

New Plymouth Operatic Society presents

CHICAGO

THE MUSICAL





NEW PLYMOUTH OPERATIC SOCIETY

PRESENTS

THE **G.J. Gardner.** HOMES SEASON OF

CHICAGO

THE MUSICAL

TSB SHOWPLACE, 3-19 JULY 2025

Book by Fred Ebb and Bob Fosse

Music by John Kander, Lyrics by Fred Ebb

Based on the play CHICAGO

by Maurine Dallas Watkins

Script adaptation by David Thompson

PRODUCED BY

NEW PLYMOUTH OPERATIC SOCIETY

DIRECTOR: HELENA McHUGH

CHOREOGRAPHER: DREW NOBLE

MUSICAL DIRECTOR: FRASER BREMNER

VOCAL DIRECTOR: KARLA KIMI

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welcome

From the President

Kia ora Taranaki!

On behalf of New Plymouth Operatic Society (NPOS), it is my honour to welcome you to the TSB Showplace for our 2025 major production - Chicago!

Get ready to be wowed by this evergreen juggernaut of a musical that is perhaps even more relevant today than ever before, through its wit, edge & commentary. The story you are about to witness is a satirical and darkly comedic exploration of fame, criminal justice, and the corrupt world of the "roaring 20s" in Chicago. Following an incredibly popular Australian professional tour last year; it is a privilege for NPOS to present this Razzle Dazzle musical in what is the 50th anniversary year of the original Broadway production debut in 1975.

NPOS at 73 years young is so incredibly fortunate to have an amazing community that fully supports quality musical theatre in our region.

The first of several thank yous is to you, our audience. Your presence & support makes this all possible. We wouldn't be able to stage musicals of this quality & scale for Taranaki without you.

Thank you to all of our sponsors, new and returning alike, providing generous support to allow our 150+ volunteers to bring an incredible night's entertainment to Taranaki audiences. In particular G.J. Gardner Homes Taranaki, our season sponsor for a 4th consecutive year. Thank you. And as well as sponsorship, the continued support from our funding partners New Plymouth District Council & TOI Foundation is also very much appreciated.

Finally, a personal thank you to our volunteers. Our incredible cast and crew, and their amazing families, who each give hundreds of hours to create this amazing spectacle you are about to witness.

Live theatre is a powerful force. One that invites us to reflect, to connect & be inspired by. We hope Chicago leaves you tapping your toes and thinking long after the curtain falls.

Enjoy the show!

Shaun Murphy, President,
New Plymouth Operatic Society

From our Season Sponsor

G.J. Gardner Homes Taranaki is proud to once again be the season sponsor for New Plymouth Operatic Society, and their production of Chicago.

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Being locally owned and operated in Taranaki since its inception in 2006, GJ's core value has always been to give back, and it's at the heart of everything we do.

That's why we're proud to support Chicago, brought to life by the incredible talent of New Plymouth Operatic Society.

Join us in celebrating local arts, local people and the magic that happens when creativity meets community.

On behalf of Ben, Rod and the team at G.J. Gardner Homes Taranaki, please now sit back and enjoy New Plymouth Operatic Society's performance of Chicago, The Musical.

Rod Roebuck & Ben Hawke
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G.J. Gardner. HOMES

Ladies and Gentlemen,
you are about to see a
story of greed, corruption,
violence, exploitation,
adultery and treachery...
all the things we hold near
and dear to our hearts...

Chicago, Illinois. The 1920s are roaring with hot jazz and cold-blooded killers. As the Overture ends, we're introduced to Velma Kelly – a vaudevillian who shot her husband and the other half of her sister act when she caught them in bed together. Velma invites us to sample All That Jazz while showing us the story of chorus girl Roxie Hart's cold-blooded murder of nightclub regular, Fred Casely. Roxie convinces her husband Amos that the victim was a burglar, and he cheerfully takes the rap. Roxie expresses her appreciation in song (*Funny Honey*) until the police reveal to Amos that Roxie knew the burglar, shall we say, intimately, and Amos decides to let her swing for herself.

Roxie's first taste of the criminal justice system is the women's block in Cook County Jail, inhabited by Velma and other merry murderesses (*Cell Block Tango*).



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RAZZLE
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about

The women's jail is presided over by Matron "Mama" Morton whose system of mutual aid (*When You're Good To Mama*) perfectly suits her clientele. She has helped Velma become the media's top murderer-of-the-week and is acting as booking agent for Velma's big return to vaudeville (after her acquittal, naturally). Velma is not happy to see Roxie, who is stealing not only her limelight but her lawyer, Billy Flynn. Eagerly awaited by his all girl clientele, Billy sings his anthem, complete with a chorus of fandancers to prove that (quote) "*All I Care About is Love*." Billy takes Roxie's case and re-arranges her story for consumption by sympathetic tabloid columnist Mary Sunshine, who always tries to find *A Little Bit of Good* in everyone.

