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THE CHOICE IS CLEAR
Our Company was set up in Waterford during January 1991 by a group of young people with an interest in modern musicals.

The objectives of the group would be to cultivate the arts of music, drama and dance through the presentation of modern musical presentations, and to encourage public appreciation of the arts.

In June '91 work began on our first production "Grease" which was presented at the Theatre Royal last October and was a huge success breaking box office records.

Since then Stage Fright have set up office at 15 Broad Street, and in the past few months, have been busy planning the 1992/93 season. Various projects (including two full-scale productions) have been lined up for '93, which many young people will take part in and hopefully you the public will support.

This production of Chicago is dedicated to the memory of Brendan Phelan who appeared in our production of "Grease" last year and who died in July 1992.

"He will live again in freedom in the garden of the Lord"

From the Musical Les Miserable

Acknowledgements

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every success with "Chicago"

John Mullally
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Brian Flynn
Director

Brian is the founder of Stage Fright. He started dancing at the age of 4 with the Betty Bible dancers. As a child he was introduced to the stage through his family's involvement in music & theatre. On the musical stage, Brian has appeared in productions of 'My fair lady', 'Guys n Dolls', 'George M', Henry in 'South Pacific', Enoch Snow in 'Carousel', Marcellies in 'Music Man', Riff in 'West side story' and Finch in 'How to succeed in Business without really trying'. In variety Brian has competed with various groups in John Player Tops and in April this year his production "All for the best" brought Tramore Variety players to the National Quarter Finals of the competition. In pantomime Brian has appeared in Robinson Crusoe, Cinderella, Robin Hood and he also appeared in Two productions of 'The Good old days'. Brian studied music with Bro. Benedict Hanlon and at WRTC and has sung in various choirs as well as playing percussion for various productions. He has worked as musical direction for various plays by Waterford Youth Drama and he produced Stage Frights first Show"Grease" last year.

Richard Dowling
Stage Manager

Richard has been involved in theatre for the last 10 years. He is vastly experienced in stage work and has worked on a wide diversity of productions. These include: My Fair lady, Music man, Guys n' Dolls, Oliver, How to succeed in Business, West side story, Bells are Ringing, Fiddler on the Roof, all with De La Salle College M.S. With Edmund Rice Choral Society Richard has worked on 'Annie get your gun' and the 'Vienesse Concerts'. With D.L.S. Musical Society he has worked on such shows as 'Corosel', 'Pajama Game, South Pacific, George M., Desert Song. Richard works as a reporter with Waterford News & Star.

Aiden McGrath
Lighting

Aiden became involved in theatre at a very young age, through his father's involvement with the Theatre Royal. Since then Aiden has worked in theatres all over the country through both back-stage work and lighting. In May 1985 Aiden designed the lighting for Red Kettle Theatre Co's very first production "The Gods are Angry Miss Kerr" by local playwright Jim Nolan. Over the years he has designed for many variety shows, musicals and plays and on numerous occasions reached the finals of John Player Tops which was televised live by RTE. For three years Aiden was stage manager of the Festival of Light Opera and he also worked for one year at the National Theatre, London. Aiden has won numerous awards for his work. He designed our lighting last year and this year he co-designed our set also.

Mona Manahan
Costumes

Began making costumes with Waterford Dramatic Society in the 1960's and has been fully involved since then. Worked over a six-year period with Old Time Music Hall, and on the wardrobe for the film 'The Luck of Barry Lyndon' and for the joint RTE- Channel 4 production of 'Echoes'. She has also been involved with the Irish Theatre Company for 'Thieve's Carnival', and with Edmund Rice Musical Society's production of 'Showboat', 'The Arcadians', 'Guys n' Dolls', and 'My Fair Lady'. Worked with Red Kettle for the first time on Equus, and retained the connection with 'What the Butler Saw' in Waterford and on tour in Ireland, and also on the production of 'Hello and Goodbye' and 'Beat'. Worked on the Garter Lane productions of 'The Fantasticks' and 'Macbeth', and more lately on 'Annie get your Gun' with the Edmund Rice Musical Society in the Theatre Royal.

Michelle Condon
Choreography

Michelle has been dancing from a very young age. To date she has choreographed 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicoloured Dreamcoat', 'Smike', 'The Pyjama Game', 'The Boyfriend', 'One Season's King' for Waterford Dramatic Society, Tramore Variety Players Tops 1992. In 1991 attended an International Dance Course with teachers from The Vaganova Ballet Academy Lenningrad, The London Contemporary Dance School and the Amsterdam Folk Dance Co. Michelle teaches dancing locally.

