..."

"Sparkles with wit, style – and though Mame would cringe at the thought – high moral purpose."

I was delighted to be asked to be part of The Production Company's Tenth Anniversary Celebration. It was at the end of their very first year that I directed *Funny Girl* and to be doing *Mame* ten years on is a privilege and a delight.

All congratulations to Jeanne and everyone at The Production Company and I hope you will enjoy tonight's offering... a musical that is entertainment with a capital 'E'.

Gary Young
Director



Just sensational!

MAMMIE

Frank Van Straten discovers the special fascination of a timeless musical

It was always going to be a great big hit. *Mame* came to Broadway with impeccable credentials. A hugely successful book, play and film had already introduced its feisty heroine to potential audiences, and they flocked to welcome her to her place in the pantheon of the American Musical Theatre.

The saga of redoubtable Mame Dennis and her 'adopted' nephew was based on fact. Chicago born and privately educated, Patrick Dennis began his career with a book publisher; later he worked with the US Council of Foreign Affairs and served in North Africa during World War II. His first books were published under the pen-name Virginia Rowans, though his name was really Edward Everett Turner. As Patrick Dennis he published *Guestward Ho* and, in 1955, his best selling novel-memoir *Auntie Mame*.

Its success encouraged him to write *Around the World with Auntie Mame*, *Little Me* and *First Lady*.

Auntie Mame was adapted for the stage by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, playwrights of the 1955 success *Inherit the Wind*. *Auntie Mame* opened the

following year, providing Rosalind Russell with one of her most memorable roles. Late in the long run Beatrice Lillie assumed the lead and took the play to London. In 1959, in Garnet H. Carroll's production, personable American Shirl Conway was Australia's first Auntie Mame. Physical culture guru Sue Becker played her for the Tasmanian Theatre Company in 1982.

In 1958 Rosalind Russell repeated her characterisation when Warner Brothers filmed *Auntie Mame*. The acerbic Vera Charles was played by the colourful Australian star Coral Browne.

Late in 1965 Robert Fryer and Lawrence Carr joined with Sylvia and Joseph Harris to



Broadway opening night party, 25 May 1966: Jerry Herman and Angela Lansbury (centre) with Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee



Angela Lansbury as Mame, Broadway, 1966

produce a musical version of the play. They invited Jerry Herman to contribute the score.

'I didn't have to think about it for a minute,' Herman recalls. 'I just yelled out: "Wow! Yes! My answer is Yes!"' Herman's 1964 hit *Hello, Dolly!* was still packing the St James Theatre and because of its success *Mame* presented him with a special challenge: '*Mame* was my way of saying to the world: "I can do it again. Just watch me!"'

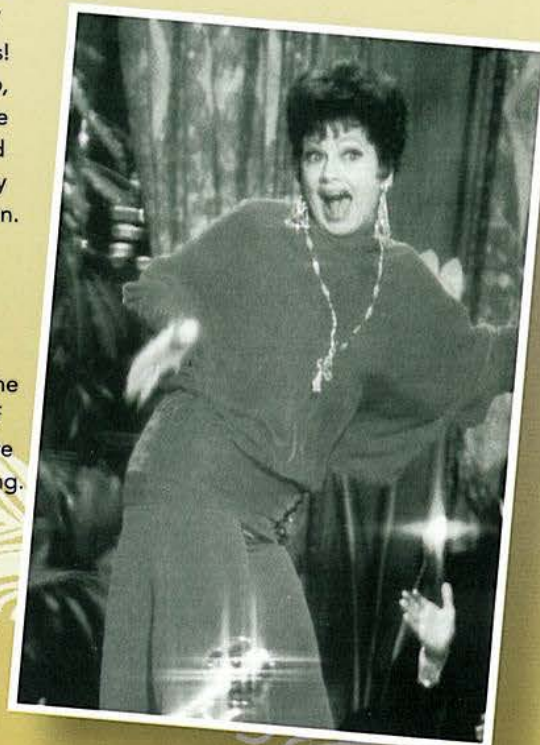
The first song off the Herman production line was 'Open a New Window'. 'When I finished that song, I knew that I had really found Mame Dennis's "voice". After that, the rest of the songs just started pouring out of me. I never wrote more quickly, or with more assurance, because I loved what I was writing. I absolutely loved *Mame*. It was one of the great joys of my life. It was the most warm and wonderful experience.'

It may have been warm and wonderful, but there was one major problem: finding a leading lady. The producers wanted Mary Martin, but she refused to forsake the tranquillity of her home in Brazil. Ethel Merman, Carol Channing and Rosalind Russell also turned it down. In contrast, Lucille Ball

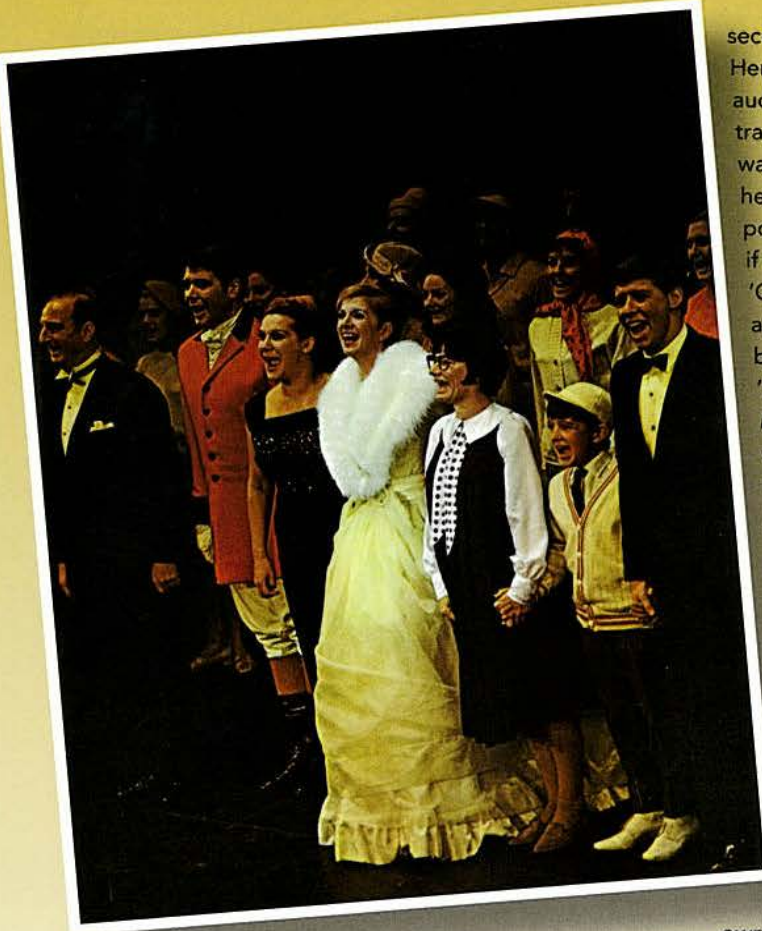
and Elizabeth Taylor were among more than forty actresses who vied for the role. Nanette Fabray, Dolores Grey and Lisa Kirk were on the short list, but none seemed ideal. It was Herman who suggested Angela Lansbury. Then aged forty-one, she had extensive film experience and had appeared frequently on stage, but only in one musical, the 1964 flop *Anyone Can Whistle*. An audition, with Herman at the piano, did the trick. Lansbury got the part.

The role of Vera Charles went to Beatrice Arthur, wife of the show's director, Gene Saks. Charles Braswell was Beauregard Burnside, Jane Connell was Agnes Gooch and Frankie Michaels played young Patrick.

After 'try outs' in Philadelphia and Boston, *Mame* debuted on 24 May 1966 at New York's Winter Garden, the great Broadway Theatre recently vacated by *Funny Girl*. It was, of course, a total triumph. *Variety* magazine hailed 'the whopping musical comedy hit that everyone was waiting for – a song and dance blockbuster'.