Roxie's press conference turns into a ventriloquist act with Billy dictating a new version of the truth (*We Both Reached For the Gun*) while Roxie mouths the words. Roxie becomes the new toast of Chicago, and Velma's headlines, trial date and career are left in the dust. Velma tries to talk Roxie into recreating the sister act (*I Can't Do It Alone*) but Roxie turns her down, only to find her own headlines replaced by the latest sordid crime of passion. Separately, Roxie and Velma realize there's no one they can count on but themselves (*My Own Best Friend*), and the ever-resourceful Roxie decides that being pregnant in prison would put her back on the front page.

Back after the Entr'acte, Velma cannot believe Roxie's continual run of luck (*I Know a Girl*) despite Roxie's obvious falsehoods (*Me and My Baby*). A little shy on the arithmetic, Amos proudly claims paternity and still nobody notices him (*Mr. Cellophane*).

Velma desperately tries to show Billy all the trick's she's got planned for her trial (*When Velma Takes the Stand*). Billy's forte may be showmanship (*Razzle Dazzle*), but when he passes all Velma's ideas on to Roxie, down to the rhinestone shoe buckles, Mama and Velma lament the demise of Class.

As promised, Billy gets Roxie her acquittal but, just as the verdict is given, some even more sensational crime pulls the pack of press bloodhounds away, and Roxie's fleeting celebrity is over.

Left in the dust, she pulls herself up and extols the joys of life Nowadays. She teams up with Velma in that sister act (*Nowadays*), in which they dance their little hearts out (*Hot Honey Rag*) 'til they are joined by the entire company for the grand Finale.



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Andrea Michelle

as VELMA KELLY

Andrea Michelle brings a wealth of experience and passion to the NPOS stage, and we're thrilled to have her starring as Velma Kelly in *Chicago*. Her career as a performer has taken her around the globe—from dancing and creating family entertainment for Nickelodeon, to managing and directing full-scale productions on cruise ships. Whether performing or producing, the joy of entertaining has always been at the heart of Andrea's work.

Andrea's training began with a strong foundation in dance and musical theatre. She holds a BFA in Musical Theatre and trained at the prestigious American Musical and Dramatic Academy in both New York and Los Angeles. Her versatility as a dancer and performer was honed through years of studying a wide range of styles, from ballet and jazz to contemporary and tap.

Her stage credits reflect that dynamic range. She's taken on iconic roles such as Rizzo in *Grease*, Rosie in *Bye Bye Birdie*, and Shelly in *Hairspray*. Since settling in Taranaki, Andrea has continued to share her talents with the local theatre scene, including performing in the ensemble of *We Will Rock You*.

Now, she steps into the heels of the fierce and fabulous Velma Kelly—a role that demands charisma, precision, and serious attitude. Andrea brings all that and more, embodying one of musical theatre's most unforgettable characters with style and power.

A true professional with a lifelong love for the stage, Andrea's return is a gift to audiences and castmates alike. We're so excited to see her shine in this bold and brilliant role!

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Becky McEwan

as **ROXIE HART**

Becky McEwan's love for performance began at Alison's School of Dance in New Plymouth, where she trained for as long as she could before leaving home at 17. She continued her journey as a student of Warren Bates at Stage Centre, later honing her craft at South Seas Film & Television School in Auckland.

Becky has appeared in previous local productions such as *The Producers* for NPOS, and the Hospice Fundraising show *The Wedding Singer* both in 2012. She also spent time teaching performing arts to young people, and passing on her passion for the stage.

Her career took her to television, where she landed the role of Tess Hutchinson on *Shortland Street* and Jess in *Power Rangers*. After returning to Taranaki, Becky delighted audiences in Cue Theatre's production of *Cosi* last year, and has also been involved in various creative projects both on and off stage, often mentoring young performers and contributing to the local arts scene.

Now, she's thrilled to step into her dream role as Roxie, a part she's especially excited to play in her hometown!

Outside of acting, Becky is a proud mum to her adorable little girl, and alongside her husband, Jay, they run the production house *Goldie & Co*. Becky is grateful for the support of her family and community as she continues to pursue her passion for the arts.

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MATRON MAMA MORTON

JULIE TRIGGER

Julie brings a wealth of experience to the stage, having performed with numerous theatre societies since childhood. She's appeared in many NPOS productions, including *Les Misérables*, *Wicked*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Blood Brothers*. Known for her strong stage presence, Julie has taken on iconic roles such as Geraldine in Rep's *Vicar of Dibley* and Julie in *Bad Girls* with Harlequin Theatre in Auckland.

A talented performer and seasoned director, Julie continues to inspire with her versatility and passion for theatre. She's thrilled to step into the bold and unforgettable role of Matron Mama Morton.

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MARY SUNSHINE PHILIPPA DRINKWATER

Philippa has a long and impressive history with the society, beginning with *The Sound of Music* in 1985. She has since appeared in numerous productions, later serving as Vocal Director for *Les Misérables* in 2018 and Musical Director for *Seussical Jr.* in 2023.