Pamela Flynn
Musical Director

Pamela started playing piano at the age of 6 and since then has studied music at Mercy Convent, Waterford, WRTC, and Trinity College Dublin. She has previously worked with Cathedral Choir, DeLa Salle Musical Society and the Edmund Rice Choral group. Pamela is at present teaching music at De La Salle College, Waterford.
Best Wishes to Stage Fright on their production of "Chicago." We wish them continued success.
Synopsis of Story & Musical No's.

Act I

As our jazz band plays a brief OVERTURE, we learn that Roxie Hart (Karen White) has just killed her erstwhile lover Fred Casely (Graham Doyle) while fellow murdress Velma Kelly (Greta Rochford) sings a sultry ALL THAT JAZZ.

Roxie bemoans husband Amos Hart's stupidity (FUNNY HONEY) when he (Raymond Collins) admits to police that the dead Casely was not a burglar but an acquaintance. Thrown into jail with assorted "innocents", (THE CELL BLOCK TANGO) and an over-friendly matron (Deborah Cunningham and WHEN YOU'RE GOOD TO MAMA), Roxie meets shyster lawyer Billy Flynn (Keith Dunphy and ALL I CARE ABOUT) who manipulates the local sob sister reporter Mary Sunshine (P. Green and A LITTLE BIT OF GOOD) as well as the rest of the press (WE BOTH REACHED FOR THE GUN).

Glowing in their new found fame, both Roxie (ROXIE) and Velma (I CAN'T DO IT ALONE) find themselves thwarted by a new murder that captures the public's attention.

(MY OWN BEST FRIEND) Quick on her feet, Roxie makes a dramatic announcement that she's pregnant and Act One End.

Act II

As act II begins, Velma sings about her fellow murdress (I KNOW A GIRL) as Roxie comforts her "baby" (ME AND MY BABY). She leaves the always-ignored Amos ignorant of what is going on (MR. CELLOPHANE).

Velma decides to try some of Roxie's showmanship (WHEN VELMA TAKES THE STAND). But Billy reminds everyone that the legal system is just another variation of show business (RAZZLE DAZZLE). Meanwhile matron and Velma reminisce about the good old days (CLASS).

When yet another sensational murder pushes Roxie and Velma off the front pages, the deadly duo join forces for a combined act (NOWADAYS) that proves that lust and murder are just part of the all - American success story.
Orchestra

Conductor / Piano.......................................................... Pamela Flynn
Keyboards................................................................. Coleen Coyne
Trumpets................................................................. David Quinlan
Trombones.............................................................. Niall O'Connor
Tuba ................................................................. Julie Quinlan
Violin ............................................................... Fergal Kavanagh
Double Bass.......................................................... Paddy Kavanagh
Reeds .............................................................. Stephen Mackey
Percussions............................................................ Karl Casey

Off Stage Vocals

Edel Flynn, Audery Glendon, Christy Brophy, Andrea O'Mahoney, Jennifer Flynn, Brian Collins

Cast in order of appearance

M.C. ................................................................. Bill Stafford
Velma Kelly ........................................................ Greta Rochford
Roxie Hart ........................................................... Karen White
Fred Casely ....................................................... Graham Doyle
Cpt. Fogarty ........................................................ Denny Corcoran
Amos Hart ............................................................ Raymond Collins
Liz ................................................................. Sinead O'Donoghue
Annie .............................................................. Majella Maher
June ................................................................. Eileen Stafford
Hunyak ............................................................. Olga Purcell
Mona ............................................................. Margaret Browne
Matron Mama Morton .......................................... Deborah Cunningham
Billy Flynn .......................................................... Keith Dunphy
Mary Sunshine .................................................. P. Greene
Go-to-Hell Kitty.................................................. Christine Tubbitt
Harry .............................................................. Mick Power
Aaron ............................................................. Paul Browne
The Judge ........................................................... Noel O'Neil
Count Clerk ....................................................... Paul Kavanagh
Martin Harrison ................................................ Jamie Beamish

