

GET READY FOR SOME RAZZLE DAZZLE



Original Broadway Cast. Photo: Paul Kolnik

"Come on Babe, why don't we paint the town and all that jazz" at CHICAGO, part of the KeyBank Broadway Series at PlayhouseSquare January 12-24, 2010. This is a show that will "razzle dazzle 'em, an act with lots of flash in it." According to Ben Brantley of *The New York Times* CHICAGO is "a musical for the ages. The sexiest, most sophisticated dancing seen on Broadway in years. CHICAGO flies us right into musical heaven. If there's any justice in the world, audiences will be exulting in the parade for many, many

Awards

performances to come."

CHICAGO received six 1997 Tony Awards including Best Musical Revival, Direction, Choreography, Actor, Actress, and Lighting Design. It is also the winner of

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Vice President of Theatricals:

Gina Vernaci

Director of Community Engagement & Education:

Colleen Porter

Director of Ticket Sales & Marketing:

Autumn Kiser

Editors:

Linda Jackson, Cindi Szymanski

Writer:

Robin Pease

Photos:

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ArtsEducation@PlayhouseSquare.org





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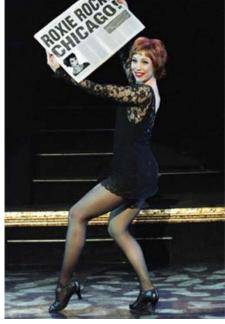
"Come on Babe, why don't we paint the town and all that jazz" at CHICAGO, part of the KeyBank Broadway Series at PlayhouseSquare January 12-24, 2010. This is a show that will "razzle dazzle 'em, an act with lots of flash in it." According to Ben Brantley of The New York Times, CHICAGO is "a musical for the ages. The sexiest, most sophisticated dancing seen on Broadway in years. CHICAGO flies us right into musical heaven. If there's any justice in the world, audiences will be exulting in the parade for many, many performances to come."

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Awards

country.

CHICAGO received six 1997 Tony Awards including Best Musical Revival, Direction, Choreography, Actor, Actress, and Lighting Design. It is also the winner of five Drama Desk Awards. five Outer Critics' Circle Awards, two Astaire Awards, a Drama League Award, a Helen Hayes Award, a Critics Circle Award, two Joseph Jefferson Awards, and the 1998 Grammy for best



Bianca Marroquin. Photo by Paul Kolnik.

A worldwide phenomenon, CHICAGO continues to amaze audiences on every continent. It has received the following international awards: two Oliver Awards in London, three Asociación Mexicana de Críticos de Teatro Awards, four Guldmasken Awards in Sweden, two Helpman Awards in Australia, and two Premio Qualidade Brasil Awards.

Broadway show music, just to name a few of the kudos the show has received in this

CHICAGO has been performed in Dutch, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Korean, French, Swedish, Italian and Danish. In 13 years, more than 18 million people around the world have seen the show at more than 16,000 performances.

No wonder People Magazine says the show is "Insanely entertaining!" and syndicated columnist Liz Smith pronounces CHICAGO is "still the best damn show in town."

Los Angeles Times' Laurie Winer proclaims the show to be, "Terrific! Each one of the show's 22 numbers is a polished gem."

"Good, isn't it, grand isn't it, great isn't it, swell isn't it, fun, isn't it?" CHICAGO it is!

Synopsis

The place is Chicago, Illinois. The time is the roaring 20s. "Welcome. Ladies and Gentlemen, you are about to see a story of murder, greed, corruption, violence, exploitation, adultery, and treachery - all those things we all hold near and dear to our hearts." CHICAGO is the story of Velma Kelly and Roxie Hart, two women accused of murder, who discover that being a celebrity can manipulate the criminal justice system to their advantage.

Did you know...

