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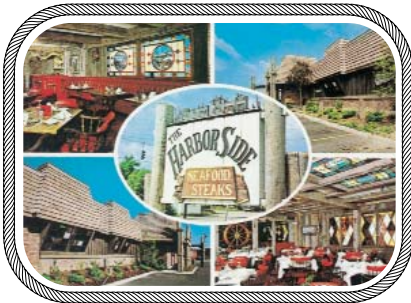
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A LETTER FROM THE PRODUCER

Welcome back to the 2006 season.

We're almost through another amazing year, marked by critical successes and audience-pleasing productions that we hope will be remembered for years to come.

Thank you for joining us here in Patchogue for *La Cage aux Folles*, one of those spectacular old-fashioned Broadway hits that has dazzled audiences for decades. *La Cage* opened at the Palace Theatre on Broadway in August of 1983, and a revival production closed on Broadway just last year. We're glad to bring this show, which won the Tony triple crown in 1983 (Best Book, Score, Musical), to our audiences in Bellport for the first time in ten years.

For those of you new to the world of *La Cage*, who have never witnessed the excitement of the St. Tropez nightclub, you're in for a real treat. And for the rest, we hope Gateway's fresh take on this favorite will be just as good as, if not better than any production you've seen before.

Beneath the surface, beyond the glitzy razzle-dazzle production numbers and those leggy Cagelles, *La Cage aux Folles* is ultimately a show about the unconditional love of family—even when it's difficult—and acceptance of not just them, but everyone, for what they are. Most importantly, though, the show is about acceptance of self; Albin is right when he sings "life is a sham, till you can shout—out loud: 'I am what I am!'"

As always, we're committed to providing you with timeless and memorable musical theatre that you can't see anywhere else on Long Island. That's our commitment, and we thank you for yours.

Paul Allan



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with

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DEB G. GIRDLER

DAREN KELLY

JAMES DUANE POLK

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ERIN KRAUS

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MARIANNE DOMINY

Production Stage Manager
JOVON E. SHUCK

Lighting Design
DOUG HARRY

Scenic Design
KELLY TIGHE

Associate Choreographer
GEORGE NIEVES

Musical Direction by
SCOT WOOLLEY

Directed and Choreographed by
DJ SALISBURY

La Cage aux Folles is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.
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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

AlbinDAVID EDWARDS*
GeorgesRICHARD WHITE*

LES CAGELLES

HannaJOEY ABRAMOWICZ*
PhaedraDENNIS KENNEY*
MercedesSHUA POTTER
ChantalBENJIE RANDALL*
NicoleCOLIN BRADBURY*
OdetteYAMIL DeJESUS
DermahMATTHEW MARKS*
AngeliqueLAUREN PASTOREK
Lo SinghANTUAN RAIMONE
Clo-CloMELISSA SYBIL

Jean-MichelMARK FISHER*
AnneHANNA-LIINA VOSA
JacobJAMES DUANE POLK*
Edouard DindonDAREN KELLY*
Mme. DindonAPRIL WOODALL
FrancisBRAD YORK
JacquelineDEB G. GIRDLER*
M. RenaudADAM HEMMING
Mme. RenaudSTEPHANIE WILBERDING
EtienneCOLIN BRADBURY*
ColetteMELISSA SYBIL

UNDERSTUDIES

GeorgesADAM WEST HEMMING
JacobANTUAN RAIMONE
AlbinBRAD YORK
Jean-MichelSHUA POTTER
AnneLAUREN PASTOREK
JacquelineSTEPHANIE WILBERDING
Edouard DindonADAM WEST HEMMING

MUSICIANS

Piano/ConductorROBERT FELSTEIN
Reed 1LOU GALLO
Reed 2MARK GATZ
Reed 3MITCH KAMEN
Trumpet 1JOSEPH BOARDMAN
Trumpet 2CHARLIE SARLING
TromboneMIKE CIFARELLI
KeyboardBRENDON WHITING
BassCATHERINE O'MALLEY
DrumsPETE DE SALVO



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DAVID EDWARDS



MARK FISHER



DEB G. GIRDLER



ADAM WEST HEMMING



DAREN KELLY



DENNIS KENNEY



MATTHEW MARKS



LAUREN PASTOREK



JAMES DUANE POLK



SHUA POTTER



ANTUAN RAIMONE



BENJIE RANDALL



MELISSA SYBIL



HANNA-LIINA VOSA



RICHARD WHITE



STEPHANIE WILBERDING



APRIL WOODALL



BRAD YORK



The Musicians employed in this production are members of the American Federation of Musicians.