Lucille Ball as Mame in the Warner Brothers film, 1974



Curtain call, *Her Majesty's*, Melbourne, 1968. Front row, left to right: John Frawley (Dwight Babcock), Geoff Hiscock (Beauregard), Sheila Bradley (Vera Charles), Gaylea Byrne (Mame), Mary Hardy (Gooch), David Atkins (Young Patrick), John Dolan (Patrick aged 19-29)

At the 1966 Tony Awards, Angela Lansbury was honoured with the first of her four Tonys. Beatrice Arthur and Frankie Michaels also won Tonys but the show itself missed out on the Best Musical award: that went to *Man of La Mancha*.

Mame notched up 1508 performances, putting it among the longest-running Broadway shows of its era. Backstage Angela Lansbury welcomed a stream of international celebrities, including the Australian Prime Minister. 'It really took me back,' said Harold Holt. 'That was my generation.'

Celeste Holm replaced Angela Lansbury for a short period and later led a national touring company. When Lansbury decided to take a

second company on the road, Herman's idol, Judy Garland, auditioned for the producers; tragically, they decided it was too risky. What if her health failed? What about potential tantrums? What if the audience demanded 'Over the Rainbow' as an encore? Says Judy's biographer, Gerold Frank: 'She could have played *Mame* in masterful fashion; she wanted the part desperately; she had never been in a Broadway musical; she would have had first chance at the movie role; it would have meant so much to her.' Herman adds, 'She was destroyed. She was absolutely devastated to be turned down for a replacement role in a Broadway musical. That is something that I have had to carry in my own heart through the years.'

Lansbury's Broadway successors were, in turn, Janis Paige, Sheila Smith (Lansbury's understudy, she'd starred in *Fade Out – Fade In* at the Melbourne Tivoli in 1965), Jane Morgan and Ann Miller. Susan Hayward headed a third company that played for four months in Las Vegas, and a fourth company, with Janet Blair as Mame and Elaine Stritch as Vera, toured in 1969. Angela Lansbury starred in a brief Broadway revival in 1983.

Mame reached the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in 1969, initially with Ginger Rogers as the star. Though Juliet Prowse made an excellent replacement, the show drew Londoners for only as long as Rogers was in it. It closed after 443 performances.

It was inevitable that Hollywood would want to film *Mame*. Jerry Herman sold the film rights to Warner Brothers 'for a lot of money' and was hired as 'musical supervisor' – but he admits he had no real input into the project. Robert Preston was cast as Beauregard, and

Jane Connell and Beatrice Arthur repeated their Broadway roles – the latter possibly because the film, like the stage show, was directed by her husband.

Herman had hoped that Angela Lansbury would recreate her stage portrayal. To his – and most people's – amazement, in December 1971, a Los Angeles gossip columnist announced that Lucille Ball was to be Hollywood's Mame. The adored star of television's *I Love Lucy* could neither dance nor sing and was then aged sixty-one. She did, however, have five million dollars invested in the production.

Things started badly when Lucy broke her leg skiing, delaying shooting for twelve months, then there were unpleasant rumours of dissension between Lucy and Bea Arthur, by then famous as television's *Maude*. Sadly the movie – Ball's last film – earned an undeserved reputation as flop. In reality it did good business and continues to entertain on regular TV reruns and DVD.

Before this, however, *Mame* had hit Australia. In December 1966 the New York representatives of J.C. Williamson's reached an agreement with the show's owners for an Australian production. The original contract – which is preserved in the Arts Centre's Performing Arts Collection – along with Agnes Gooch's tie-on pregnant stomach – provided for an advance against royalties of US\$10,000. The royalties were to be calculated at 13% of the gross box office.

In February 1967 Williamson's officially announced that *Mame* was on her way. The production would be in the hands of a team of JCW dependables: director Fred Hebert, an American with a long record of successful local musicals; choreographer Betty Pounder, tireless, respected and much loved; and

expert musical director Noel Smith. Almost immediately speculation started about a possible lead. Of course, back then, an Australian was out of the question. 'Mame is a typically American type of role,' a Williamson spokesperson explained to the *Sydney Morning Herald*. 'There is a flavour to the play that should have an American lead.' Would it be Eve Arden, Jane Wyman or Jane Russell? Reports of Miss Russell's alcoholism and her messy divorce swiftly put her out of contention.

Eventually the part went to Gaylea Byrne. Miss Byrne's only Broadway credit was a spell as a replacement for Joan Diener in *Man of La Mancha*, though she had worked in road companies and summer stock in *Camelot*, *Oliver!* and *She Loves Me*. She'd played leads in *My Fair Lady* for a tour of Russia and in *Show Boat* and *Carousel* in South



Mary Hardy as Gooch and David Atkins as Young Patrick, Australia, 1968



Gaylea Byrne as Mame, Australia, 1968

America. Although she was definitely not, as Williamson's publicity claimed, 'in the top bracket of American musical stars', she was vivacious and vibrant and made an admirable Mame.

The lesser roles were cast locally. Londoner Sheila Bradley (Vera Charles) had come to Australia to play the lead in *Grab Me a Gondola*. She'd stayed, married singer Bill French, and had starred in local productions of *Oliver!*, *Once Upon a Mattress* and *The King and I*. Bacchus Marsh's pride and joy, Mary Hardy (Agnes Gooch) was an anarchic television and radio clown, with extensive stage experience including *Peter Pan*, *Salad Days*, *Bells are Ringing* and revue at the Phillip Theatre in Sydney. Geoff Hiscock (Beauregard) was a handsome television all-rounder, making his first appearance in a musical.

The three boys chosen to alternate as young Patrick Dennis were Grant Seiden from

Sydney and Philip Gould and David Atkins from Melbourne. Philip, said the programme, 'has been learning tap and ballroom dancing and drumming for as long as he can remember, and he has his own band. His hobbies are running, swimming, tunnel-ball and looking after two dogs, Rusty and Sandy and his two cats, Fritsy and Twiddles.' He was eleven. David, twelve, a student at Watsonia High, was learning tap from Bill Maynard at the May Downs School. His singing and dancing had won him many prizes. 'When he is not dancing and singing he is fencing, horse riding, arching [?] and swimming. He is the fourth generation in show business.'

The Australian tour opened on 25 May 1968 with a gala premiere at Her Majesty's in Melbourne, where Mame replaced the long-running *Fiddler on the Roof*. The audience's enthusiasm was reflected by most of the critics. In the *Sun* Howard Palmer dubbed it 'A whopping great happy show' and the *Herald's* H.A. Standish said it had 'the hallmark of a winner'. Others weren't so sure. Katharine Brisbane, writing in *The Australian*, described it as 'the musical of the film of the play of the novel of the alleged autobiography of Patrick Dennis.' She went on: 'It is a hectic, brassy musical with a stunning, elegantly-coltish blonde American, Gaylea Byrne, in the centre. It is a pleasant enough way to spend an evening and worth a visit for the sake of the enchanting star. The production by Fred Hebert, seems to me to be no more than perfunctory, even with the New York production to copy.' In the *Sydney Morning Herald*, H.G. Kippax concurred, calling the production 'disconcertingly patchy'. But all the critics agreed that Miss Byrne made a splendid Mame, and that she had solid support from Sheila Bradley and Mary Hardy. Taffy Davies, in the *Sydney Sun*, highlighted 'a little gem of a performance from young Philip Gould, which flattens everything in sight.'

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Sheila Bradley as Vera Charles, Australia, 1968

everything in sight.'