That many stars of film and TV have appeared on Broadway in CHICAGO? Stars of CHICAGO have included: Grammy award winner R & B singer Usher, Whose Line Is It Anyway comedian Wayne Brady, A Chorus Line Revival Tony award winner Charlotte D'Amboise, Oscar winner for Cabaret Joel Grey, Working Girl Golden Globe winner Melanie Griffith, People's Choice winner Brooke Shields, HBO's Dexter Golden Globe winner Michael C. Hall, Grammy Award winner Huey Lewis, Backstreet Boys' Grammy Winner Kevin Richardson, TV's Paige Davis of Trading Spaces, NYPD Blue's Sharon Lawrence and The Sopranos' Vincent Pastore just to name a few. Everyone wants to be a part of CHICAGO!



THE PLAY + THE MUSICAL = REAL LIFE!

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"Murder, greed, corruption, violence, exploitation, adultery, treachery."

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CHICAGO characters Roxie Hart and Velma Kelly are based on the real life murderesses of Cook County Jail.

In 1924, the *Chicago Tribune's* front page reported two sensational crimes. Beulah Annan, often called 'the most stylish of murderess row,' was indicted for bumping off an intruder. Cabaret singer Belva Gaertner, referred to as 'the beauty of the cellblock,' was accused of murdering of her husband.



Tribune journalist Maurine Dallas Watkins covered the trials, where accused murderer Belva Gaertner told her, "gin and guns - either one is bad enough, but together they get you in a dickens of a mess, don't they?"



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A scene from "CHICAGO" on Broadway at the Ambassador Theatre. www.ChicagoTheMusical.com. Photo: Paul Kolnik.

Playing up the men, jazz, and booze aspects of the crimes, Watkins' stories sold a lot of papers.

Does this sound like a musical?

Annan testified at her trial that before she shot the intruder, they struggled and both reached for the gun. Then she told her husband that she had killed a man who tried to make love to her.

Just like in the musical, there was a media frenzy. One of the women claimed to be pregnant and slick lawyers helped both women get exonerated. It was believed the sob story coverage of the crimes in the *Chicago Tribune* contributed to the acquittals.

Shortly after the verdicts, Watkins covered the infamous Leopold and Loeb case, which quickly pushed the merry murderesses off the front page. There was a new sob story in the *Chicago Tribune* to catch the eye of the masses. While Roxie and Velma's 15 minutes of fame had passed, their story was not over.

The Real Story Becomes a Play

Watkins left the Tribune to pursue playwriting at Yale University, telling the story of the two murders she had covered for the newspaper. Her play was originally called *The Brave Little Woman*, then the title was changed to *Chicago, or, Play Ball*. It opened on Broadway in 1926 playing 172 performances. It then toured for 2 years starring an unknown Clark Gable.

1927 saw a silent film version of the popular play directed by Cecil B. DeMille, followed by the 1942 film *Roxie Hart* starring Ginger Rogers.

The Play Becomes a Musical

Then in 1956, Gwen Verdon read the play and asked Bob Fosse to make it into a musical for her. Fosse approached Maurine Watkins, but was refused the rights for 13 years. She had become religious and it was speculated that she felt guilt for helping get the women exonerated, or she was tired of being recognized for only one play.

It wasn't until after her death in 1969 that her estate gave Fosse the rights to adapt the play. Real life had finally become musical theater. Then in 2002, real life became reel life as the musical won an Oscar for Best Picture.



ARE CELEBRITIES ABOVE THE LAW?

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The cast of Broadway's Tony Award-winning hit musical CHICAGO. Photo: Paul Kolnik.

CHICAGO characters Velma Kelly and Roxie Hart committed serious crimes. They murdered a husband, a sister and a lover. They are arrested for their crimes, but somehow getting their 15 minutes of fame in the newspapers manages to get them off the hook with the justice system. Could this really happen? Yes.

Celebrities today often get off the hook. Sometimes their charges are dropped, they receive a slap on the wrist, a reduced sentence or a get out of jail free card. It's not surprising that the characters in CHICAGO may remind you of the tabloid press today.

Case In Point ...

Actress, Lindsey Lohan, was arrested for DUI and cocaine possession and sentenced to one day in jail, 21 days community service and 3 years probation, but served only 84 minutes.

Actor Daniel Baldwin allegedly stole a SUV but was released without bail.

The case was all over the newspapers: "Lizzie Borden took an axe gave her mother 40 wacks, when she saw what she had done, gave her father 41." She was found not guilty.