*Actors employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



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MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

OvertureOrchestra
 "We Are What We Are"Les Cagelles
 "A Little More Mascara"Albin and Friends
 "With Anne on My Arm"Jean-Michel
 "With You on My Arm" (Reprise)Georges and Albin
 "The Promenade"Townspeople
 "Song on The Sand"Georges
 "La Cage aux Folles"Albin and Les Cagelles
 "I Am What I Am"Albin

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Entr'acteOrchestra
 "Song on the Sand" (Reprise).....Georges and Albin
 "Masculinity"Georges, Albin and Townspeople
 "Look Over There"Georges
 "Cocktail Counterpoint"Georges, Dindon, Marie and Jacob
 "The Best of Times"Albin, Jacqueline and Patrons
 "Look Over There" (Reprise)Jean-Michel
 Grand Finale.....Company

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JOEY ABRAMOWICZ (*Hanna*): Joey comes to Gateway straight from Maine State Music Theatre where he was seen in *South Pacific* and as the carpet in *Beauty and the Beast*. Originally from New Orleans, he received his BFA from the University of Mississippi. Other credits include: Pre-Broadway – *The Times They are a Changin'* the new Twyla Tharp/Bob Dylan musical. Regional: *Cats*, (TUTS, Walnut St., Westchester Broadway), *Carousel*, (Fulton Opera House). Thanks to DJ and George!

COLIN BRADBURY (*Nicole*), a New Hampshire native, is delighted to return to the Gateway Playhouse after performing in last summer's *42nd Street*. He most recently completed the season at the Pittsburgh CLO performing in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (Caleb), *Beauty and the Beast*, *Grease*, and *42nd Street*. Other credits include *Irving Berlin's White Christmas* (Orig. LA Company), *42nd Street* (Japan and US National Tour), *Encore!* (Tokyo Disney Sea), and *A Christmas*

Carol (McCarter Theater). Endless thanks to Mom and Dad for their love and support!

YAMIL DEJESUS (*Odette*) is thrilled to be making his Gateway debut with *La Cage*. National Tours: *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (Louie), and *Cats* (Tumblebrutus/us Mistoffelles). Film: *Across the Universe*. He is a graduate of AMDA in NY. Thanks to family and friends for endless love and support.

DAVID EDWARDS (*Albin*) comes to this production directly from starring in the acclaimed revival of *Room Service*, scheduled to re-open in New York in the fall. He recently appeared as both Max Bialystock and Roger DeBris in the National Tour of *The Producers*. Broadway: *By Jeeves*, *The Rothschilds*; Other notable New York theatre credits include *The Fantasticks* (as the final El Gallo in the original record-breaking run), *The Disputation* (as the tormented young priest Pablo Christiani), *Zion* (as the bigoted southern zealot Posey Maddox), Musicals Tonight's revival of *The Roar of the Greasepaint...* (starring as Cocky), *Dr. Sex*, *Jolson & Co*, *Company*, *That's Life*, *What's A Nice Country Like You...*, *Bittersuite*, *The Witch of Wall Street*; Favorite regional credits include *Man of La Mancha* (Quixote), *Bells Are Ringing* (Jeff Moss), *A Little Night Music* (Fredrick), *Little Me* (NJ Critics Award Best Actor), *La Cage Aux Folles* (Albin), *Camelot* (King Arthur), *The Pajama Game* (Sid), *The Butter and Egg Man*, *Irma Vep* etc. such theatres as the Old Globe, Eugene O'Neill Center, GeVa, Syracuse Stage, American Stage Co, Westchester Broadway Theatre, The

Ordway, etc.; Film: *Belly*; *The Fantasticks: Try to Remember*, etc. Television: *Eternal Light*, etc. Recordings: *Bittersuite* cast album, *Kings*, *It Helps to Sing About It*. Voice of Ellery Queen for Chivers Audio Books, guest artist with Virginia, NYC, & Skylight Opera Companies and Symphony Orchestras across the US.

MARK FISHER (*Jean-Michel*): Gateway debut! Originally from Long Beach Island, NJ, Mark is happy to be on another island that's long. Favorite credits include: *Cats* (Munkustrap) at Theater Under the Stars and Maine State Music Theatre; *The Cocoanuts* (Bob Adams) at Seaside Music Theatre; *Songs for a New World* (Man 2) at Syracuse Stage After Hours. BFA in Musical Theatre, Syracuse University. Thanks to family, friends and my peeps at BLOC and lots of love to Loftiss.

DEB G. GIRDLER (*Jacqueline*): *La Cage Aux Folles* marks Deb's first appearance at the Gateway Playhouse. She received praise in the *N.Y. Times* for her portrayal of Aimee Semple McPherson in *Sister Aimee* at the Gene Frankel Theatre Off-Broadway, appeared for 10 seasons at the Hampton Playhouse in N.H., The Cincinnati Playhouse-in-the-Park, the Birmingham Theatre in Mich., The Cohoes Music Hall, Long Island Stage, George Street Playhouse in N.J., The Charles Playhouse in Boston, Ford's Theatre and represented the U.S. at the World Theatre Festival in Monaco, hosted by Princess Grace. Deb appears frequently in new works at the Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati. This fall she returns to the only

theatre in MD to reprise her role as the Fairy Godmother in Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Cinderella*. She'd like to thank you all for coming out and supporting LIVE THEATRE!