After eighteen weeks in Melbourne, Mame swept on to Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth and, finally, to Her Majesty's in Sydney. There, disappointingly, it survived for a mere five weeks, closing on 15 March 1969. Perhaps, as Rex Cramphorn wrote in *The Bulletin*, it was 'fresh out of fizz'. Miss Byrne returned to the United States where she disappeared without trace. Mary Hardy and Geoff Hiscock resumed their television careers, and Sheila Bradley continued to adorn many a musical.

And, of course, two of Mame's young Australian 'nephews', Philip Gould and David Atkins, have opened many new windows in the forty years since they appeared in Mame – and, in 1999, it was Atkins who directed the revival of Mame that launched the Production Company. Rhonda Burchmore was Mame, with Alan Fletcher as Beauregard, Pamela Rabe as Vera Charles and Susan-ann Walker as Agnes Gooch.



Philip Gould as the young Patrick Australia, 1968

That inaugural 'toe-in-the-water' season (in what was then known as the Melbourne Concert Hall) was for a mere three performances, from 1 June 1999. 'It's the shortest season in history,' Atkins told *The Sunday Age*, while Susan-ann Walker added ruefully, 'I just want to do it forever'.

It was the perfect show to launch the new enterprise. 'What a Grand Dame is Mame!' said *Sunday Herald Sun* critic Graham Pearce, adding that the show 'proved it could stir a Melbourne crowd into a feet-tapping frenzy.'

And now, to celebrate The Production Company's ten glorious years, Mame is back – and with the extra excitement of seeing Ms Burchmore repeat her original roles.

So welcome, Mame, ready, as always, to make us feel alive again, give us the drive again... you're just sensational... Mame!

© Frank Van Straten OAM

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

★ Overture	Orchestra
★ St. Bridget	Agnes and Young Patrick
★ It's Today	Mame, Vera and Company
★ It's Today (Reprise)	Mame, Young Patrick and Company
★ Open a New Window	Mame, Young Patrick and Company
★ The Moon Song	Vera, Mame and Ladies
★ My Best Girl	Young Patrick and Mame
★ We Need a Little Christmas	Mame, Agnes, Ito and Young Patrick
★ We Need a Little Christmas (Reprise)	Mame, Agnes, Ito, Young Patrick and Beauregard
★ The Fox Hunt	Young Patrick, Uncle Jeff, Mother Burnside, Sally Cato, Cousin Fan and Company
★ Mame	Beauregard, Mother Burnside and Company

ACT II

★ Entr'acte	Orchestra
★ Mame (Reprise)	Young Patrick and Older Patrick
★ My Best Girl (Reprise)	Older Patrick
★ Bosom Buddies	Mame and Vera
★ Gooch's Song	Agnes
★ That's How Young I Feel	Mame and Company
★ If He Walked into My Life	Mame
★ It's Today (Reprise)	Mame, Vera and Company
★ My Best Girl (Reprise)	Older Patrick
★ Finale	Mame and Company

CAST OF CHARACTERS *In order of appearance*

Patrick Dennis age 10	Thomas New
Agnes Gooch	Lara Mulcahy
Mame Dennis	Rhonda Burchmore
Vera Charles	Nicki Wendt
Ito	Kaeng Chan
M. Lindsay Woolsey	Adam Murphy
Ralph Devine	Darren Natale
Doorman	Rohan Browne
Bellboy	Ben Brown
Messenger	Loredo Malcolm
Dwight Babcock	Grant Smith
Leading Man	Cole Rintoul
Madame Branislowski	Joanna Fripp
Gregor	Troy Sussman
Beauregard Jackson Pickett Burnside	Robert Grubb
Uncle Jeff	Lyall Brooks
Cousin Fan	Katie Houghton
Sally Cato	Ana Maria Belo
Mother Burnside	Laine Lamont
Patrick Dennis age 19-29	Alex Rathgeber
Junior Babcock	Matt Heyward
Mrs Upson	Brenda Clarke
Mr Upson	Troy Sussman
Gloria Upson	Belinda Wollaston
Pegeen Ryan	Esther Hannaford
Peter Dennis	Kurtis Papadinis and Jack Heanly
Mame's Friends:	Rebecca Grennan, Esther Hannaford, Nick Jones, Troy Phillips, Eve Prideaux, Angie Stapleton

THE COMPANY

ANA MARIA BELO LYALL BROOKS BEN BROWN ROHAN BROWNE
BRENDA CLARKE JOANNA FRIPP REBECCA GRENNAN
ESTHER HANNAFORD JACK HEANLY MATT HEYWARD KATIE HOUGHTON
NICK JONES LAINE LAMONT LOREDO MALCOLM DARREN NATALE
KURTIS PAPADINIS TROY PHILLIPS EVE PRIDEAUX COLE RINTOUL
ANGIE STAPLETON TROY SUSSMAN BELINDA WOLLASTON

TIME and PLACE:

The action takes place in Mame's Beekman Place Apartment and various locales in which she becomes involved during a period from 1928 to 1946.

Words & Music by JERRY HERMAN

One of the leading composers and lyricists for the American musical theatre during the past 30 years, Herman was playing piano by the age of six. After high school, he started to train as a designer, but had second thoughts, and studied drama at the University of Miami. By the mid-'50s, he was playing piano in New York clubs and writing material for several well-known entertainers. During the late '50s and early '60s, he worked on a number of off-Broadway musical shows, the first of which was *I Feel Wonderful* (1954). He also wrote the book, music and lyrics and directed *Parade* (1960), and in the same year contributed the opening number, *Best Gold*, to the short-lived *A to Z*. In 1961, after writing some songs for the 13-performance flop, *Madame Aphrodite*, he enjoyed his first real success with his score for the Broadway musical *Milk and Honey*, which ran for 543 performances. He had a smash hit three years later with *Hello, Dolly!*.

In 1966, Herman had another triumph with *Mame*, which is generally considered to be his best score. Since then, his infrequent, but classy scores have included *Dear World* (1969), *Mack & Mabel* (1974), *The Grand Tour* (1979), and *La Cage aux Folles*. The latter show opened in 1983, and ran for 1,176 performances in New York. Herman won a Grammy for the *Mame* cast album, and Tony® Awards for his work on *Hello, Dolly!* and *La Cage aux Folles*. Herman has been inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame and the Songwriters Hall of Fame. The latter organization honored him with their Johnny Mercer Award in 1987, and in 1996, he received a lifetime achievement award from the Hollywood Press Club. Herman occasionally presents an evening devoted to his own songs, and many shows have been staged in tribute to him over the years, including *Jerry's Girls*, which played on Broadway in 1986. He is Patron of the Music Theatre Guild of Victoria.

Book by JEROME LAWRENCE ROBERT E LEE

The playwriting team of Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee was one of the great partnerships in American twentieth-century theatre. Among their many long running and widely produced plays are *Inherit the Wind*, *First Monday in October*, *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail*, and *Auntie Mame*. Lawrence was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1915. Lee was born in Elyria, Ohio, in 1918. The two met and formed their legendary 52-year collaboration in January 1942. Their first work, *Inside a Kid's Head*, was produced on radio and has since been widely anthologized.

From the late 1940s, Lawrence and Lee collaborated on plays for the theatre. Their first Broadway production, *Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!*, opened at the Adelphi Theatre in 1948. Their second play, *Inherit the Wind*, opened at the National Theatre in New York on 21 April 1955. In addition to dozens of plays, the partnership produced books for musicals, screenplays, radio and television scripts, biographies and textbooks, and many stories and articles for a variety of publications, nationally and internationally. They also directed many productions of their own plays. Both writers taught frequently, sharing their expertise and mentoring novice playwrights.