Daughter of singer Lionel Richie, Nicole Richie, with a prior drunken driving arrest, was arrested for DUI, then served only 82 minutes in jail.

Musician Fred Durst, of the band *Limp Bizkit*, tried to run down two people with his car and got a 120 day suspended jail sentence.

Actor Matthew McConaughey was detained for possession of marijuana and resisting arrest. The drug charges were dropped and he was fined \$50 for violating the city's noise ordinance.

The Doors' lead vocalist Jim Morrison was arrested for immoral exhibition, resisting arrest and breach of peace. After the first two charges were dropped, Morrison had to pay a fine of only \$25.

Rapper Foxy Brown attacked two manicurists in a nail salon over her refusal to pay a bill for services. She received 3 years probation and anger management classes. Brown has been arrested previously with no serious criminal consequences for hitting a neighbor with her Blackberry and almost running over a baby in a stroller with her Range Rover.

Actress Winona Ryder, convicted of the felony charges of vandalism and grand theft for shoplifting items from Sax 5th Avenue, received three years probation and community service.

Director John Huston killed a pedestrian with his car but no charges were filed against him.

Actress Natasha Lyonne was arrested for attacking her neighbor, breaking her neighbor's mirror and threatening to molest the neighbor's dog. She received one night in jail and after failure to appear in court, was sentenced to conditional discharge.

Would any of these people have gotten off if they were not celebrities? Would you have gotten the same outcome if you had committed the same crime?

When talking about CHICAGO, Roy C. Dicks of *The News and Observer* had it right when he said, "now, more than a decade later, the musical's sardonic swipes at celebrity lawbreakers, the fickle press, and an easily manipulated legal system ring truer than ever."



CHICAGO TRIVIA

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The cast of Broadway's Tony Award-winning hit musical CHICAGO. Photo: Paul Kolnik.

CHICAGO is one of the longest running musicals on Broadway and was called one of the great musicals of all time by T. Wallinger of the *Colorado Springs Gazette*. Did you know these facts about the show?

John Kander wrote the music and Fred Ebb wrote the lyrics.

Fred Ebb and Bob Fosse co-wrote the script.

Gwen Verdon got a throat infection by inhaling a feather and Liza Minelli took her place in the show for five weeks.

Bob Fosse, original director/choreographer, was born in Chicago.

Bob Fosse created CHICAGO for his third wife, Gwen Verdon.

Ann Reinking took over the role of Roxie Hart from legend Gwen Verdon in 1977.

Ann Reinking went on to star in the film musical *All That Jazz*, which took its title from CHICAGO.

CHICAGO is based on the 1926 play Chicago, directed by George Abbot.

Ginger Rogers starred in a 1942 film called Roxie Hart.

Catherine Zeta-Jones played Velma Kelly in the film Chicago.

Taye Diggs played the bandleader in the film.

The late *Law and Order* star and Broadway veteran Jerry Orbach was the original Billy Flynn on Broadway.

Ann Reinking choreographed the 1997 revival of CHICAGO in the style of Bob Fosse.

A section of Paulina Street in Chicago is now called "Bob Fosse Way."

Bebe Neuwirth received a 1997 Tony Award as Best Actress in CHICAGO.

Joel Grey made an appearance in *The Muppet Show* singing the song "Razzle Dazzle" from CHICAGO.

James Naughton won a 1997 Tony Award for his portrayal of Billy Flynn.

Chita Rivera and Gwen Verdon were the original co-stars of the show.



TALKING WITH BIANCA MARROQUÍN

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Bianca Marroquín portrays Roxie Hart in the national tour of **CHICAGO**. Prior to joining the tour, Marroquín finished six months in Mexico as Maria in *The Sound of Music*. Marroquín is the first Mexican woman to ever be invited to make the crossover from Mexico to Broadway in a lead role. She has a Helen Hayes Award for her portrayal of Roxie Hart and several other awards in her native Mexico.

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Buzz Extra spoke with Marroquín, who had just arrived in the states after touring with CHICAGO in Japan.

EXTRA: I understand you have a little jet lag.