Philippa has directed several productions for other societies and teaches vocal performance to aspiring youth across the region. Her exceptional talent led her to perform with the London Philharmonic Choir for over 12 years.

We're thrilled to have Philippa as Convenor for our annual KH Spear Musical Theatre competition.

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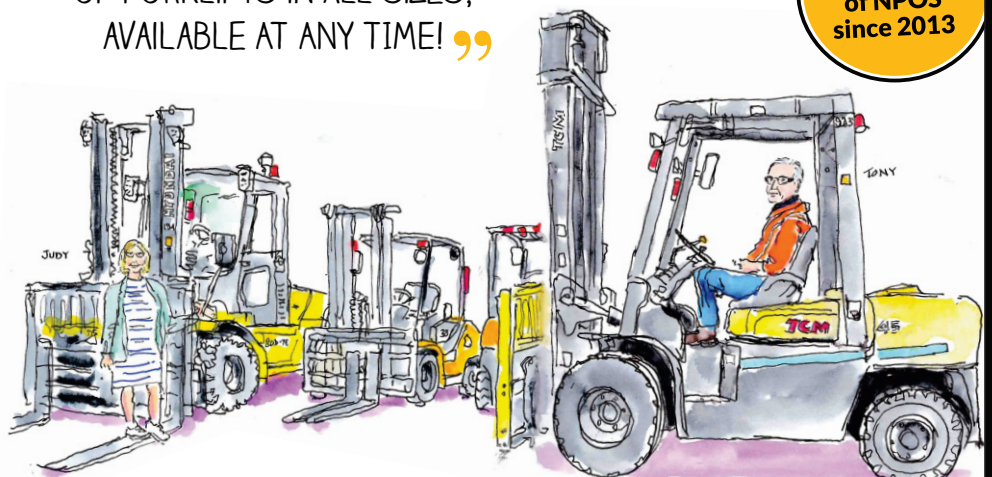
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BILLY FLYNN

CALLUM STUART

Callum Stuart made his debut with the society in *We Will Rock You*, followed by his role as Tommy DeVito in *Jersey Boys* last year. Playing Billy Flynn in *Chicago* is a dream role come true for Callum.

By day, he works as an Engineering Geologist. Outside of work, Callum enjoys an active lifestyle, participating in a range of sports and leisure activities with his partner, Aaliyah, who is also part of the cast.

He's excited to take on this new role and share his passion for performance with his community.

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AMOS HART

SIMON COLES

Simon Coles has a rich background in theatre and performance. A former student of Warren Bates at Stage Centre, Simon spent many years studying singing and performing in numerous productions.

His journey took him overseas to Montreal, where he continued to develop his craft. Now, Simon has returned to Taranaki, and is making his long-awaited return to the NPOS stage for the first time in 15 years.

He is excited to reconnect with the local theatre community and share his experience and passion for performance with audiences once again.

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the music

OVERTURE | Orchestra

AND ALL THAT JAZZ | Velma & Ensemble

FUNNY HONEY | Roxie

CELL BLOCK TANGO | Merry Murderesses

WHEN YOU'RE GOOD TO MAMA | Matron

ALL I CARE ABOUT IS LOVE | Billy & Girls

A LITTLE BIT OF GOOD | Mary Sunshine

WE BOTH REACHED FOR THE GUN

Billy, Roxie, Mary Sunshine & Ensemble

ROXIE | Roxie & Boys

I CAN'T DO IT ALONE | Velma

MY OWN BEST FRIEND | Roxie & Velma

Act Two

ENTR'ACTE | Orchestra

I KNOW A GIRL | Velma

ME AND MY BABY | Roxie & Boys

MISTER CELLOPHANE | Amos

WHEN VELMA TAKES THE STAND

Velma & Boys

RAZZLE DAZZLE | Billy & Ensemble

CLASS | Velma & Matron Mama Morton

NOWADAYS | Roxie & Velma

HOT HONEY RAG | Roxie & Velma

FINALE | Roxie, Velma & Ensemble





KIRSTY SHIELDS
JUNE + UNDERSTUDY VELMA

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Chicago marks Kirsty's debut with NPOS, though she's no stranger to the stage, having performed in school and university productions including *Cabaret*, *Blood Brothers*, and *Anything Goes*. Recently relocated from Tauranga, Kirsty is enjoying getting to know the Taranaki community and has already jumped into local life - most recently by competing in a boxing event through her gym! With a lifelong love of musical theatre, she's thrilled to be part of this vibrant production. We're excited to welcome Kirsty to both the stage and the region - Taranaki is lucky to have her!