Lawrence and Lee have received numerous awards including the Peabody Award separately, and the Donaldson Award, the Outer Critics' Circle Award, and the London Critics' Award for Best Foreign Play for *Inherit the Wind* jointly. Both were recognized with honorary degrees for their literary accomplishments -- Lawrence from the Ohio State University, Fairleigh Dickson University, and Villanova University, and Lee from Ohio Wesleyan University and the Ohio State University. They were inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame in 1990. That same year, they were named Fellows in the College of Fellows of the American Theatre at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

ORCHESTRA VICTORIA

Violins	Elisabeth Ambrose Ellen Mentiplay Martin Reddington Alyssa Conrau
Violas	Jason Bunn Ray Hope
Celli	Sarah Cuming Diane Froomes
Bass	Matthew Thorne
Reed 1	Anthony Hicks
Reed 2	Stuart Byrne
Reed 3	Grania Burke
Trumpets	Greg Maundrell Robert Smithies
Trombones	Peter Brosnan Scott Evans Anthony Gilham
Harp	Mary Anderson
Percussion	Guy de Blêt
Drums	Dean Cooper
Guitar/Banjo	John Paine
Piano	Ben Kiley
Keyboard	Simon Walter

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Technical Director	David Miller
Company Administrator	Adam Lowe
Stage Manager	Kirsten Marr
Rehearsal Repetiteurs	Ben Kiley Simon Walter
Assistant Stage Managers	Bonnie Walsh Kate McMillan
Wardrobe Supervisor	Josephine Antonino
Hair and Make Up	Corrine Day
Head Mechanist	Jack Grant
Sound Engineering	System Sound
Mix Engineer	Nick Reich
Radio Mic Techs	Anthony Shaw Jenny Morgan
Marketing	ACMN Pty Ltd
Publicity	Make A Difference PR
Set Construction	Malthouse
Assistant to the Director	Chris Parker



THE ENSEMBLE



Ana Maria Belo

Ana Maria is proud to be a part of The Production Company's season for the second time. In 2002 she played Jeanie in *HAIR* and was nominated for a Green Room Award. Her other theatre credits include: Sarah in *The Listmaker* for Bell Shakespeare Company; Australian tour of *Fame the musical* playing Serena Katz; *Noises Off* for Ensemble Theatre Company playing Brooke/Vicki; Connie in *Dr Akers Women* for Griffin Theatre Company and Fantail in Company B's production of *The Adventures Of Snugglespot and Cuddlepie and Little Ragged Blossom*. Television credits include *All Saints*, *Home And Away*, *White Collar Blue* and in the UK *According To Bex* and *Life Begins*. Ana Maria has appeared in the feature films *A Cold Summer* and *The Book Of Revelation*.



Lyall Brooks

Mame marks Lyall's first show for The Production Company.

On stage, Lyall has performed in the award-winning cabaret show *Vaudeville X* at the Malthouse Theatre and Adelaide Cabaret Festival, *The Thing About Men* for Magnormos, *The DaVinci Hump* for Hunchbax Theatre Restaurant, productions of *West Side Story* (Tony), *Pippin* (Pippin), and *Assassins*

(Charles Guiteau), and even several years in a children's group, *Disney's JAAM*.

For cruise lines, he has appeared as Lead Vocalist on the P&O Pacific Sun, and Lead Actor, Dancer and Fight Captain on Disney Cruise Lines.

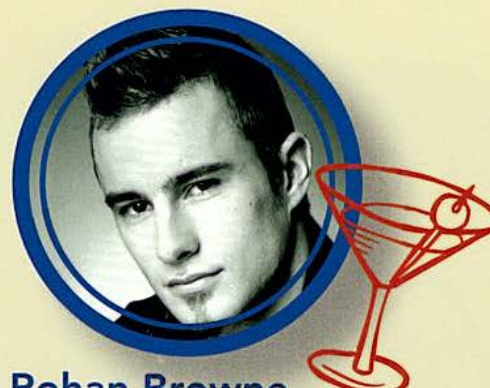
After hosting TV's *The Mint* on Channel 9 earlier this year, Lyall will soon be appearing as Nathan Black on *Neighbours*. Other screen credits include *Blue Heelers*, *Tripping Over*, *Blonde*, the award-winning short film *Alex/Alexa* for VCA, and he has appeared as a Guest Vocalist on *Good Morning Australia* and *Mornings With Kerri-Anne*.

Lyall also works as a presenter and MC, and is currently voicing children's cartoon series *Sumo Mouse*.



Ben Brown

Developing a love of dance at an early age, Ben's formative years were spent fine tuning his talents at several well known dance schools, including Bartuccio's, the Victorian College of The Arts and Dance World Studios in Melbourne, where he completed his Certificate III in Classical Ballet and Diploma in Performing Arts. Shortly after graduating, Ben secured the role of Peter Pan in Disney's *One Man's Dream 2* at Tokyo Disneyland. After returning home to Melbourne, Ben landed his first musical, *Monty Python's Spamalot* at Her Majesty's Theatre. Upon the seasons end, Ben was lucky enough to be cast in The Production Company's three shows for the year, *Follies*, *Damn Yankees* and is thrilled to be back now for *Mame*. Ben wishes to thank all of the wonderful people he's met during these shows. "You're truly amazing, and performing with you all on that stage is something I'll never forget."



Rohan Browne

Rohan Browne has been involved in eleven professional music theatre productions in Australia & abroad, including roles in *CATS* (Rum Tum Tugger), *Hot Shoe Shuffle* (Wing) & *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Herod). He has worked extensively with recording artists on album launches and has toured with Dannii Minogue, Jamelia, Human Nature, Sophie Monk, S2S, Tali & Ann Lee. Rohan has also featured on free-to-air television programs and also appeared on Channel V, MTV & Top Of The Pops. As a choreographer his credits include events for corporate giants BMW, Franck Muller, Motorola, L'Oreal, Elizabeth Arden, Lion Nathan and the National Australia Bank. Rohan was also featured in the Academy Award® winning movie *Happy Feet*.

Rohan is currently setting up an entertainment business specialising in concept management for corporate events called *Swing Set Productions*. With extensive knowledge of the corporate world, he aims to bring high-end entertainment to the commercial sector.

Rohan wishes to thank his family and beautiful girlfriend for their continued love and support and would like to dedicate this performance of *Mame* to them.



Brenda Clarke

Brenda has worked in film, television and theatre both in Australia and England for the last 29 years. Last year Brenda toured nationally in *My Grandma lived in Gooligulch*. She has appeared in comedy sketch shows on television as well as dramas including *MDA* on ABC TV. Her experience in the UK included playing the Good Fairy in *Panto* at the Belfast Opera House, touring in *Kiss Me*, *Kate*, *Prisoner: Cell Block H*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *The Musical* and a one woman show at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Brenda participated in a musical writer's workshop in Oxford with Stephen Sondheim. In her spare time she writes and produces her own work including a musical tribute of rarely performed Cole Porter songs *Perfectly Porter*, *The Petticoat Pirate* and two children's books. Brenda dedicates her performance in memory of her father, Roger who recently passed away.



Joanna Fripp

This is Joanna's fourth Production Company show after recently performing in *Follies* - originally as a featured ensemble member and then at very short notice filling the role of Solange La Fitte. Under the direction of Roger Hodgman, she appeared in the Australian premier of *Thoroughly Modern*

Millie and as Ramona Vandergeld in *Little Me*. Earlier this year she was lucky enough to perform on the Rod Laver stage with Michael Bublé in *Call Me Irresponsible*. After studying Musical Theatre at WAAPA Joanna performed regularly in a vocal trio around Perth and then set off to Singapore for her first major contract as a cabaret singer on the Superstar Gemini Cruise. Since arriving in Melbourne four years ago she has worked for The Entertainment Store hosting children's shows, *No Mates Productions*, *Theatre in Decay* at the Adelaide Fringe Festival in *Eight Days* and in Anthony Crowley's *The Wild Blue*. In 2005 she was a top ten finalist in Short & Sweet, as Jessica in *Four*. A career highlight in 2004 was being given the opportunity to play Laura in *The Glass Menagerie* touring BC, Canada. Joanna takes her hat off to Jeanne Pratt and The Production Company for their support of the arts over the last 10 years!



