



2024 SEASON

PERFORMANCE GUIDE





WELCOME TO THE 2024 SEASON

.....

I liken creating a professional musical theatre production to cooking a multi-course, gourmet meal: Both require thoughtful menu planning, the careful sourcing of ingredients, skilled hands for its proper preparation and execution, and a mad scramble at the end of the cooking process to deliver each of the dishes at the right temperature, looking and tasting delicious! And just like cooking, we don't produce shows for the sake of producing them: We create them to feed people, to nourish souls. Welcome to our table!

Theatre is always best served with an understanding and appreciation of its ingredients. That's what inspired our Education and Community Engagement team to create this multifaceted guide. Each of the shows in our 2024 Broadway At Music Circus lineup are represented with insights into their production histories, story content, historical context and what inspired them. It is our hope that this guide both enhances your enjoyment of the show and later serves as a reminder of your time with us.

If you are like me, no meal is too large; I can always find room for another serving! I feel the same about musical theatre – the more, the better – whether it's seeing the same show for the twentieth time or experiencing something completely new. I hope your attendance at a show (or shows!) this summer has whet your appetite for more. We'll keep cooking them up and you, our welcome guest, are always invited.

Bon appetit! Enjoy the show!

SCOTT KLIER

PRESIDENT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

BROADWAY AT MUSIC CIRCUS THROUGH THE YEARS

- **1949** Actor St. John Terrell sets up a summer stock theatre under a giant round tent in Lambertville, New Jersey. Drawing inspiration from the layout of Greek amphitheaters and the summer fun of the circus, Terrell's idea is a success and more than 40 others pop up across the country in the next decade.
- **1951** With the support of arts patron and newspaper owner Eleanor McClatchy, producers Russell Lewis and Howard Young establish the Sacramento Music Circus by setting up a tent in the parking lot of the Sacramento Civic Repertory Theatre. It is the first professional theatre-in-the-round located to the west of the Mississippi River and the fourth in the country.
- **1953** Lewis and Young found the Sacramento Light Opera Association to continue producing shows in the area. Sacramento Music Circus continues to be a successful summer tradition, gaining a notable reputation in the theatre community.
- **1989** The Broadway Series is introduced as a winter companion to the summer shows, bringing national tours of Broadway musicals and plays to Sacramento every year.
- **2003** The Wells Fargo Pavilion (now called the UC Davis Health Pavilion) opens on the site of the original Sacramento Music Circus tent, providing a state-of-the-art, permanent, fully air-conditioned facility for all future shows.
- **2018** The company name changes to Broadway Sacramento, with the respective touring and summer seasons being named Broadway On Tour and **Broadway At Music Circus**.
- **2020** The 2020 and 2021 seasons were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **2024** **The 72nd Broadway At Music Circus season opens June 11 at the UC Davis Health Pavilion!**

BEFORE THE SHOW BEGINS, A FEW QUICK REMINDERS:

- Make sure you find your seat before the show starts! Actors will be entering through the aisles, so staying seated when the lights go down helps keep everyone safe. If you need to leave for any reason, the ushers in the hallway will let you know when it's okay to enter again.
- Please keep your cell phones silenced and put them away during the show. You are welcome to use them before or after, but the bright screens and noises are distracting for everyone else at the theatre. Using your phone to take pictures or video during the performance is also not allowed.
- If you're enjoying the show, make sure to laugh, cheer and applaud! The actors love hearing that you're having a good time. Please save side conversations until after the show, though. That can be distracting for the actors and the people around you.



JUNE 11-16

MUSIC BY
HARRY WARREN

LYRICS BY
AL DUBIN

BOOK BY
MICHAEL STEWART
& MARK BRAMBLE

- THE STORY -

In 1933 New York City, famed director Julian Marsh's new show *Pretty Lady* is wrapping up auditions when newcomer Peggy Sawyer arrives to audition. Peggy is a naive but talented woman and she convinces Julian to cast her in the ensemble after showing off her dance skills. Meanwhile, Julian and his creative team are trying to appease the show's leading lady Dorothy Brock and her wealthy older boyfriend Abner, who is funding the production. Dorothy is also secretly seeing her former vaudeville partner Pat and Julian is determined to keep them apart so Abner won't revoke his support for the show.