KORENA CUNNINGHAM
LIZ

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Korena brings a wealth of musical theatre experience to the NPOS stage, having performed with various theatre societies across New Zealand and in London. By day, she works as a Business Transformation Manager at the NPDC, and by night, she's mum to two delightful preschoolers. *Chicago* has long been a dream show for Korena, and she's thrilled to bring that dream to life as one of our fierce and fabulous Murderesses. Her passion, experience, and dedication shine through, and we're delighted to have her as part of this year's cast. Welcome back to the stage Korena!



HANA KLENNER
MERRY MURDERESS SWING

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Chicago marks Hana Klenner's third production with NPOS, following her performances in *Wicked* and *Mary Poppins*. A passionate performer, Hana has studied ballet from a young age and has a deep love for both dancing and singing. Outside the theatre, she works in the marketing team at NPDC. Hana spent a year living in France as an exchange student and is fluent in French. She is thrilled to be part of this year's cast, joining the fierce and fabulous lineup of Murderesses. Hana is excited to bring energy and attitude to the stage in this bold and iconic production.





AALIYAH READE
ANNIE + UNDERSTUDY ROXIE

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Aaliyah's passion for performance began early, training in various dance styles and vocal performance before becoming a dance tutor. A former student of the New Plymouth Stage Centre, she moved to the Waikato to complete her teaching degree and now teaches at Mangorei School. This marks Aaliyah's fifth production with NPOS, following earlier appearances with Theatre Whakatane. She brings energy and enthusiasm to every role and is thrilled to portray one of the Murderesses in this production, as well as understudy the role of Roxie. Aaliyah is excited to be part of this dynamic cast and share the stage again.



TYLA HADLAND
MONA

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Tyla returns to the NPOS stage, stepping into the spotlight as Murderess Mona. She has previously appeared as a dancer in two NPOS productions and brings a strong performance background to the role. Tyla is a full-time student at Waikato University, where she is pursuing a double major in Theatre & Dance alongside her Screen and Media Studies. With extensive dance experience, including performing at Dreamworld Australia as part of Dance Project, Tyla is excited to blend her passions on stage once again. She's thrilled to be part of this dynamic production.



HANNAH BETHALL
HUNYAK

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Hannah Bethall made her stage debut in *The Wedding Singer* for Taranaki Hospice and is delighted to return to the stage after a ten-year hiatus. Now working as a General Practitioner in New Plymouth, Hannah balances her medical career with a love for hiking, rock climbing, board games, and time with her husband and daughter. With a rich background in dance, she trained in ballet, contemporary, tap, and jazz to scholarship level, and brings strong performance experience to this production. Hannah is thrilled to be back under the lights and part of the talented cast, reigniting her passion for theatre and performance.









CHRIS MURRAY
UNDERSTUDY BILLY FLYNN

Chris Murray has grown up treading the boards with New Plymouth Operatic Society, and we're thrilled to welcome him back as part of the *Chicago* ensemble and understudy to Billy Flynn.

A devoted husband and proud dad to two-year-old Thomas, Christopher brings his personal mantra - striving to be better in every aspect of life - into everything he does.

A talented performer with a strong sense of musicality, he has also studied cello and piano. An avid sportsman and long time NPOS member, his passion and dedication shine both on and off stage. We're so pleased to have him back where he belongs!

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TAYLOR SALTON
UNDERSTUDY AMOS HART

Taylor made his debut in professional theatre with Circa Theatre's *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* in 2015, and took on his biggest role to date as Angel in *Rent* for Otaki Players in 2016. Since graduating with a Bachelor of Performing Arts in Wellington in 2018, Taylor has continued to grow as a performer, both on stage and as a singer/songwriter, with many of his original songs available across streaming platforms.

He joined NPOS for *We Will Rock You* and also appeared in *Jersey Boys* last year showcasing his dynamic talent and passion for musical theatre. We're thrilled to welcome him back to the NPOS stage this year and can't wait to see what he brings to this production.

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ZANE COLEMAN
FRED CASELY

Zane is no stranger to the spotlight, having first joined us on stage in *Hairspray* in 2013. With a natural stage presence and infectious energy, we're thrilled to welcome him back as Fred Casely and a valued member of our ensemble.

Offstage, Zane is just as dynamic - he owns and operates a successful roofing company in New Plymouth and is a passionate sports enthusiast. Whether he's on the field or on the roof, Zane brings dedication, drive, and a great sense of humour to everything he does. His return to the theatre brings an exciting energy to our cast, and we're delighted to have him back in action for this production.

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ADRIANA THOMAS

Adriana is thrilled to return to the New Plymouth Operatic Society stage, having previously appeared in *Miss Saigon*, *Mamma Mia!*, and *The Sound of Music*.

By day, Adriana is a dedicated primary school teacher and proud mum to Tamawaru and Amara. Outside the classroom and the theatre, she finds joy in spending time with her whānau and riding horses across the farm - connecting with nature is truly her happy place. Before pursuing a career in education, Adriana served in the New Zealand Army, bringing discipline and heart to all she does. She's excited to be back performing and is grateful to share the magic of *Chicago* with this talented cast and the community.