Rebecca Grennan

Rebecca trained at the Brent Street School of Performing Arts and the Queensland Dance School of Excellence.

She made her professional musical theatre debut in *Grease -The Arena Spectacular* for Gordon Frost/SEL, and has since appeared in *The Boy from Oz*, *Shout! The Legend of The Wild One* as well as *Sweet Charity* for The Production Company's 2007 season. For Opera Australia Rebecca has appeared in *Tannhauser* and *Alcina* at the Sydney Opera House.

Rebecca worked in productions for Universal Studios in Osaka and in Legends in Concert in Las Vegas. As a commercial dancer she has worked for many of Australia's leading choreographers including Kelley Abbey, Jason Coleman, Leah Howard and Matthew Lee.

Film credits include *Happy Feet*, *The Mask II* and on television, *Headstart* and *Home and Away*.

Rebecca has also co-written and performed her own one-woman cabaret show, *Half Full*.



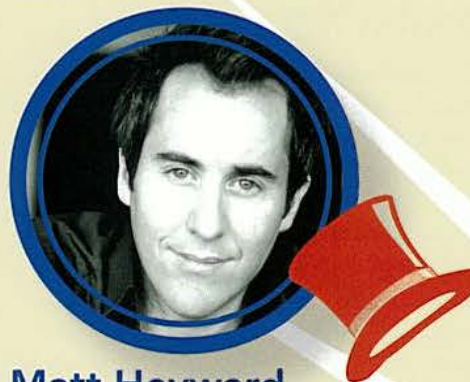
Esther Hannaford

Esther Hannaford graduated from the National Theatre Drama School in Melbourne (Musical Theatre). Most recently she performed the role of Amy in the workshop production of *Once We Lived Here* written by Dean Bryant and Mathew Frank. Other theatre credits include: *Eurobeat - Almost Eurovision* - playing UK and Sweden (Korean Tour), *Virgins - A Musical Threesome* - Essie, Alison, and Kursten (Malthouse Theatre and The New York Musical Theatre Festival), *Burn the Floor* - Lead Female Vocalist (Aust, Euro, USA) *Mamma Mia!* - Lisa and understudy to Sophie (Australasian Tour), *The World Goes Round* -Young Girl / *All that Jazz* (Chapel off Chapel) *Hair* -Tribesman (The Production Company). Esther has also performed in many cabaret and charity concerts around Australia.



Katie Houghton

Mame is Katie's third show for The Production Company, having previously enjoyed roles in *Carousel* and *Hello, Dolly!*. An award winning graduate of WAAPA, Katie has also toured nationally with *The Merry Widow*, *Plainsong*, and *Bear In The Big Blue House*. Katie has performed locally in *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Bat Boy* and her all time favourite, *Forbidden Broadway*, where she relished impersonating Ethel Merman and Liza Minnelli. Katie has recently taken a break from performing to raise her two children James, 3, and Ella, 2, and would like to thank her incredibly supportive husband and friends for all of the childcare. Katie is thrilled to be back on stage in this exciting production!



Matt Heyward

Matt made his professional debut as an original cast member of the smash hit *Mamma Mia!*, understudying the roles of Pepper and Eddie. After two and a half years he then joined the original cast of *The Producers*, understudying the roles of Leo Bloom and Carmen Ghia. He played the role of The Writer in *Hello Again* at Chapel Off Chapel, before joining a Russian boy band and a Swedish foursome in the Australian

and Korean Tours of *Eurobeat* - Almost *Eurovision*.

A graduate of the Ballarat Academy of Performing Arts, Matt has played roles such as Tim in Alex Harding's *Only Heaven Knows*, and Will Parker in *Oklahoma!*, touring regional Vic and NSW. He appeared as Marcel and Bors the Headless Knight in Monty Python's *Spamalot*, also covering the role of Patsy. Most recently Matt played Benny Van Buren in *Damn Yankees* for The Production Company.



Nick Jones

Nick began dancing at the age of three at the Michelle Rae School of Dance and graduated from the VCA in 1998. His professional career began at age 10 with roles in *The Wizard of Oz*, *The King and I*, *Scrooge*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Masked Ball* and *La Boheme*. Other theatre includes *The Merry Widow*, *The Boy From Oz*, *The Music Man*, *Shout! The Legend of the Wild One*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *We Will Rock You*, *Miss Saigon* and *Follies*.

Nick's television credits include *Late for School*, *The Man From Snowy River*, *Fast Forward*, *Neighbours* and *Blue Heelers*.

Nick spent a year in China writing and performing in a pop group, which culminated in the release of a top selling CD.

He was tour co-ordinator on *Chita Rivera Down Under*, danced in her Melbourne Master Class, was Assistant Choreographer/Illustrator on *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, recreating the choreography for the return Sydney season and is now Resident Choreographer/Director for the Brisbane Season.



Laine Lamont

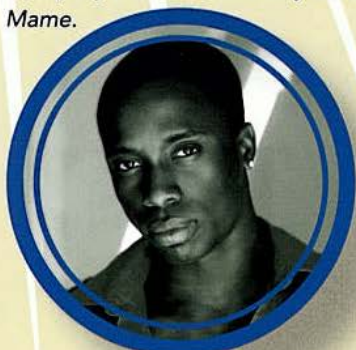
Laine has had extensive experience on stage, television and film. Her training in theatre, singing and dancing was under the guidance of Betty Pounder and Graham Clarke. Her stage roles include the Tony award ® winning musical *Me and My Girl*, *Nunsense* and the one woman play *Dream Kitchen*. Laine toured nationally in these shows. Her Adelaide Festival Theatre season of *Rodeo Noir* required her to yodel.

Television appearances include *Denise*, *Good Morning Australia*, *Frontline*, *Prisoner*, *Neighbours* and *Blue Heelers*.

Laine performs in cabaret with her husband Ian Pearce as Duo Plus.

Film credits include *The Wannabees*, and many VCA films including *Sogno d'Amore*.

For The Production Company, Laine has performed in *Mame*, *Bye, Bye Birdie* and *Follies*. Laine is enjoying being back on the stage as Mother Burnside in The Production Company's tenth anniversary season of *Mame*.



Loredo Malcolm

Loredo Malcolm started his performance training at the age of 9 at Ashe Caribbean Performing Arts, in Jamaica. He moved to New York to pursue further training,

graduating with his certificate in dance. Loredo went on to understudy the role of Simba in *Disney's The Lion King* touring Australia, Shanghai and London's West End. Recently returned from the West End, Loredo is pleased to be a part of the The Production Company Season in both *Follies* and *Mame*.

Loredo has numerous commercial credits which include television commercials for Nokia, Colgate and Porter Davis Homes and music videos performing with Australian and international artists.

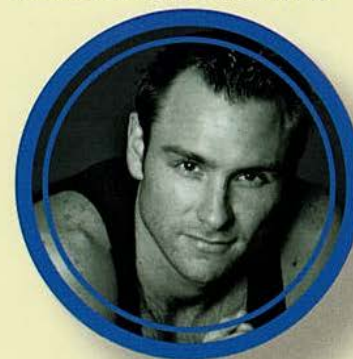
Loredo is proud to call Australia home and wishes to bring his unique style of dance to Australia and contribute as much as he can to the Australian musical industry.