Ensemble

Crew List

Director ......................................................................................... Brian Flynn
Production Manager .............................................................. Liam Rellis
Choreography ............................................................................. Michelle Condon
Musical Director .......................................................................... Pamela Flynn
Assistant M.D. ................................................................................ Colleen Coyne
Lighting Design ............................................................................ Aidan McGrath
Operated By .................................................................................. Aidan McGrath,
......................................................................................................... Billy Sharpe
Sound By ......................................................................................... Mark Daly
Sound Liaison ............................................................................... Jackie O'Keeffe
Costumes ....................................................................................... Mona Manahan
Wardrobe Mistress ....................................................................... Belinda Casey
Dressers ......................................................................................... Chrissie Sheehan
......................................................................................................... Mary Flynn, Valerie Power
......................................................................................................... Nuala Twomey
......................................................................................................... Richard Dowling
Stage Manager ............................................................................... Jane Sinnott
Assistant Stage Manager .................................................................. Jane Sinnott
Stage Director ............................................................................... Liam Maher
Stage Hands ..................................................................................... Liam Maher
......................................................................................................... Susan Murphy, Elaine
......................................................................................................... Lonergan, Clare Scott, Ruth
......................................................................................................... Coughlan, Carmel Murphy
......................................................................................................... Helen Coughlan
......................................................................................................... Ritchie Maher, Pat Grimes
......................................................................................................... Mary Boland, Jim Meagher
......................................................................................................... Dave Curran,
......................................................................................................... Staff of Dave's Diner
Stage Crew ..................................................................................... Noel Kane
......................................................................................................... Brian Flynn, Aidan McGrath
......................................................................................................... Noel Kane, Paul Greene
......................................................................................................... Keith Dunphy, John Kelly
......................................................................................................... Harry Hannon
......................................................................................................... Harry
......................................................................................................... Dave Curran
......................................................................................................... Jayne Fraher, Valerie
......................................................................................................... Furlong
......................................................................................................... Liam Murphy
......................................................................................................... Pamala Flynn
......................................................................................................... Jimmy O'Dea
......................................................................................................... Pat Grimes, Kevin Cadogan
......................................................................................................... Elaine Whelan
......................................................................................................... Keith Fraher, Mark Knox
......................................................................................................... Ann Kelly
......................................................................................................... Derval Hayes, Kitty Power
......................................................................................................... Aisling Kelly, Rosemary
......................................................................................................... Power, Camilla Casey,
......................................................................................................... Mary Casey
......................................................................................................... Adrian "Harpo" Cullinane
Transport ......................................................................................... Liam Rellis
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CHICAGO - 17 YEARS LATER: A LEGEND GROWS BRIGHTER

New York musical theatre in the 1970's - a time of rising costs, falling creativity, critical apathy and audience indifference.

Or was it?

After all, the Seventies did mark the popular emergence of Stephen Sondheim with five dazzling shows, the rise of Michael Bennett and "A Chorus Line" and a succession of surprises - expected and otherwise (Andrew Lloyd Webber).

And Bob Fosse was active as well, with "Pippin" (1972), "Chicago" (1975) and "Dancin" (1978) the latter of which prompted Alan Jay Lerner to send Fosse an opening night telegram congratulating him on eliminating the book writer altogether!

Following the successful yet troublesome "Pippin," Fosse was ready to tackle a project that - if it didn't exactly eliminate the musical comedy book - certainly minimalized it. As his subsequent 1979 film a clef "All that Jazz" amply illustrated: Bob Fosse saw life as one big vaudeville extravaganza. And that certainly sums up "Chicago".

In his landmark study of Broadway "The Season" William Goldman wrote:
"Some shows start out big and open big: The Odd Couple. Some shows start out big and open small: Kean. Some start out big and just don't open: Breakfast At Tiffany's."

For a number of reasons, "Chicago" started out big enough to practically invent (and rewrite) its own Legend. And yes, "Chicago" was/is/always-will-be-a Legend, the kind of show that brings together a sure-fire subject and whirlwind talent and almost defies you not to like it.

Yet, on June 1, 1975 when "Chicago" opened at New York's Forty-Sixth Street Theatre, the critical response was decidedly mixed. For many observers, "Chicago" was not the show they anticipated.

Though based on a well-known 1926 stage play by Maurine Watkins (who used the 1924 Chicago murder of Beaulah Annan, which Watkins covered as a cub reporter, as the source material), the story was best-known from its second film version, a fast-moving 75-minute 1942 farce directed by William Wellman with a cast headed by Ginger Rogers as Roxie, Adolph Menjou as her fast-talking lawyer, George Montgomery as her love interest, and a supporting cast of genuine scene stealers - Phil Silvers, Spring Byington, Nigel Bruce, Lynn Overman, Iris Adrian. The over-all effect was not unlike another famous farce set in Chicago, "The Front Page" where newspapermen and criminals vied for equal attention.

After long negotiations, the rights to "Chicago" were awarded to producer Robert Fryer, director-choreographer Fosse, and Fosse's estranged wife, legendary four-time Tony Award winner Gwen Verdon - who had yearned to play Roxie since seeing the Rogers film while a teenager.

However, in the ensuing years, many things changed - including Fosse's vision of the world and show business. Between the time the rights were awarded in 1969 and the show was produced in 1975, Fosse had directed the film version of his and Verdon's stage success "Sweet Charity" undertook his second film directing assignment with "Cabaret" and directed and choreographed "Pippin" on the stage. Going from being a show business outcast (following the failure of the "Sweet Charity" film) to being everyone's A-1 Director (winning the Oscar, Tony and Emmy in 1973, the only director to ever win all three awards in the same year) drove Fosse toward an ever-accelerating lifestyle of substance abuse and personal cynicism, culminating in a near-fatal heart attack just as "Chicago" entered rehearsals in the fall of 1974.