ADAM WEST HEMMING (*M. Renaud/u/s Georges, Dindon*): *La Cage Aux Folles* marks Adam's debut with Gateway Playhouse. Some favorite roles include Wallace Hartley in *Titanic*; Prince Dauntless in *Once Upon a Mattress*; Marvin in *Falsettos*; Buddy Plummer in *Follies* and Seymour Krelborn in *Little Shop of Horrors*. He musically directed numerous shows including *Into the Woods*; *And the World Goes Round* and *Falsettos*. He is co-founder of No Square Theatre in Laguna Beach, California, and his professional claim-to-fame is doing the "By Mennen" jingle in Los Angeles.

DAREN KELLY (*Edouard Dindon*) has been featured on Broadway in four of its biggest hits: *Deathtrap*, *Woman of the Year*, *Crazy for You*, and *South Pacific* (NYCLO). A native of Califor-



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WHO'S WHO

nia, he made his professional debut at the Tony-winning South Coast Repertory Theater under the Direction of Daniel Sullivan. He has toured America with Richard Kiley in *Ah Wilderness*, Children with Sada Thompson, as Julian Marsh in the National Company of *42nd Street*, as Rev. Moore in *Footloose*, and as Lank Hawkins in *Crazy for You*. Favorite roles include the Chorus to Al Pacino's *Oedipus*, Lovborg to Harriet Harris' *Hedda Gabler*, Manders in Lanford Wilson's translation of *Ghosts*, Barrymore in *I Hate Hamlet*, and the title role in Chekhov's *Ivanov*. Television appearances include *Law and Order*, *M*A*S*H*, *Kate and Allie*, *Tales from the Dark Side*, *All My Children*, *As the World Turns*, and *Love Hurts* with Jeff Daniels.

DENNIS KENNEY (*Phaedra*) is thrilled to be returning to the Gateway stage! He just finished performing in the Kennedy Center's Production of *Mame*, starring Christine Baranski and Harriet Harris. Other credits include the

role of Eddie in the Las Vegas production of *Mamma Mia!*, the First National Tour of the Broadway Revival of *42nd Street* (Andy Lee u/s), Charlie in Baltimore Center Stage's production of *The Pajama Game*, as well as Bernardo in *West Side Story* and Paul in *Kiss Me Kate*... right here at Gateway Playhouse! He holds a B.F.A. in acting/musical theatre from Carnegie Mellon University. He would like to dedicate this show to Roxy, the true diva in his life!

MATTHEW MARKS (*Dermah*) is thrilled to be joining Gateway's production of *La Cage*. Matthew has just returned from the National Tour of *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*... in which he played the title role of the mouse. His other recent credits include Tulsa in *Gypsy* starring Joyce Dewitt, a wrangler in *Will Rogers Follies* and Gregor in *Mame* starring Linda Dano. Matthew would like to thank Jack Waddell, Michael Lavine, and his loving family especially Robert for all their support. Matthew is a proud equity member.

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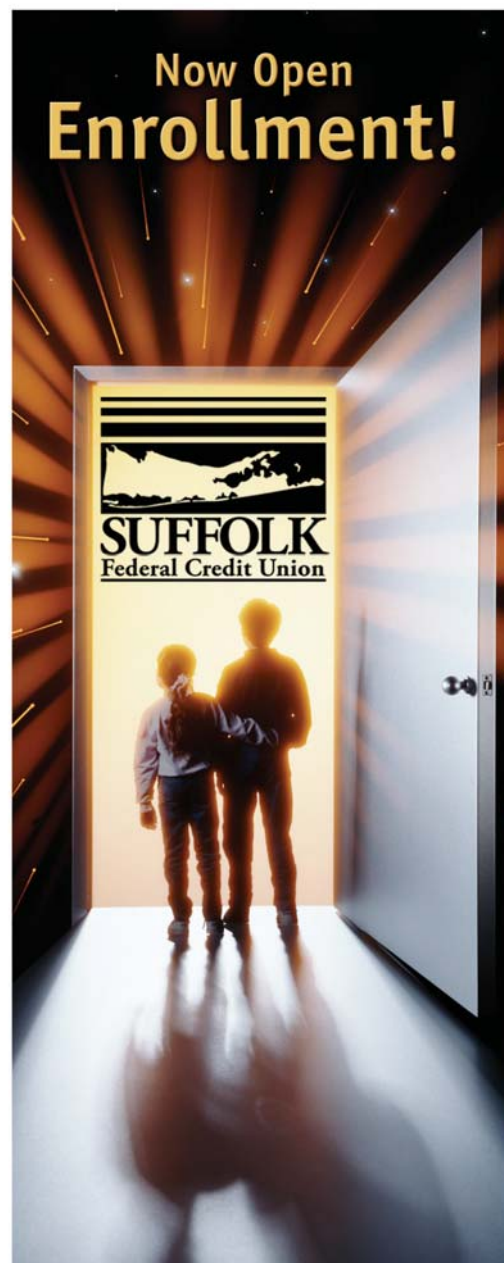
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WHO'S WHO

LAUREN PASTOREK (*Angelique/u/s Anne*): This tall Texan is giddy to be making her Gateway debut after two and a half years of traveling the country on the national tours of *The Will Rogers Follies* (Betty Blake u/s) and *Oklahoma!* (Gertie u/s, Minnie), and a glorious stint around the Hawaiian Islands singing, dancing and scaling circus apparatuses. Regional: *Camelot* (Guenevere), *Brigadoon* (Meg), ...*Forum* (Gymnasia). Recordings: *Yeomen of the Guard* (Phoebe), *Autumn Maneuvers* (Treszka), *Das Dreimäderlhaus* (Hederl), *Utopia: Limited* (Phylla). BM, Eastman School of Music, valedictorian. MM, Cincinnati College-Conservatory. Love to my family, friends and chiropractor!