Darren Natale

After graduating from the VCA Drama School, Darren has worked extensively as an actor, singer and musical theatre performer across Australia. His credits include *42nd Street*, *Sunset Boulevard* and *Pajama Game* for The Production Company. He played Lady Chiang in the new Australian musical, *Sideshow Alley*. Other theatre credits include Baron de Charlus in the Melbourne Festival Production of *Remembrance of Things Past* and *Sleepless Night* for the Melbourne Short & Sweet Festival, which won best production. He devised and performed two sell out solo cabaret shows at The Butterfly Club, *Audacious* and *Velvet Tales*. Television credits include *Neighbours* and *Blue Heelers*. Film credits include the short film *The Passenger* which was awarded Best International Short Film at the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival in 2001. Darren is Artistic Director of Verve

Studios – a leading centre for actor training in Melbourne. Darren has been a proud member of MEAA since 1994.



Troy Phillips

Troy is a graduate of Dance at the Victorian College of the Arts.

He made his professional debut in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* and has an extensive list of musical theatre credits including: *My Fair Lady*, *Sisterella*, *Chicago*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *Get Happy The Musical* (dance captain), and *We Will Rock You*. He performed in the concert version of *Sunset Boulevard* for Luna Park's re-opening celebrations, in the national tour of *The Boy From Oz* and most recently in *Guys and Dolls*.

Troy is a highly sought-after dancer and has worked with the likes of Kylie Minogue, Christine Anu, Rhonda Burchmore, Vanessa Amorosi, Marcia Hines, Jackson Mendoza, S2S, Guy Sebastian, Delta Goodrem and Jade McCrae. He performed at the Commonwealth Games Closing Ceremony in Manchester, for the opening of Fox Studios and has worked with all of Australia's leading choreographers at various conventions and award ceremonies.

Troy's film credits include *Moulin Rouge*, *Scooby Doo*, *Bootmen* and *Happy Feet*. Television credits include appearances on the *Logies*, *In Melbourne Tonight*, *The Midday Show*, *Ocean Girl* and the *Australian Idol Unforgettable Special*.



Eve Prideaux

Originally from Byron Bay, Eve trained at both the Queensland Dance School of Excellence, and Brent Street School of Performing Arts. Prior to her graduation she made her music theatre debut in the original production of *Shout!*. Following this she toured Asia with David Atkin's *Fame*, appeared in The Production Company's *Bye Bye Birdie*, revisited *Shout!* (Regional tour) playing Johnny O'Keefe's second wife, travelled with the Australasian production of *Mamma Mia!* and enjoyed the sixties musical, *Leader of the Pack*. Eve then moved to France to perform in Paris' famed *Moulin Rouge*. She has recently returned from London's West End where she performed in the smash hit *Dirty Dancing*, also appearing as the role of Lisa Houseman.

Eve is glad to be back on stage here in Australia and thanks Peter, Clare, Amy, Nick and Darius for their love and laughter.



Cole Rintoul

Cole started performing in the pop group Mercury 4, which saw the group achieve an ARIA nomination (2003), three Top 20 hits; including *Get Me Some* which peaked at #5 on the ARIA charts. His film credits are *Mutiny on the Bounty* (Lt James Morrison) and *Love Match* (Jimmy 'coach' Thomas), as well as

numerous TV appearances: *Carols in the Domain*, *Sunrise*, *The Footy Show*, *Funniest Home Videos*, *GMA*, *Mornings With Kerri Anne*, *Disney Show* and *Hot Source*. Cole has appeared in *Neighbours*, *Mission Impossible* (series), commercials, co-hosted *So Fresh* (Nine Network) and *Video Hits* (Ten Network). Cole's stage credits are *Mary Bryant* (Will Bryant) *Eurobeat – Almost Eurovision* (Australian and Korean Tour), *RENT* (Roger), *Les Misérables* (Enjolras) and *Godspell* (Disciple).



Troy Sussman

Troy Sussman has appeared in a huge range of commercial Theatre productions in the West End (London), Asia and Australia. London: *Les Misérables*, Val Jean/Theodoric u/s, Australian theatre productions: include Rusty Charlie in *Guys and Dolls*, Herman in *Sweet Charity*, Prince in *We Will Rock You* (u/s Brit, Kashoggi & Pop), Homer Pearly in *The Witches of Eastwick* (u/s Clyde & Fidel), Mr Kleiman in *Mack and Mabel*, Tim Allgood in *Noises Off*, *The Singing Forest*, Nicely Nicely Johnson in *Guys and Dolls*, *The Gilbert & Sullivan Show*, Gershwin in *Jolson*, 10th Anniversary Production of *Les Misérables*, Chess, Captain Shultz in *Miss Saigon* (u/s John), Fakir in *The Secret Garden*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, Woof in *Hair*, Australian and New Zealand Tour of *Les Misérables*, *Aida* and *Carmen* with the Victoria State Opera and the Artful Dodger in *Oliver*. In Asia, The Bullfrog in *Honk!* and Captain Abel Coffin in *Chang and Eng*. Concerts: *Masterpiece: The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber* in China. *Les Misérables* at Windsor Castle. Television Appearances: *Les Misérables* at Windsor Castle, *Forensic Investigation*, *Denise*, *Good Morning Australia*, *The Footy Show*, and *Saturdee*. Film: *South Pacific*. Recordings: *South Pacific Soundtrack*, Australian Cast Recording of *Hair*, *Standing Ovation*.



Angie Stapleton

Angie appeared in *Follies* earlier this year for The Production Company and is delighted to be also joining to cast of *Mame*.

Angie has extensive experience across all facets of the industry. Theatre credits include: *We Will Rock You*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Kitty Can Tap*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *I Only Want to Be With You*, *Hot Shoe Shuffle* (understudy lead role) and *42nd Street*.

Some of Angie's other on stage highlights include singing with Moby, Ronan Keating and Deep Purple for their Australian Tour.

The face of numerous television commercials, Angie has also appeared in US mini series *Blonde*, Australian Tele Movie *Tribe*, the ABCs *State Coroner* and *Russell Gilbert Live*. She has also featured in the films *Unbeknown* and *Ever Danced with the Devil*.

Most recently Angie was the Resident Choreographer for the recent Korean season of *Eurobeat – Almost Eurovision*. She also held this position while performing in the original Australian Tour and for the successful season at the Edinburgh Festival.



Belinda Wollaston

Belinda Wollaston has established herself as one of Australia's leading young entertainers. In musical theatre, she has appeared in the smash hit musical *Mamma Mia!* (Littlestar) where she covered the lead role of Sophie. Also as Cathy Doyle in *Summer Rain* (Sydney Theatre Company), Kate McGowan in *Titanic* (Seabiscuit Productions), Miriam Van Agar in *Respect - The Musical* co-starring alongside Rhonda Burchmore, John Williamson's *Mother in Quambatook – The New Australian Musical*, Richard & Hart Concert series *Isn't It Romantic* (QPAC) and the upcoming production of *Shane Warne the Musical*.

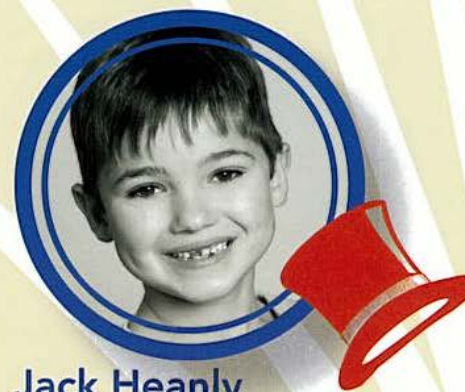
Belinda has also appeared in numerous other productions of plays and musicals, including *Three Winters Green* (SBW Stables Theatre), *Milk* (Old Fitzroy Theatre), *Assassins* (New Theatre), *Putting It Together* (Seymour Centre) and *Balm In Gilead* (Imperial Hotel Theatre).