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BRYLEE COPESTAKE

Brylee began her dance journey at just three years old and hasn't stopped moving since. Trained in tap, contemporary, ballet, and jazz, she has developed into a versatile and passionate performer.

Brylee now shares her love for dance with the next generation as a teacher at Thespa, where she inspires young dancers with her skill, dedication, and enthusiasm. Her strong foundation in dance brings grace and precision to every performance, and whether on stage or in the studio, Brylee brings creativity and heart to all she does.

We're delighted to have her as part of the cast of *Chicago*.

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CAMERON MONKLEY

Cameron Monkley is stepping into the spotlight for his first NPOS production, and we're thrilled to have him in the *Chicago* ensemble!

By day, Cameron works in road maintenance—but don't let the high-vis fool you. A talented ballroom and Latin American dancer, he recently turned heads collecting a tux and tails from the dry cleaner in full work gear!

With a love for dance and a great sense of humour, Cameron brings charm, rhythm, and enthusiasm to the stage. We're excited to welcome him to the NPOS family and can't wait for you to see him in action.

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FEDE IRIARTES

By day, Fede works as a lifeguard and dance tutor - by night, he's lighting up the stage as part of our *Chicago* ensemble! This is Fede's first NPOS production, and we're thrilled to welcome him to the family.

With a passion for Salsa, Pro Bachata, and Folklore dancing, he brings rhythm, energy, and enthusiasm to every performance.

Fede loves meeting new people and is known among the cast for his warm and friendly nature. He's excited to be part of such a vibrant show and looks forward to sharing the stage with this incredible team.

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GREER ANDERSON

Greer has nurtured a love of performing since her earliest days in dance classes. Her passion for the stage has grown over the years, extending into choreography and theatrical production. She choreographed *Mamma Mia* for Hawera Repertory and earlier this year, the NPOS production of *Wendy Jr.* Greer first graced our stage in *We Will Rock You* and has been a vibrant part of our theatre family ever since. Outside of the spotlight, Greer keeps busy with a range of creative pursuits, from gardening to crafting. A Legal Executive by profession, she also devotes time to studying ballroom and Latin dance. Her energy, creativity, and dedication brings joy to every project she undertakes, both on and off the stage.

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KATE DAWKINS

Kate Dawkins is excited to return to the NPOS stage, having previously appeared in *Mary Poppins*, *Wicked*, and most recently as Francine in *Jersey Boys*.

With a strong background in ballet, tap, modern, contemporary, and musical theatre dance, Kate brings energy and passion to every role. Offstage, she enjoys baking, skincare, fashion, crafting, and spending time in nature.

Chicago has long been on Kate's performance bucket list, so much so that she even named her cat 'Amos'! She's thrilled to finally bring this dream to life and is grateful to be part of such a fantastic cast and production.

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NIQUAY LANGTON

Niquay Langton is thrilled to be joining the cast in the ensemble, marking his return to the stage after 25 years. He first appeared in *The Buddy Holly Story* back in 2000 and is excited to be treading the boards once again.

Niquay trained in a variety of dance styles before attending the Excel School of Performing Arts, where his passion for performance truly took flight. When he's not on stage, he's often found in the kitchen - he's a keen baker with hours of cooking videos to his name!

The team is delighted to welcome him back, and Niquay is equally excited to be part of such a talented group. Here's to a joyful return to the spotlight!

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RIA CUMMINGS

Ria is delighted to be joining NPOS for the first time in this exciting production of *Chicago*.

No stranger to the stage, Ria has previously performed with other musical theatre companies, with credits including *Wicked*, *Into the Woods*, and *Cats*. She holds a Diploma in Performing Arts from Otago, where she developed a strong foundation in acting, singing, and dance. Ria is particularly excited to dive into the iconic Fosse style that *Chicago* is renowned for and is loving the chance to work alongside such a talented and passionate cast. She's grateful for the opportunity and is looking forward to sharing this incredible show with audiences.

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SYDNEY BECKER

Sydney is thrilled to be making her New Plymouth Operatic Society debut in *Chicago*, and hopes it's just the beginning of many more performances to come. A passionate performer and filmmaker, Sydney brings a strong background in dance to the stage, having competed in the PACANZ Young Performer of the Year Awards and trained at the prestigious Backhaus Summer Dance Camp in the United States. She is especially excited to explore the stylised, intricate world of Fosse choreography that *Chicago* celebrates.

Sydney is delighted to be part of such a talented ensemble and thanks the creative team for the opportunity to bring this iconic show to life.