JAMES DUANE POLK (*Jacob*): James recently guest starred on *Law & Order: SVU*. Soap opera fans might recognize James from his many appearances on *As the World Turns*, *One Life to Live*, and *Guiding Light*. James has traveled the world acting in Nigeria, Africa to Russia. Favorite roles include Puck in *A Midsummer*

Night's Dream and starring in the award-winning short film *Rage*. James is pleased to be making his Long Island debut at the Gateway Playhouse. He dedicates his performance to the loving memory of his mother, Norvella.

SHUA POTTER (*Mercedes/u/s Jean-Michel*): Shua is thrilled to be making his Gateway debut in *La Cage aux Folles*. Shua is a B.F.A. graduate from Point Park University in Pittsburgh, and was most recently seen playing Peter Pan aboard Disney Cruise Line. Favorite roles include Truffaldino in *The Servant of Two Masters* and Lenny Bruce in the Original Pittsburgh Production of *Red*. Much gratitude and love to God, my wonderful family, and beautiful friends!

ANTUAN RAIMONE (*Lo Singh*) was happy to make his first appearance here at the Gateway Playhouse in *Sweet Charity* earlier this season. Antuan recently completed *Kiss Me Kate*

Bios continued on Page 23

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LA CAGE aux FOLLES

The Making Of A Musical



In 1976, Alan Carr, the former manager of Ann-Margret and recent producer of the film *Grease*, was in Paris where he saw the hit play, *La Cage aux Folles*, which debuted in 1973 and would run for seven years. Carr was so thrilled by the audience response that he spent the next two years acquiring the rights to the show. However, when word got around the Broadway community that Carr was planning to turn the show, a farce about a homosexual couple, into a musical, he was repeatedly told it would never fly: the subject matter was just not appealing to the mainstream conservative audience, the "theatre party ladies" whose attendance was crucial to any Broadway show's success.

Undeterred, Carr contacted nearly every successful Broadway composer, author, and director including Maury Yeston (*Phantom, Nine*), Jay Presson Allen (*The Prime Of Miss Jean Brodie*) and Mike Nichols (*Barefoot In The Park, The Odd Couple*) but no one wanted to tackle what was assumed to be a losing proposition.

Carr changed his tack and decided to first find an actor to play Albin. He attended a performance of *Torch Song Trilogy* to see Harvey Fierstein, but was instead completely "knocked out by the humor, and warmth and pathos of the script," for which Fierstein won a Tony Award. He asked Fierstein to meet with him about writing the script for *La Cage*, then approached Jerry Herman (*Mame, Hello, Dolly!*) to be the composer/lyricist. Herman himself

had tried to obtain the rights to the show after he had seen the French movie version, and believed he was fated to write the musical. Carr had tried to sell director Arthur Laurents, a Tony winner for *Gypsy*, on directing *La Cage*, but not until Fierstein and Herman were committed did Laurents agree.

By now, it was well into the early 1980's, and a neo-conservative political climate was emerging, making the task of coming up with a hit show from such liberal material even harder. A gay-themed project in the days when AIDS was still referred to as "the gay cancer" - wasn't a homophobic backlash inevitable? The creative team, all gay men, thought that their show would instead be a bright, glittering antidote to the despair of those suffering from the illness and the fear of the illness by the straight community. They chose to concentrate the focus of the show on the couple in a non-confrontational, non-controversial way - writing dramatic moments that allowed the music to show the depth of Albin and Georges' relationship. Fierstein also changed the conflict of the piece from showcasing the prospective father-in-law as the villain, to Georges' son's thoughtlessness, thereby enabling audiences to relate to something nearly everyone has experienced - a child being ashamed of and embarrassed by his parents. As Fierstein has said, "what *La Cage* comes down to is simple - Honor thy father and mother."

The team continued producing the show in a traditional style - when *La Cage* debuted on Broadway in 1983, pundits proclaimed the old-fashioned musical was back. The show was a sumptuous eyeful, with exquisite sets, and glamorous costumes by veteran designer Theoni V. Aldredge, who had won Tony Awards for such mainstream hits as *Annie* and *42nd Street*. Laurents didn't let his leads so much as share a kiss on the cheek for fear of offending his audience, and cast two well-known,

straight "he-man" actors, George Hearn and Gene Barry, as Albin and Georges. Every effort was made, from the production through the PR, to embrace conservative middle-class, family values, including the omission of all of Fierstein's work in gay theatre from his biography in the show's Playbill, aside from the commercially successful *Torch Song Trilogy*.