Belinda has performed extensively in cabaret, having appeared at both the 2002 and 2003 Sydney Cabaret Conventions. She has presented three separate solo shows - *Songs From My Hairbrush: The Bedroom Mirror and Me* (2002), *Hymns From The Hurricane* (2003) and *Everything In Show Business is 20 Minutes Too Long* (2006). In 2006, she also made her New York cabaret debut and was invited to be a part of the ASCAP Musical Theatre Festival working alongside some of Broadway's biggest names. Belinda is a proud graduate of NIDA's Singer, Actor, Dancer and the NSW Talent Development Programme.



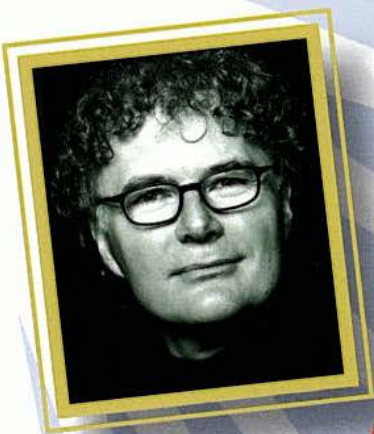
Kurtis Papadinis

Kurtis is a versatile little actor. He is not only a wonderful musical theatre performer, but has had extensive experience in TV at the ripe old age of 8!. Some of his screen credits include: appearing in a live skit on *Rove Live* and in a Holeproof socks TV Campaign. Kurtis is an enthusiastic musical theatre performer training at Centrestage Performing Arts School and was lucky enough to perform with the talents of Debra Byrne and Carrie Barr at a recent Toyota launch featuring the works of Andrew Lloyd Webber conducted by Guy Simpson. Kurtis is thrilled to be making his professional musical theatre debut playing the role of Peter Dennis in *Mame*.



Jack Heanly

Jack is a very enthusiastic performer. He is currently training in singing and musical theatre at Centrestage Performing Arts School and is developing at a rapid pace. Jack is also focusing on screen acting and has had several auditions this year. Jack is very excited to be making his musical theatre debut playing the role of Peter Dennis in *Mame*.



GARY YOUNG Director

Gary wrote and directed the new Australian musical *Sideshow Alley* which premiered at the Playhouse QPAC to critical acclaim. With composer Paul Keelan they won the prestigious 2007 Helpmann Award for Best Original Score, Music and Lyrics. Gary also won the Aussie Theatre Award for his direction of *Sideshow Alley*.

He was nominated for the 2006 Helpmann Award for his direction of the hugely successful *Menopause The Musical*. Recently he directed *Fully Committed* starring Spencer McLaren, *The Merry Widow* for the Melbourne City Opera and staged Rhonda Burchmore's concert for the celebration of the 35th birthday of the Festival Theatre.

Gary was Associate Director for the Australian/Asian production of *Mamma Mia!*. For The Production Company he directed *Carousel* starring David Campbell, *Funny Girl* with Caroline O'Connor and *Call Me Madam* starring Geraldine Turner. He directed the new musical *Crusade* for the Edinburgh Festival and *Guys and Dolls* at the Adelaide Festival Theatre starring Rhonda Burchmore. For the Canterbury Opera, NZ, he directed Stephen Sondheim's *A Little Night Music* teaming up with Geraldine Turner once again.

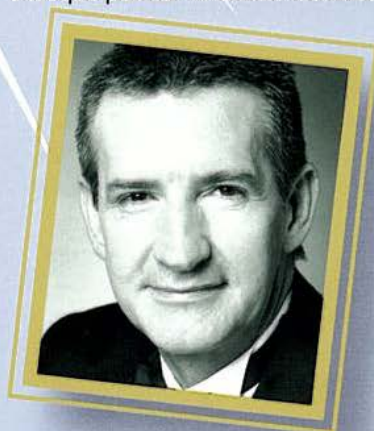
He has had a varied career as performer, writer and director and has worked all over the world in theatre, cabaret and television with the Mo Award winning Ritz Company. Theatre productions include *Side By Side By Sondheim*, *Starting Here*, *Starting Now*, *Showboat*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Jesus Christ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

He was Resident Director for the Australian productions of *Miss Saigon* and *Les Misérables* for the Cameron Mackintosh Organisation, *Aspects Of Love* for The Really Useful Company, *Scrooge* with Keith Michell at the Princess Theatre, *Tales Of Hoffmann* and staged *The Student Prince* for the Victoria State Opera. He was Associate Director for the 10th Anniversary Production of *Les Misérables* and *Miss Saigon* and directed the Australian premiere of *Crusade*.

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 *Jekyll* was staged at the Churchill Theatre, Britain, starring Dave Willets.

Current works with composer Paul Keelan include *Ship Of Fools*, showcased at Chapel Off Chapel Theatre, *A Woman's Eyes*, *Black Widow* and *Tea With Oscar* which was nominated for the Green Room Award for music and lyrics and ran for two successful seasons at the Chapel Off Chapel Theatre.

Their musical *Sideshow Alley* won the National search for new work by Australian writers and composers, winning the prestigious The Pratt Prize for Music Theatre. *Sideshow Alley* premiered at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre in 2007. Their current works include a musical based on the life of the Italian Baroque painter Artemisia Gentileschi.



PETER CASEY Musical Director / Conductor

Peter Casey is one of Australia's most versatile Musical Directors, having established a career spanning the genres of musical theatre, arena presentations, symphonic concerts,

orchestration, television and recording.

During the past years, Peter has been Musical Director for several major music theatre productions, including *Les Misérables*, *The Sound of Music*, *The King and I*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Chicago*, *Cabaret*, *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, *The Songs of Leiber and Stoller*, *Topol's Fiddler on the Roof*, Stephen Sondheim's *Company*, Monty Python's *Spamalot*, the Andrew Lloyd Webber musicals *Evita*, *CATS*, *Aspects of Love*, *Song and Dance*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The New Mel Brooks Musical The Producers*, for which he received a 2004 Green Room Award, and The Production Company's productions of *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Pajama Game*, and *42nd Street*.

He was Musical Supervisor for *Guys and Dolls*, *South Pacific*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *Grease - The Arena Spectacular*, the Big Top touring productions of *CATS - Run Away To The Circus* and *Grease - The Mega Musical*.

In 1998, he was Musical Director for the acclaimed arena production *The Main Event*, starring John Farnham, Olivia Newton-John and Anthony Warlow, and was Musical Director for the 2001, 2002, 2005 and 2006 Helpmann Awards.

Peter has worked extensively in South East Asia, co-composing and orchestrating several musical productions, operas and recordings, and has been Guest Conductor for the West Australian Symphony, Adelaide Symphony and Queensland Symphony Orchestras.

Peter is proud to be associated with The Production Company's 10th Anniversary production of *Mame*.



ANDREW HALLSWORTH Choreographer

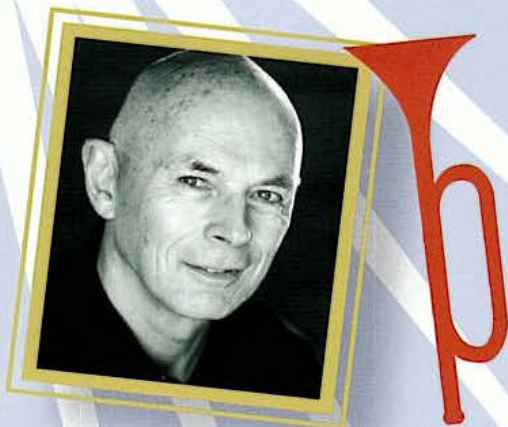
Andrew's choreographic highlights include the original Australian production of *Eurobeat - Almost Eurovision* for which he was nominated for a Green Room Award. This production was revived for the Edinburgh Festival, UK tour and current West End season. Other choreographic credits include the smash hit *Menopause - the Musical*, (nominated for Helpmann and Green Room Awards), *Indigeridoo* and *Ja'ime's Assembly Routine* on the cult TV show *We Can Be Heroes*, *Leader of the Pack* (Betty Pounder Green Room Award for Best Choreography, Helpmann Award nomination), *Sideshow Alley* (QPAC and Pratt Prize workshop) and *The Merry Widow* for Melbourne City Opera.