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Upright Bass: Ken Kimi
Drums / Percussion: Jared Hill

BACKING VOCALISTS

Amy Bellomo
Briana Dolan
Chanelle Robertson
Debbie Bygate
Kellan Bartlett
Stephanie Lewin
and
Jenny Bennett [understudy to Mama Morton]



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Helena McHugh Director

Helena McHugh is a graduate of the National Academy of Singing and Dramatic Art (NASDA) in Otautahi, Christchurch, where she completed a Bachelor of Performing Arts majoring in Music Theatre. Since graduating, Helena has had the privilege of working within Musical Theatre in Aotearoa, and in 2021 opened THESPA: The Space of Performing Arts, with her husband Cameron. Helena's creative credits include: Director/Choreographer: *Curtains*, MTI's *All Together Now!* (4th Wall Theatre); Director: *The Last Five Years* (4th Wall Theatre), Choreographer: *Seussical The Musical* (NPOS); *Urinetown*, *Little Shop of Horrors* (4th Wall Theatre), *Coca Festival*, *Christchurch Winter Festival* (Two Productions); and *Coca Cola Christmas In The Park* (JK Performing Arts).

As well as working as a creative and performer, Helena also spent time training with tutors from *Broadway Dance Centre*, *Steps on Broadway*, and *Millennium Los Angeles*. *Chicago* is Helena's dream show, and she would like to thank her husband Cam, mum Christina, and children Roman and Vienna, for supporting her through this incredible experience. She couldn't have done it without you.



Drew Noble Choreographer

Drew is a freelance actor and choreographer who holds a Bachelor of Performing Arts (Musical Theatre) from The National Academy of Singing and Dramatic Art (NASDA).

His performance credits include *Kinky Boots* (G&T Productions, Showbiz Christchurch), *Jersey Boys* (G&T Productions), *Shrek The Musical* (Showcase Entertainment Group), *And The Winner Is...* and *Launch To The Future* (Echelon Productions), *Curtains* and *Urinetown* (4th Wall Theatre). Whilst at NASDA he performed in shows including *Curtains*, *42nd Street*, *Earthquakes in London*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Wild Cabbage*.

As a choreographer, Drew has worked throughout the country for numerous companies and institutions including NASDA, JK Performing Arts, THESPA and 4th Wall Theatre. In 2018, Drew was the recipient of the New Zealand Dance Awards Musical Theatre Scholarship for which he earned a trip to train at Broadway Dance Center in New York City.

He is thrilled to be a part of bringing *Chicago* to life for New Plymouth audiences.



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Fraser Bremner Musical Director

Fraser is a musician, composer, conductor and teacher. He has performed with groups such as NZ Symphony Orchestra, NZ Army Band, Band of the Royal NZ Air Force, Orchestra Wellington, Sir Dave Dobbyn and The Veronica's.

Fraser's brass compositions have been performed throughout New Zealand, and have been recorded by Wellington Brass, the National Youth Brass Band of New Zealand, and the National Secondary Schools Brass Band to name a few.

In August 2024 his composition 'Black Tears' (written about the 2010 Pike River Mine disaster) gained international attention, and was performed by the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, with soloist James Fountain (Principal Trumpet, London Symphony Orchestra).

Chicago is Fraser's fourth production for NPOS. He played drums for *Hairspray* (2013) and *We Will Rock You* (2023), was appointed as Assistant Musical Director for *Jersey Boys* (2024), and is excited to take the reins with his first credit as Musical Director/Conductor for *Chicago*.



Karla Kimi Vocal Director

Karla holds a Diploma in Performing Arts, specializing in sound and vocals. With almost 30 years of professional singing experience, performing as a lead and backing vocalist for bands, artists, and corporate events around NZ, Karla thrives on shaping performances that are not only powerful and dynamic, but built on a foundation of vocal health and expressive storytelling.

As a Vocal Director, Karla brings a strong focus to vocal technique, vocal health, and artist wellbeing - ensuring performers not only sound incredible, but sustain their voices for the long haul. She held this role previously for NPOS's *We Will Rock You*, and as Director, Vocal Coach and Sound Designer for our *Back to the 80's* cabaret show. She has graced the stage at *Christmas at the Bowl*, and other NPOS cabaret shows as a performer and creator of technical sound elements of the productions.

Karla has loved bringing the iconic vocal stylings of *Chicago* to life. Having her husband Ken also involved as the bassist for *Chicago*, has made it a truly special experience both professionally and personally.

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the design

This production of Chicago, is unique to New Plymouth Operatic Society.

As this has not been a Consortium produced show with a touring set and costumes, all elements of this production have been built from scratch.

Our Set Designer, Rosie Gilmore, was tasked with creating the concept and design of all the elements you see on the stage. Rosie deeply explored the sub-contexts of the story to find its central themes:

The Themes

“

For me, the musical Chicago explores the dark and twisted underbelly of fame, where corruption and the intoxicating allure of being a celebrity drive individuals to extreme measures. Fame becomes an addiction in itself, with characters Roxie Hart and Velma Kelly unable to break free from its grip, constantly seeking validation and attention despite the personal cost.