MARROQUÍN: It's horrible, I went to sleep at midnight and I woke up at two. But I am looking forward to coming. I love Cleveland.



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Bianca Marroquin as Roxie Hart in CHICAGO.

Photo: Len Prince

EXTRA: CHICAGO is such a dancer's show. Tell us about your dance training.

MARROQUÍN: At age 3, my mother took me to my first ballet class. When I turned 8, I added Flamenco and Tap. At 13, I added Jazz and Folklorico, Mexican Folk Dance. I was focused on Flamenco. That was what I really wanted to do... until musical theater came and kind of got in the way.

EXTRA: How did it get in the way?

MARROQUÍN: Beauty and the Beast came to Mexico. They were looking for dancers who could sing. That's when musical theater took off for me. Then Rent came to Mexico and I was the dance captain. When Phantom of the Opera came, it was hard to find ballet dancers who could sing, so my ballet came in handy. I was dance captain and swing for all the girls. Then CHICAGO and Roxie brought me to Broadway!

EXTRA: Can you share your pre-show warm up routine?

MARROQUÍN: I have a couple of exercises on the floor to cover everything: the back, the lower back, all the parts of my legs, knees, quads... and then I do sit ups and push ups to make sure I stay in shape... I find that the best training for any dancer is the floor bar because you're working against gravity. Do the bar on your back so you're not standing and it all comes from your upper thighs.

EXTRA: Before you got cast in CHICAGO in Mexico, was there was a six day workshop to prepare dancers for the audition?

MARROQUÍN: Most people in Mexico, myself included, weren't familiar with the Fosse technique. Gene Foote, from the Gwen Verdon generation, taught us different numbers from Fosse's shows. It was amazing. I felt quite comfortable with the technique. It is against everything you are taught if you have classical dance training. Everything is inward instead of outward, and there's more tension in the fingers. In ballet everything is soft. With Fosse, the movement is more like twitches instead of flowing. His anatomy was a little different than classical dancers. Instead of fighting it, he worked with what he had and created a new style, fashion, and technique. And it caused a sensation.

EXTRA: Why is his style of dance so appealing?

MARROQUÍN: It is very sexual without being vulgar, never vulgar, which is what I love. It is electrifying. He is brilliant, the way he choreographed. He converts the whole body into weapons to create stories.

EXTRA: Have you worked with Ann Reinking?

MARROQUÍN: The very first time I came to Broadway, 2002, my Billy Flynn was George Hamilton. He just had surgery on his knee and I couldn't sit on his lap. And for the number, "We Both Reached for the Gun," Annie had to come in to change the choreography. We had a couple of sessions just to re-choreograph that number. I got to work with her one on one. It was amazing. When Patrick Swayze was in the show, Annie came in and altered the show for him because he was more of a dancer. So, yes, I have had the chance to work with her and am very fortunate.

EXTRA: We can't wait to see the show when you get here. Now get some sleep!

MARROQUÍN: Definitely!



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BROADWAY BUZZ EVENTS

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Want to find out even more about the show? Come get "buzzed" with host Joe Garry at the Broadway Buzz Pre-Show Talk! Join us one hour before the curtain of each performance of **CHICAGO** in the Idea Center® at PlayhouseSquare.

The Idea Center is located just two doors west of the Allen Theatre at 1375 Euclid Avenue. You can enter the Idea Center quickly from the PlayhouseSquare parking garage by taking the elevator or stairs to Level 1. Exit through the red doors and cross at the crosswalk which will lead you directly into the rear



entrance of the building. You also may enter the Idea Center from Euclid Avenue.

Catch our Post-Show Chats with the Cast following Thursday evening performances (14th and 21st).

Lindsay Roginski of CHICAGO will teach the choreography from "All That Jazz" during a dance master class on Wednesday, January 20 from 3 - 4:30 pm. Participants must be advanced dance students or professional dancers. Ages 14 and up only, please. Others are welcome to observe.

Participation is free; advance registration is required. Please call Stephanie Reed at 216-771-4444 ext. 3258 or send an e-mail to reeds@playhousesquare.org.

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