Certain factions of the gay community were upset by this direction, feeling that as "Broadway's first gay musical" *La Cage* should not have portrayed a homosexual relationship along such a strict heterosexual model. When the show opened, reviewers also criticized the show for not taking advantage of its political potential. However, Jerry Herman has said, "If we had written a stronger, tougher political message into the material, the *New York Times* might have loved us more. But that would have given our show too narrow an appeal and it never would have found the huge universal audience that it did."

It did, indeed. The show was a smash, running for 1,761 performances, and was nominated for nine Tony Awards winning six of them, including the Triple Crown for the creative team - Best Score, Best Book, and Best Musical.

When talking about the newest revival and the chance to do *La Cage* in the year 2006, Artistic Director Robin Allan remarked, "A lot has changed since 1983 when *La Cage* broke new ground. Over the past few years, gay storylines and themes, both serious and played for laughs, have been written into successful television shows and films." She cited *Birdcage*, *Will And Grace*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *Six Feet Under* and several soaps and prime time series. She added, "It is due to shows like *La Cage*, which took the foresight and bravery of creators Carr, Fierstein, Laurents and Herman, that allows us as a people to move forward and accept each other. After all, isn't art supposed to lead the way?" ♦

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(Paul/DC), Lyceum Arrow Rock Theatre and has been blessed to travel around the world once with both Stiletto Entertainment & PGT, Inc. B.F.A., Missouri State University. Favorite credits include: *Smokey Joe's Café* (Ken Ard), American Heartland Theatre; *Sweet Charity* (Brother Ray), STAGES, St. Louis; *School House Rocks Live* (Willis), Coterie Theatre. Antuan would like to thank his family for their love & support & God for this wonderful gift; may I use it in the way you have meant it.

BENJIE RANDALL (*Chantal*): Benjie returns to the Gateway Playhouse after playing Mungo-jerrie in *Cats*. Benjie most recently appeared in *Hello, Dolly!* and *Carnival*, both at the Papermill Playhouse. Off-Broadway: *Dr. Sex The Musical* and *Boobs, the Music of Ruth Wallace*. Other New York credits include Gene Kelly in *Judy Garland and Uninvited Company* and Roger in *Grease* at the Papermill Playhouse. Benjie has a BFA from the Boston Conservatory. Love to B-4. www.BenjieRandall.com

MELISSA SYBIL (*Clo-Clo*): Melissa is proud to be a part of the Gateway family. Last seen in this summer's *Sweet Charity* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, Melissa is an alumni of Gateway's Children's Theater. Happy to be back home in Bellport, she just finished the National Tour of *The Will Rogers Follies*. Melissa has performed with the Rockettes in NYC, Detroit, St. Louis and Columbus. Regional Theater credits include *Crazy For You* (Patsy), *Carousel*, and *The Music Man*. Melissa has her BA in writing from CUNY Hunter College. A million thanks to Mom, love to my family and MG.

HANNA-LIINA VOSA (*Anne*) is very excited to be a part of the Gateway family. Recent credits include Sandy in the International and National Tour of *Grease*, Penny in the first European production of *Hairspray* (in Finland). Other favorite roles include Cosette in *Les Miserables*, Maria in *West Side Story*, Polly in *Crazy for You*, Audrey in *Little Shop of Horrors*, Sally in *Cabaret*. She has hosted many children's TV shows and concerts in her native Estonia and is also an active concert performer. She's had the oppor-

tunity to perform with various West End soloists, and has also sung at the home of the world-famous librettist Tim Rice and at the Earth and Millennium Day celebrations at the United Nations in NYC. She is a spokesperson for Estonian Mitsubishi. Alumna of AMDA (American Musical and Dramatic Academy). I dedicate this role to my Jesseputukas! www.Hannaliina.com

RICHARD WHITE (*Georges*): Best known as the voice of "Gaston" in Disney's animated feature film, *Beauty and the Beast*. Created the role of the Phantom in Yeston/Kopit *Phantom* (RCA). Other credits include: PBS *Great Performances*; Robert Mission in *New Moon*; Gaylord Ravinal in *Show Boat*. Broadway debut: Joey in *The Most Happy Fella*. Off-Broadway: *Elizabeth and Essex* - Essex (w/Estelle Parsons). New York revivals: *Brigadoon* - Tommy, *South Pacific* - Lieutenant Cable. Regionally: Arthur in *Camelot*,



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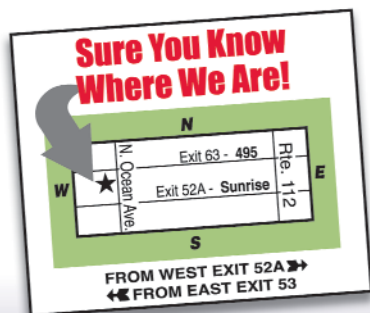
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WHO'S WHO

Emille De Becque in *South Pacific*, Don Quixote in *Man of La Mancha*. National Tour: *Urinetown* - Officer Lockstock.