At its core, the story reflects how fame can become the puppet master. Manipulating people to act in ways they otherwise might not. Women especially, are shown as using their beauty and sexuality to navigate and exploit a patriarchal system to their advantage, to get ahead. Greed runs rampant throughout the story, with characters willing to commit murder to maintain or achieve their desired status.

The public's obsession with scandal turns even the most heinous acts—like murder—into forms of entertainment. In this world, everyone is constantly under scrutiny, living with the oppressive pressure of being watched and judged by the media and the public. Ultimately, Chicago is a sharp commentary on the dehumanizing effects of fame, revealing how the addiction to notoriety can lead people to compromise their morals and identity just to stay relevant in the spotlight.

The Design

The central themes of power and control have driven the design of the set and narrative of the Audio Visual elements. Two imposing structures, resembling a jury overseeing the performers, symbolize constant surveillance and scrutiny.

These heavy, masculine forms are contrasted by the delicate femininity of neon strip lighting, which suggests how women are not only taking control of these spaces but also manipulating the narrative to their advantage.

The ever-present large screen—hovering, illuminating, and reshaping the space—mirrors the pressure of the media, which constantly influences the characters' choices.

As Roxie's journey unfolds, the ebb and flow of the AV reflects her growing addiction to the spotlight. The lighting spills across the floor, enveloping the characters, reinforcing the idea that the media's gaze is always there, inescapable and all-consuming. Chicago is sleek, sexy and seductive embodying the unrelenting, almost intoxicating allure of fame.

”

CHICAGO

Roxie
Velma

ROXIE



Joe Deegan
Production Manager

Originally from Ireland, Joe met his wife Colleen while overseas, and settled in New Plymouth in 2001.

Joe made his stage debut for NPOS as part of the cast of cabaret show, *Solid Gold* in 2017, and since facilitated the cabaret shows in 2019, 2020 and 2021, taking on both onstage and offstage roles simultaneously.

In 2023 Joe took up the opportunity to work as Assistant Director for *We Will Rock You*, and last year he was Production Manager for the successful season of *Jersey Boys*.

Joe says the 12 months dedicated to this production has been the most exciting and rewarding work he has done to date for the Society, as we bring together so many new ideas and concepts in one amazing production.



Rosie Gilmour
Set Designer

Rosie is a Theatre Designer based in Otautahi, Christchurch. She holds a Bachelor of Design: Stage and Screen degree from Toi Whakaari: New Zealand Drama School.

Notable credits include The Court Theatre production of *She Kills Monsters* (Set and AV Designer), *Appleton Ladies* (Set Designer), *Potato Race* (Set Designer), *O Le To a* (Costume Designer), *Katzenmusik* (Set/Properties and AV Designer), *Whā* (Set and Costume Designer), and *The Unauthorised Biography of...* (Set and Costume Designer). Showbiz production of *That Bloody Woman* (Set Designer), Cubbin Theatre Company production of *Sportsball*, *Cubbin Concert* and *Bundle Baby* (Designer). Metro Maori Production of *Be Like Billy* (Set Designer), Red Scare production of *Homemade Takeaways* (Set Designer) and National Theatre/ New Zealand Festival's production of *The Brief and Frightening*.



Michelle Read
Costume Designer

Michelle has been sewing and designing since the age of 9 when she was sewing purses from felt, and constructing items from scraps of fabric for a primary school fashion show.

During High school she won numerous fashion awards, and was recognised at the NZ Smokefree Young Designer Awards. At age 19 she produced her own runway fashion show, from pattern drafting to the final styling, and the design and construction of over 50 looks.

Michelle studied at Wellington Design School, graduating with a Diploma of Fashion Design and Technology.

Her resourcefulness, and an eye for detail, helped her evolve the look and feel for the *Chicago* costumes which she describes as a decadent treat for audiences in a classy cabaret style.




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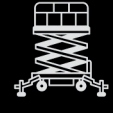




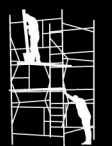










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show credits

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CHOREOGRAPHER: Drew Noble

MUSICAL DIRECTOR: Fraser Bremner

VOCAL DIRECTOR: Karla Kimi

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Joe Deegan

COMPANY COORDINATOR: Colleen Deegan

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TECHNICAL ADVISOR/CONSTRUCTION: Dean Clark

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VIDEO DESIGN: Dave Sparks Design

SOUND DESIGN: BounceNZ

COSTUME DESIGN: Michelle Read

STAGE MANAGER: Huw Griffiths

ASST STAGE MANAGER: Carli Culpan

STAGE CREW: TBC

FLY CREW: TBC

SOUND OPERATOR: Eve Curzon

RADIO MICS: Jacqui Jones (HOD), Ann Stewart, Emma Davison, Jen Bovaird, Natasha Foster

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PROGRAMME PRINTING: Annex Group