The cast of *Pretty Lady* heads to Philadelphia for an out-of-town tryout and backstage tensions rise as Dorothy suspects Peggy of trying to steal Pat – and the spotlight – away from her. Disaster strikes on opening night, leaving the show without a star, but the chorus girls convince Julian to promote Peggy to the lead and take the show straight to New York. Peggy has the skills, but lacks the confidence and she'll need to trust her inner talent to ensure that *Pretty Lady* becomes a Broadway smash.

- THE CHARACTERS -

JULIAN MARSH: A famed Broadway director known for losing his temper under pressure.

PEGGY SAWYER: A young performer from Pennsylvania with impressive tap-dancing skills.

DOROTHY BROCK: A well-known Broadway diva whose best days are behind her.

BILLY LAWLOR: A talented, charismatic dancer who is the juvenile lead of *Pretty Lady*.

MAGGIE JONES: The charming, witty co-writer of *Pretty Lady*.

BERT BARRY: Maggie's comedic creative partner on *Pretty Lady*.

ANDY LEE: The choreographer of *Pretty Lady*.

ABNER DILLON: Dorothy's wealthy older boyfriend who is financing the show.

PAT DENNING: A talented vaudeville performer who is secretly romancing Dorothy.

MAKING THE MUSICAL

FROM BACKSTAGE TO CENTER STAGE

42ND STREET depicts the backstage drama that occurs during the creation of a Broadway show, but the real-life story of its development is equally dramatic. The story began as a novel published by Bradford Ropes in 1932, which was a darkly comedic behind-the-scenes story about the musical theatre community. The following year, Ropes' novel was adapted into a smash hit musical film. Hollywood musicals had been declining in popularity after their initial success in the late 1920s, but **42ND STREET** breathed new life into the genre with its charming songs by Harry Warren and Al Dubin and lavish production numbers choreographed by Busby Berkeley.

More than four decades later, theatre producer David Merrick's career also needed a revitalization. Merrick had built his name during the Golden Age of musical theatre, producing extravagant hits in the 1950s and '60s including *GYPSY*, *OLIVER!* and *HELLO, DOLLY!*, but by the '70s audience tastes tended to favor more dramatic contemporary stories, like *CHICAGO* or *A CHORUS LINE*. Furthermore, Merrick had built a reputation as a difficult collaborator, scaring off many of his colleagues.



(L to R) US songwriting team of Harry Warren and Al Dubin

Two of those colleagues, writer Michael Stewart and writer-director Mark Bramble, had begun work on a stage adaptation of **42ND STREET** in 1978. The duo had first pitched the idea to composer Jerry Herman, who encouraged them to build the show around more of Harry Warren and Al Dubin's classic songs instead of writing a new score. When Merrick caught wind of the project he asked Bramble and Stewart if he could produce it, envisioning **42ND STREET** as an ideal comeback vehicle for both his career and the classic large-scale Broadway musical. They reluctantly agreed and Merrick set out to raise money while famed director Gower Champion was brought on to direct and choreograph the show.

Merrick scraped together the necessary funds and **42ND STREET** went into rehearsals in the summer of 1980 for a pre-Broadway tryout at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Tensions ran high as Merrick clashed with the creative team's choices on everything from the color of the set to the size of the ensemble. Champion, meanwhile, was struggling to stay on top of both the stage direction and choreography due to an illness that he assumed was a prolonged cold. When the show opened at the end of June, ticket sales were low, but the audience members who showed up were charmed by the nostalgic production.