STEPHANIE WILBERDING (*Mme. Renaud*) is making her Gateway debut with this production of *La Cage aux Folles*. Most recently, Steph performed in *The Music Man* at the Fulton Opera House. Other credits: *George M!*, *Funny Girl*, *Show Boat*, and *Mame* (Merry-Go-Round Playhouse). NYC credits include: *A Day in the Life of Ordinary People* and *A Stoop on Orchard Street*. Many thanks and much love to family. For Celine.

APRIL WOODALL (*Mme. Dindon*) has performed at the Bristol Riverside Theatre, the Lenape Regional Performing Arts Center, Philadelphia Fringe Festival, and the Philadelphia Young Playwright's Festival. For the 2005 Philadelphia Gay & Lesbian Theatre Festival she played Esther Robertson in the east-coast

debut of *Kilt*. April trained at The Curtis Institute of Music where she studied with Todd Duncan (the first Porgy of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*). In addition to musicals and operas, she has enjoyed playing non-singing roles such as Snakehandler in *Talking with...*, God in *Everyman*, Mrs. Whitefield in *She Stoops to Conquer*, and Amanda in *The Glass Menagerie*. April is tickled pink to be making her Gateway Playhouse debut and this wonderful cast. Love always to E & C.

BRAD YORK (*Francis*), a native of Portland, OR, is thrilled to be back at Gateway after appearing in *Oliver* and *Sweet Charity* earlier this season. NYC and regional credits include: *Iron Curtain* (World Premier - The Prospect Theatre Co.); *The Grinch/Seussical the Musical* (Fulton Opera House); *Reg/Full Monty* (The Gateway Playhouse); Evelyn Oakleigh/*Anything Goes* (Arizona Broadway Theatre) and Sparky in *Forever Plaid*. National Tour credits: 1st Officer

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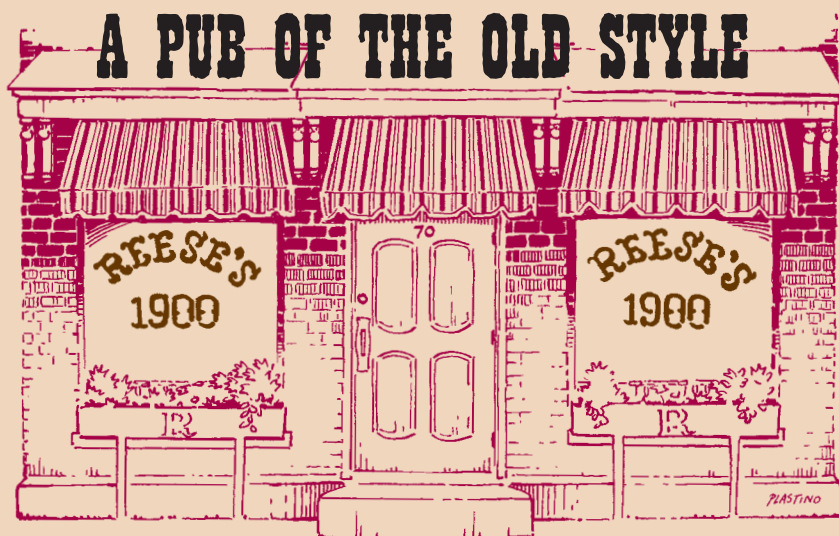
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Murdoch/Titanic '03. Brad is a graduate of Linfield College (BA/Music) and Arizona State University (MM). Thanks and love to my family back in Oregon. Robby 45888 always!

PAUL ALLAN (Producer) has been involved in theatre since before he can remember. In the early days of Gateway, he spent his summers following around his grandfather who had his hands full trying to make ends meet - running a theatre in the 60's. Paul grew up here, looking forward to each summer and being able to do more each year. By the time he was a teenager he was beginning to take charge of maintaining this 7 acre complex as well as becoming an integral part of the back stage crew. In the 80's as a young Gateway producer, Paul spent part of the winter months working in NY on many off-Broadway shows - serving as technical supervisor, production manager, and/or show carpenter. At the same time he co-founded a touring company whose shows traveled throughout the US and other countries worldwide. The set rental company was also founded at this time and Gateway scenery is constantly being trucked to various theatres across the country. The main focus, though, is still the productions he produces here for our patrons. This season began with his 158th production, as well as a new generation of producer added to the Gateway Family—Paul's first son, Luke.

DJ SALISBURY (Director/Choreographer): A good ol' Kentucky boy, DJ has directed shows from coast to coast. Favorites include *Man of La Mancha*, several productions of *The Will Rogers Follies* (including the Dallas Summer Musicals tour starring Larry Gatlin), *Swinging On A Star*, *Into The Woods*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Baby*, *Grease!*, *The Wizard Of Oz* and many other shows for various theatres nationwide including Papermill Playhouse (NJ), Riverside Theatre (FL), Sacramento Music Circus (CA), Artscenter of Coastal Carolina (SC) and Gateway Playhouse. (His new conception of *Cats* had audiences

purring in Patchogue in 2004 and his productions of *Evita* and *42nd Street* blazed into Bellport in 2005). Among his favorite experiences creating dance are; *Nine*, *Irene*, *Annie*, the premiere of *Great Expectations* (adapted by novelist John Jakes,) *The Secret Garden*, *Gypsy Paint Your Wagon* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. DJ has had the privilege of working on several original productions and workshops in and around New York; *The Will Rogers Follies*, *Titanic*, *Time and Again*, *Femme Fatale*, *Harold and Maude* (starring Estelle Parsons) and *The Long Road Home*. Also a bookwriter/lyricist, DJ's musical adaptation of Kipling's *The Man Who Would Be King*, written with Neil Berg (composer of off-Broadway's *The Prince and the Pauper*) was showcased as part of the first New York Musical Theatre Festival. This production of *La Cage* is a thank you to the folks of the very much missed Hampton Playhouse where DJ enjoyed playing Cagelle Chantal nearly 2 decades ago.