VIDEOGRAPHY: Riddlez Interactive, iStudios Multimedia

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CAST CATERING: Shailen Sukdhoe (HOD), Cath Robinson David Thorp, Denise Hawkes, Donnelle Nunes, Elysse Kerr Georgina Picton, Graeme Howarth, Howard Rozon, John Bannister, Karena Carter, Louisa Bouzaid, May Bannister Patrick Landrigan, Robyn Hickford, Robyn Schultz, Shirley Howarth, Sunita Torrance

NPOS BAR MANAGERS: Brad Flannagan, Mark Leuthard Dave Newman, Sunita Torrance

STAGE DOOR AND SECURITY: Diane Bovaird (HOD), Grant Bovaird, Howard Rozon, James Bovaird, John Bannister Hunter Stewart-Newman, John Thomason, Nikki Truman Linda Cloke, Selina Grieve, Terry Hignett, Patrick Landrigan



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Thanks to G&T Productions Ltd, Origin Theatrical, Rod Roebuck & Ben Hawke (G.J. Gardner Homes Taranaki), Renee Owen, Claire Wilkinson, Kelly Fenwick, Vicky Christensen, Justine Burgham, Beth Fenwick (Eventfinda), Sam Ryan, David Liggett, Ben Callander, Alana Murfitt, Emily Walmsley (TSB Showplace), Kandy Bar Staff & Host Volunteers, Chantelle Sadowski & Kylie McCallum (Stuff), BSeen Taranaki, Mad Media, Michael Farrand (MJF Lighting), Plymouth Hotel, Elite Scaffolding, Dobsons Marquee & Party Hire, Chris Hill Photography, Riddlez Interactive, iStudios Multimedia, Deluxe Diner, Toi Foundation, Bryan Vickery Media, Taryn Utiger, Melissa Peters, Karla Kimi, Diana Lloyd.

A huge thank you to any other person who has helped in some way with this production of Chicago, who we have not been able to recognise individually. A special thank you to the friends and family of all those involved, who have made it possible for us all to participate in this production.

our history

1952	December Song	1986	Sweet Charity	2007	Cats
1953	A Country Girl	1986	Chicago	2007	Boogie Nights
1954	The Desert Song	1987	Mack and Mabel	2008	The Sound of Music
1955	New Moon	1987	Oliver	2008	Shake, Rhythm & Blues
1956	The Belle of York	1988	Jesus Christ Superstar	2009	Miss Saigon
1957	Rose Marie	1989	Footrot Flats	2010	Lost in the 60's
1958	Oklahoma	1989	Evita	2011	42nd Street
1959	White Horse Inn	1990	Little Shop of Horrors	2011	Ready to Rock
1960	South Pacific	1990	Me and My Girl	2012	The Producers
1961	The King and I	1990	Showtime	2012	Kiwi Made
1962	The Student Prince	1991	Cabaret	2013	Hairspray
1963	Brigadoon	1991	Peter Pan	2013	A Night at the Flicks
1964	The Merry Widow	1992	Oh What a Lovely War	2014	The Phantom of the Opera
1965	Annie Get Your Gun	1992	Grease	2014	British Invasion
1966	Music Man	1992	You're a Good Man Charlie Brown	2015	Mamma Mia
1967	The Sound of Music	1993	Wizard of Oz	2015	Born in the USA
1968	The Desert Song	1993	Big River	2016	Sister Act
1969	The Pajama Game	1994	Les Miserables	2016	Swing the Mood
1970	Can Can	1994	Anything Goes	2017	Mary Poppins
1971	Oliver	1995	Chess	2017	Solid Gold
1972	Fiddler on the Roof	1995	A Slice of Saturday Night	2018	Les Miserables
1973	Showboat	1995	Bless 'Em All	2018	Boogie Wonderland
1974	My Fair Lady	1996	Hair	2019	Priscilla Queen of the Desert
1975	Music Hall	1997	42nd Street	2019	Highly Strung
1975	Lil' Abner	1998	West Side Story	2020	Rockin' Around the World
1976	A Night of Nostalgia	1999	Joseph	2021	Wicked
1976	South Pacific	2000	Stages	2021	School of Hits
1977	Joseph & the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat	2000	Buddy - The Buddy Holly Story	2022	Matilda
1978	Tarantara Tarantara	2001	Blood Brothers	2022	The 90's Rewind Through Time
1978	Half a Sixpence	2002	Les Miserables	2023	We Will Rock You
1979	Jesus Christ Superstar	2003	Annie	2023	Seussical Jr.
1980	Hello Dolly	2004	Brassed Off	2023	Hear Me Roar
1980	The Wizard of Oz	2005	Oliver	2024	Jersey Boys
1981	A Night of Nostalgia	2006	Godspell	2024	Back to the 80's
1981	Cabaret	2006	Buddy & Friends	2025	Wendy: The Peter Pan Musical
1982	Guys and Dolls				
1983	Annie				
1984	Fiddler on the Roof				
1985	Oklahoma				
1985	The Sound of Music				



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