(L to R) Wanda Richert, Jerry Orbach, and the cast of **42ND STREET**. Martha Swope/©NYPL for the Performing Arts

Riding the wave of positive word-of-mouth, **42ND STREET** headed back to New York for an even bigger, flashier Broadway run. Merrick stoked interest in the papers with ads and stories of backstage drama, while Champion attempted to finish staging the show despite his declining health. On August 25, 1980, **42ND STREET** opened at the Winter Garden Theatre to a packed house of Broadway stars and theatre critics that gave the cast a whopping 11 curtain calls. At the end of the night, David Merrick came onstage and announced to the stunned crowd that Gower Champion had died that morning. The tragic, dramatic news overshadowed any negative press coverage, practically guaranteeing that **42ND STREET** became the most talked-about show of the season.

The original Broadway production of **42ND STREET** won two Tony Awards® and ran for nearly 3,500 performances. This was followed by a hit production in London, many tours and international productions and several notable revivals in the 2000s. The show's continued worldwide success remains a testament to the lasting appeal of classic American musical theatre, as the lullaby of Broadway continues to enchant audiences of all ages.

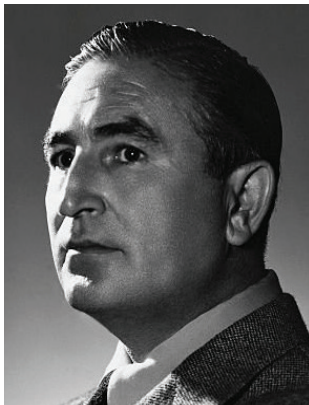
MEET THE COMPOSERS

LEARN ABOUT THE DYNAMIC DUO THAT WROTE THE HITS OF **42ND STREET**



AL DUBIN

Alexander “Al” Dubin was born in Switzerland in 1891 to Russian Jewish immigrants and grew up in Pennsylvania. By 14 he was writing songs for vaudeville performers in New York City and he began writing for Witmark Music Publishing in 1911 after his rowdy behavior got him expelled from medical school. Dubin’s early years of songwriting were not successful, but after serving in the Army during World War I he returned to writing and produced several hits. In the 1920s, Dubin began writing music for silent films and he soon became one of the first composers for talking pictures.



HARRY WARREN

Harry Warren was born as Salvatore Guaragna to Italian immigrant parents in Brooklyn, NY in 1893. The 11th of 12 children, he was a self-taught musician and left school at 15 to drum for the John Victor brass band. Prior to joining the Navy in 1918, he worked for several touring carnivals and was a piano player for Vitagraph Studios. Warren began writing his own music while in the Navy and over the next 60 years he would publish more than 500 compositions. He was hired by the music publishing house Stark and Cowan and published his first song in 1922. Warren collaborated with various lyricists throughout the 1920s, with many of his songs featured in films and Broadway shows.

In 1932, Warner Bros. Studios paired Dubin and Warren to write songs for their new musical film **42ND STREET**. This was the start of a short but prosperous partnership, as the duo wrote more than 60 songs for over 15 films during the next seven years. Their work revolutionized movie musicals and created countless songs that have become American standards. Some might even be recognizable from early Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies shorts, as Warner Bros. often reused hit songs in its cartoons.

Dubin and Warren’s partnership ended when Warren moved to 20th Century Fox Studios in 1940. Dubin’s personal struggles overshadowed his professional successes and he had difficulty finding steady work up to his death in 1945. Warren continued to work for film studios for the rest of his life, earning a total of 11 Academy Award nominations. Dubin was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1970 and Warren in 1971, cementing their individual and shared legacies as great contributors to the Great American Songbook.

HARRY WARREN SONGS

- “Rose of the Rio Grande” (1922)
- “You’re My Everything” (1931)
- “Jeepers Creepers” (1938)
- “At Last” (1941)
- “Chattanooga Choo Choo” (1941)
- “You’ll Never Know” (1943)
- “That’s Amore” (1953)