GEORGE NIEVES (Associate Choreographer) is very excited to be here at *La Cage*. Many thanks to Gateway and a very special thanks to DJ Salisbury for bringing me on board. This collaborative experience in creation has been both a fabulous journey and a career highlight. Ah. 5! 6! 7! 8! Sparkledust, Buglebeads...

ROBIN JOY ALLAN (Casting and Artistic Director) has been the Casting Director at Gateway for the last twelve years. Four years ago, she became the Artistic Director at Gateway which includes not only several Manhattan excursions to cast all productions, but involves planning advertising strategies for all productions, hiring creative staff, designing season ads, posters and booklets, overseeing artistic aspects of each production, costumes, sets and wigs, overseeing Children's Theatre, beautifying the Gateway property from choosing paint colors for actor housing, to adding new perennial floral additions to the Gateway land-

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scape. Prior to moving back home into the wonderland setting of her childhood, she did thrive in Corporate America, spending five years in Los Angeles, casting several TV pilots, MOW's and feature films. You'll find her name on the feature films; *Parenthood*, *When Harry Met Sally*, *Lord of the Flies*, *Side Out* and *Ghost*. Along with her Artistic and Casting Director duties, she is the force behind Gateway's Acting School Division, where she teaches the advanced classes. This is her most impassioned work. Her daughter Hayley, inspires her every day. She hopes her effort is good enough to honor her family, and their amazing effort all these years to bring theatre with integrity to Long Island.

DOUG HARRY (*Lighting Designer*) is happy to be designing another Gateway production. His past credits here include last year's *Aida*, *Carousel*, *Cats*, *Fosse*, *Miss Saigon*, *Scarlet Pimpernel*, *Ragtime*, *Titanic*, and *Dracula the Rock Opera*. Doug holds a degree in Theatre Production and Stage Management from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, UK. He is currently the Production Manager for New Haven's International Festival. And his company 'DarkSide Design' does corporate work for General Motors, Six Flags Theme Parks, New Haven Symphony, Calvin Klein and numerous other clients. Doug lives in Connecticut and is married with two children, two dogs, various cats and a toad. He very much enjoys his short vacations in Bellport!!

KELLY TIGHE (*Scenic Designer*) Off Broadway: *Almost Heaven*. Regional: *Aida*, *Cats*, *The Full Monty*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Gateway Playhouse); *Beauty and the Beast*, *Grease*, *Titanic*, *The Who's Tommy*, *My Fair Lady* (Contra Costa Musical Theatre); *Annie*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Joseph/Dreamcoat* (Ohio's Carousel Dinner Theater); *West Side Story*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (Diablo Light Opera Co.); *Around The World In 80 Days*, *The*

Pavilion, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* (Center Repertory Co.); *The Laramie Project*, *A Midsummer Nights Dream* (PPAS/ NYC). Mr. Tighe served as the resident scenic designer for Western Michigan's Cherry County Playhouse (*The Music Man* starring William Katt and Josie DeGuzman, and the world premiere of *Will's Women* starring Amanda McBroome), as well as Center Rep in the San Francisco Bay Area. Television: *Sunday Night Woah!* (starring Mo Rocca) for *Animal Planet* as well as several spots for *Verizon*, *Kit Kat*, *Disney*, and the *Oxygen* network. Awards and recognitions: Northern California's "Shellie", Drama-Logue, and the S.F. Bay Area's Outer Critic's Circle. Kelly resides in New York City.

JOVON E. SHUCK (*Production Stage Manager*): A proud member of Actor's Equity Association, Jovon would like to thank the other hardworking theatre professionals who apply their talents behind the scenes (and whose biographies you never get to read). Special thanks to Shannon O'Connor. Jovon's other credits include: Broadway: *Noises Off & The Graduate*; New York: The New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theatre, Actors Studio Drama School and five Christmases with *The Radio City Christmas Spectacular*; Regional & Touring: Stamford Center for the Arts Rich Forum, Cherry County Playhouse, Main Street Theatre, Lycian Center and ArtsPower National Touring Theatre. ♦



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Several times a year, the lobby of Gateway Playhouse is filled with nervous smiles, and excited energy. No, it isn't the first night of a show. It's the start of a Gateway Acting School session, and it's just as important as an opening night. Many of the youngest, and cutest, participants in this proud and successful program have never set foot on a stage, nor do they know stage left from stage right. They come to the Acting School to have fun and to learn more about performing. What they don't know is how much they'll learn about themselves at the same time.