"Chicago," with a score by composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb as well as a libretto by Ebb and Fosse, was clearly not going to be a free-wheeling, nostalgic look at the 20's. Along with Fosse's cynicism, the fine line between good and evil in American life shifted back and forth to the point where a leading cast member of "Pippin" recalls Fosse telling him that the show was really a cleverly-disguised analogy for the Manson murders. In Fosse's "Chicago," Roxie Hart is no dumb-blond innocent who accidentally murders her lover by mistake, a la Belle Poitine in Fosse's earlier 1962 show :Little Me". No, this Roxie was fed-up and bored and more than a little betrayed by her lover. The happy-go-lucky "Front Page" irony gave way to a weightier kind of satire, not unlike: Cabaret's: Brecht-Wellin influence.

Accordingly, Fosse stripped the show down to basics: that a musical was a parade of highly-creative vaudevillian turns - virtually all snaring their mockery of the American judicial system. To strengthen this concept, Fosse and Ebb added a cohort for Roxie to play off of, the equally murderous Velma Kelly, which brought Chita Rivera back to Broadway after an inexplicable ten-year absence. As loud-talking lawyer Billy Flynn, Jerry Orbach was recruited. Mary McCarthy, on a late-blooming career high following roles in "Follies" and "Anna Christie," was jail matron Momma Morton. Other important roles were filled by Barney Martin as Roxie's bemused husband, M. O'Haughey as sob sister reporter Mary Sunshine, and David Rounds as Roxie's fast-talking agent.

But if Fosse's sudden illness and an atypical narrative approach were not enough to hinder "Chicago"'s acceptance, there was one other factor - Competition. Though the 1974-75 Broadway season had produced two long-running musicals in "The Wiz" and "Shenandoah," the surprise emergence of Michael Bennett's "A Chorus Line" gave "Chicago" severe anxiety. Moreover, where "A Chorus Line" tempered its show business cynicism with compassion, Fosse's "Chicago" stayed true to its hard-as-nails conception - except for the rewrites.

During its out-of-town tryout "Chicago" underwent extensive fine-tuning, with Rounds' role being written out after it was decided his character could be combined with Orbach's. With Rounds' song "Ten Percent" went "Loopyin' De Loopin," "No," and "It," through "Loopyin' De Loopin" remains instrumentally as the major theme of the show's brief overture. (This song and "Ten Percent" can be heard on Ben Bagley's "Contemporary Broadway Revisited" album while "It," performed by Verdon and Rivera on TV, is part of the bootleg album " Forgotten Broadway").

Once past its Broadway opening, "Chicago" experienced a distinct audience let-down. With mixed reviews and fierce opposition from "A Chorus Line," ticket sales dwindled and the production could well have had an abbreviated Broadway run once it ran through its advance ticket sales. Then Fate intervened, Verdon, who had been fighting a throat infection throughout the show's tryouts, had to be hospitalized. The powers-that-be made a quick decision and enlisted no less than Liza Minnelli to step into Verdon's role on short notice. Fearful that her gesture of goodwill might be misinterpreted, Minnelli insisted on receiving no billing for her appearance outside of an announcement made to the audience prior to the curtain going up.

With the exception of making "My Own Best Friend" a solo turn, Minnelli played "Chicago" as written. Naturally, word spread like wildfire and the ensuing publicity enabled :Chicago to establish itself as a bona-fide hit. Returning to the show, Verdon remained with the production on Broadway through January 1977, when the show's investment paid off. (Verdon, Rivera and McCarty rejoined the show on tour three years later for the latter part of its Chicago run and complete West Coast engagements. An employee of the Los Angeles Music Center fondly recalls seeing Verdon and Rivera warming up at a makeshift bar before every evening performance.).

Eventually, "Chicago" ran over 900 performances on Broadway and enjoyed another 600-plus performances in London. The Australian production was also popular, with Polydor issuing a cast album. (Minnelli recorded "All That Jazz" and "My Own Best Friend" as a Columbia single.) The show has gone on to become a staple of the musical theatre repertory, with numerous stock and foreign productions. For Verdon, "Chicago" was a fitting Broadway swan song. For Rivera, it revitalized a career. For Kander and Ebb, it allowed them to produce a superb score that, if anything, sounds even better 17 years later - with songs that are satirical, atmospheric, melodic and unique. For Fosse, the production set yet another milestone in a career of achievements.

For Stage Fright it is a great pleasure to bring you the work of Bob Fosse, Fred Ebb and John Kander, and hope that we have done our little bit to enhance an already formidable legend.
Congratulations and best wishes to Stagefright on their production of Chicago

Best wishes to all at Stagefright

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