WARREN & DUBIN SONGS

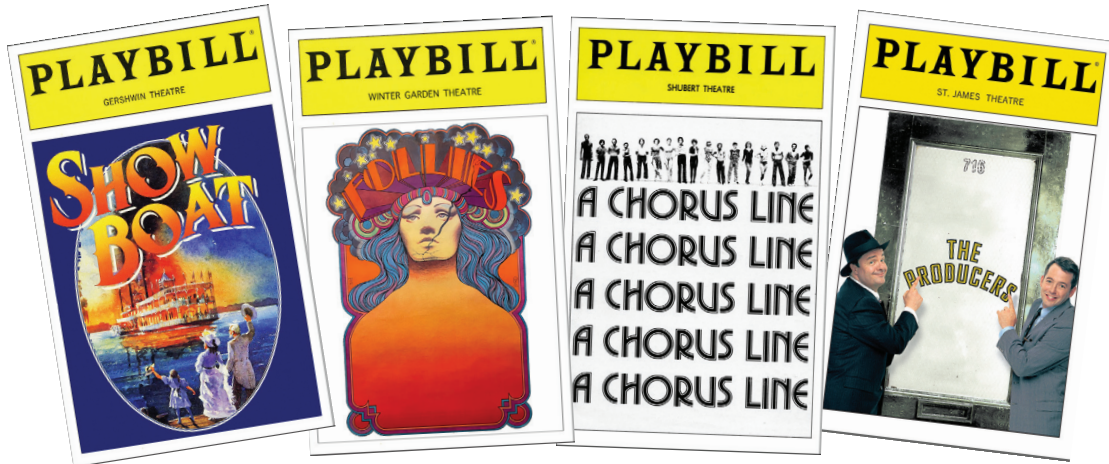
- “42nd Street” (1933)
- “Shuffle Off to Buffalo” (1933)
- “We’re in the Money” (1933)
- “I Only Have Eyes for You” (1934)
- “About a Quarter to Nine” (1935)
- “Lullaby of Broadway” (1935)
- “Lulu’s Back in Town” (1935)

AL DUBIN SONGS

- “The Dream of a Soldier Boy” (1917)
- “A Cup of Coffee, a Sandwich and You” (1925)
- “Tiptoe Through the Tulips” (1929)
- “For You” (1930)
- “South American Way” (1939)

SHOW BUSINESS STORIES

CHECK OUT THESE OTHER MUSICALS ABOUT BACKSTAGE DRAMA ON BROADWAY AND BEYOND!



SHOW BOAT (1927) – Music by Jerome Kern, Book and Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

KISS ME, KATE (1948) – Music and Lyrics by Cole Porter, Book by Bella and Samuel Spewack

GYPSY (1959) – Music by Jule Styne, Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, Book by Arthur Laurents

CABARET (1966) – Music by John Kander, Lyrics by Fred Ebb, Book by Joe Masteroff

FOLLIES (1971) – Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, Book by James Goldman

A CHORUS LINE (1975) – Music by Marvin Hamlisch, Lyrics by Edward Kleban, Book by James Kirkwood Jr. and Nicholas Dante

ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (1986) – Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, Lyrics by Charles Hart and Richard Stilgoe, Book by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Richard Stilgoe

THE PRODUCERS (2002) – Music and Lyrics by Mel Brooks, Book by Mel Brooks and Thomas Meehan

CURTAINS (2007) – Music by John Kander, Lyrics by Fred Ebb, Book by Rupert Holmes

THINK ABOUT IT

- The story of **42ND STREET** takes place during the Great Depression and the original film was released during that same era. The musical was created in 1980 and continues to be a popular hit today. What similarities do you see between the 1930s, the 1980s and present day? Why do you think this story continues to resonate with audiences after all this time?
- If you were to update **42ND STREET** to take place now, what are some changes you would make?
- Peggy Sawyer is clearly a very talented performer, but it takes some encouragement from her friends and her director for her to trust in her talents. When has someone else encouraged you to have faith in your abilities? Why do you think it can be so difficult to ignore self-doubt and believe in yourself?
- **42ND STREET** gets its name from the famed block in New York. If a musical were named after a street in your city, what would it be called?



UC **DAVIS** HEALTH PAVILION

SPECIAL THANKS TO



This guide was developed by Mason Diab, Caleb Larrosa-Colombo and Jackie Vanderbeck.
Special thanks to Griff Field, Matt Hessburg, Scott Klier, Dejan Zivkovic and YOU, audience members, for joining us at **Broadway At Music Circus** this summer!