Since Gateway Playhouse began, training has been an integral part of the property and its history. Robin Allan, who, among other things, runs the current version of the school, tells of a time when many of the performers on property were here to learn. "There was a school right at the beginning. My mother taught class, my aunt and uncle. Most of the actors at that time...were apprentices who were training. They took classes in the morning, did tech work in the afternoon, and performed at night, and that was early Gateway. So I guess it is sort of living in the grass here." It not only lives in the grass here, but in the buildings, stages, and energy of the terrain.

Currently yearly classes are held on the Gateway grounds, teaching children ranging in age from 6 to 18 years old acting skills and life lessons. It's this emphasis on actual training that sets Gateway Acting School apart from other schools in the area. At Gateway, the point of the class isn't to put on a show at the end of the session. Rather, the Acting School focuses on giving students a set of skills which they can apply in any situation. Preparing actors with the ability

to jump into any situation and give their all is more important to Ms. Allan than a one time performance.

"[Acting is] a skill. It's a skill that's tough to define, because it is not entirely physical. Through dramatic study, you train the heart and the mind and the body to all work together, it becomes sort of effortless and can be applied to any genre of performing. Whether it be a straight play, a sitcom, a children's theater show or a musical, you can be a fairy princess, or a kid whose parents are getting divorced...you can be anything because you have learned to pull the truth of the circumstances from within." She stresses that training is important for everyone interested in performing, even those who possess a remarkable gift. "There are kids who seem born to entertain, but those kids still need skill training. They know how to do one thing, and if they train, they'll know how to do anything."

"...you can be anything because you have learned to pull the truth of the circumstances from within."

The kids in the school are gaining valuable experience in the ways of acting, but also in the humanity it takes to create believable characters and enact real life situations on stage in order to reach an audience. "Even if you don't do this in your life, dramatic study does add to what you give to the world as a person, because it adds to you an insight and awareness that you can apply in life situations. It's nice to see kids growing up being able to give in that way," comments Ms. Allan.

Helping students achieve the best that they as individuals can, isn't always easy. Ms. Allan relies on an excellent staff filled with industry professionals, and familiar faces, recognizing that the students need an outward eye that has seen more than just the shores of Long Island. "We need good teachers of drama, and good directors, and I consider this school to have several of them. One of my earliest students, who started when she was 12, is now a casting director in New York. She is able to give wonderful direction and guidance to actors who read for roles for her. Because of her training, and because she is sort of a born teacher I feel privileged to have her teaching in the school now. She's a product of what we're all about, a great example."

And how is the training going these days? Recent success stories include students who have landed major roles on television shows, national commercials, and more. But to Ms. Allan, monetary gain isn't the point of the school, and it's not the greatest measure of success. Though she responds with a shining grin at the mention of her students' many achievements, she also cautions that in today's world "a lot of the focus of acting is geared towards how many millions of dollars you can make doing a film. And if you've got a TV show, that means you're a good actor, and there isn't a lot of focus on the art of it. When kids take acting classes, they realize that it is an art form; it is unfortunate that most public schools do not have programs that are geared in this way. The focus is normally on the productions, staging and superficial emphasis. Drama programs are not formulated as the music programs are or fine arts, and that's a shame."



Ms. Allan knows how valuable the program at Gateway is for that reason and is also grateful to have such a beautiful property and a business that already has a fifty-plus-year history, to give the school its backbone. The heartbeat comes from her and you can see it when she speaks of the hours she spends teaching and coaching, which she says, aside from moments with her family, are her most favorite hours spent in a day. "Not only the work is rewarding, but it's great to see the creative spirit emerge. It does enhance a person, they learn how to communicate better, they learn how to listen better, they have more of an ease with social interactions, they pay attention to what their behavior is and in doing so, realize their responsibility in the world, as a human being." They may not know it, but this is the goal with each child that walks into the lobby on their first day of Acting School. Not just to make them into better performers, but into better citizens as well. With their nervous smiles, and excited energy in tow, these little ones walking into class for the first time are starting down a well traveled road at Gateway, towards a more open and committed future on stage and in life. ♦

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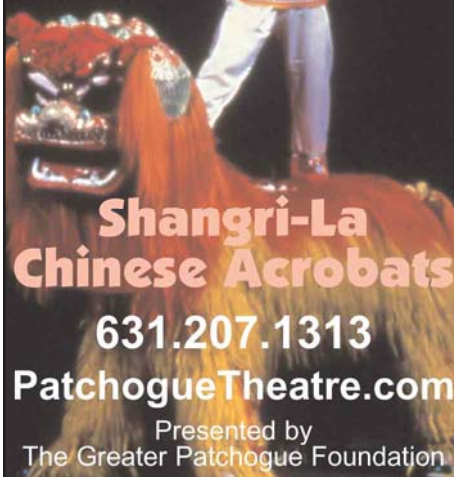
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Lighting DesignerDoug Harry
Orchestra ConductorRobert Felstein
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Assistant Technical DirectorSpencer Padilla
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