Andrew's long standing involvement with *Shout! The Legend of the Wild One* took him from Dance Captain on the original tour to Resident Director and Assistant Choreographer to Ross Coleman on the most recent tour directed by Stuart Maunder. He was Resident Director on *Oh! What a Night* starring Marcia Hines and Gary Sweet and Associate Director/Choreographer on *Fiddler on the Roof* starring Topol.

For The Production Company he started as a performer in *Funny Girl*, *Call Me Madam*, *Gypsy* and *Guys and Dolls*. For the 2002 and 2003 seasons he teamed up with Ross Coleman as co-choreographer on *The Music Man* and *Bye Bye Birdie*. They received Green Room Award nominations for both productions. In 2004 he choreographed

Carousel starring David Campbell.

Andrew is the Associate Choreographer on *Priscilla Queen of the Desert - The Musical* and has recently been in London casting the West End production for its early 2009 opening. Earlier this year Andrew choreographed for the first Australian series of *So You Think You Can Dance*.



RICHARD JEZIORNY Set Designer

Richard Jeziorny is a freelance designer who lives and works in Melbourne.

After graduating from NIDA he worked as a resident designer in New Zealand and for the Melbourne Theatre Co.

He has designed for drama, musical theatre, ballet, opera, circus and dance. He has designed several large-scale puppetry works which have toured successfully in Australia and overseas including *Inside Dry Water*, *Wake Baby*, *The Reading Boy* and *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Fish*.

He also transformed the lawn between the Concert Hall and the Arts Centre into a vibrant beach environment for the duration of the Commonwealth Games and was the designer of the Moomba Waterfest parade in 2006-2008.

In the past six years, Richard designed many musicals for The Production Company tackling shows such as *Camelot*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Carousel* and *Sunset Boulevard*, for which he won a Green Room Award for Design in the Musical Theatre category. Other musical theatre designs include *Eurobeat* and *Sideshow Alley*. *Eurobeat* has just completed

a 20 week tour of the UK and opened at the Novello Theatre in London's West End on Sept 9 to favourable reviews for a 10 week season.

He is also closely involved with the Puppetry course at the VCA and was nominated for a Helpmann Award for his design of *The Red Tree*.

Richard has also collaborated with Anthony Crowley at St Martins Youth Theatre on several important works including *Picasso's Children*, *When Sand Becomes Glass* and *Pretty White Lies and the Velveteen Undertow*.

Early in 2007 he designed *Chou Xaio Ya* (The Ugly Duckling) for the Zhexiang Acrobatic troupe in Hangzhou.

This year, in collaboration with Peter Wilson he devised and designed a new work, *The Dragon Child* for the China Children's Art Theatre in Beijing which premiered in the Lunar New Year of The Rat.

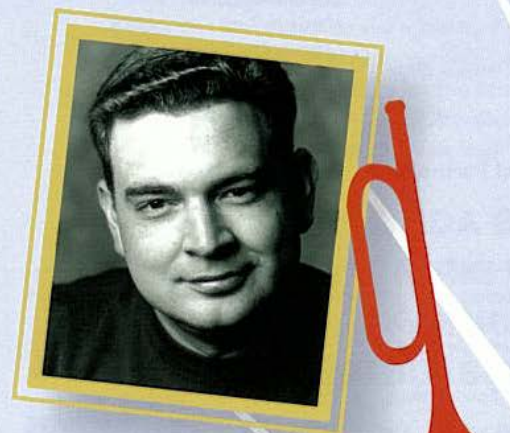
In May he designed the launch of the Citrawarna festival in Malaysia for the second year running and is currently designing a new production for the *Flying Fruit Fly Circus*.



KIM BISHOP Costume Designer

For over 20 years Kim has been involved in the theatre industry. He has toured as Head Of Wardrobe on many large scale musicals including *The King and I*, *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *South Pacific*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Aida - The Spectacular*, *Crazy For You*, *The Merchants Of Bollywood*, *Singin' In The Rain* and *Shout!*. The all Australian, world premier seasons of *The Boy From Oz*, and recently, *Dusty - The*

Original Pop Diva, were particular highlights. He dressed on *The Producers*, *Grease*, *Shirley Maclaine*, *Sugar Babies*, *Guys and Dolls* and *My Fair Lady* to name a few, made costumes with legendary costumier Bob Murphy and for some years had the pleasure of touring the world as Wardrobe Manager with Torvill and Dean and their international ice skating companies, playing venues everywhere from his home town Melbourne to Las Vegas, Madison Square Gardens and Wembley. During The Production Company's first decade Kim has supervised the Wardrobe Department on 12 shows and has been Costume Designer on *Sweet Charity*, *42nd Street* and *Damn Yankees*.



GAVAN SWIFT Lighting Designer

Gavan Swift graduated from Australia's National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in 1994. Since then he has been in constant demand as a lighting designer for plays, musicals, dance and corporate events. His musical lighting designs include *The Mikado*, *The Pirates Of Penzance*, *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Sweet Charity*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Jolson*, *Buddy*, *Oh, What A Night!*, *Footloose*, *Hair*, and *Saturday Night Fever* both in Australia and on London's West End. He has also designed the lighting for The Production Company's concert versions of *The Music Man*, *Hair*, *Mack & Mabel* and the inaugural production of *Mame*. Gavan's most recent work includes Opera Australia's production of *Lakme*, and the State Theatre Company of South Australia's production of *Hamlet*. Gavan has also designed the

lighting for productions at the Sydney Theatre Company, the Melbourne Theatre Company, the Bell Shakespeare Company, The Ensemble Theatre, Australian Theatre for Young People, Marian St, and the Q Theatre. Gavan was the Associate Lighting Designer for the Australian productions of *Cabaret*, *The Full Monty*, *WICKED* and *The Lion King*.

SYSTEM SOUND KELVIN GEDYE MARK BENSON NICK REICH Sound Design



System Sound have designed and provided the sound for all The Production Company's shows since it's inception. Engineers, Kelvin, Mark and Nick are together responsible for the sound in this production of *Mame*.

KELVIN GEDYE has worked for System Sound since 1982 on numerous musicals including the original Australian productions of *CATS*, *Les Misérables* and *The Phantom of the Opera* as Mix engineer, Sound Supervisor and Associate Sound Designer for the Australasian tour. He is currently Sound Supervisor for *WICKED*. Kelvin's work on *Mame* will be his eighth involvement with The Production Company.

MARK BENSON who joined System in 1996, is responsible for the orchestral sound on *Mame*. With System Sound, Mark has designed, supervised and mixed many concerts and special events. Mark has been the Orchestral Sound designer for The Production Company shows since 2003.

NICK REICH is responsible for the Mix and Sound Effects for *Mame*. Nick joined System in 1988, as Sound Operator on *Les Misérables* and *The Phantom of the Opera*, among many others. He was Sound Designer for The Production Company's *Guys & Dolls*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, and *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and Mix Engineer on many others.

SYSTEM SOUND has designed and engineered such productions as *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Miserables*, *Joseph*, *Rent*, *Cats*, *Aspects of Love*, *Show Boat*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Miss Saigon*, *Wizard of Oz*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Cabaret*, *Mamma Mia!*, *The Producers*, *We Will Rock You*, and currently *Billy Elliot*, *Wicked* and *Phantom*.

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