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created, choreographed & directed by
TWYLA THARP vocals by
FRANK SINATRA
Come Fly Away
A NEW MUSICAL

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The music of Ol' Blue Eyes is back in Tony award winning choreographer Twyla Tharp's COME FLY AWAY. You'll be singing and swinging at the KeyBank's Broadway Series at PlayhouseSquare May 8 - 20, 2012.

"This dazzling new dance musical deploys a stage full of brilliant performers to heighten the theatrical allure of ballroom dance, complementing the immortal appeal of Sinatra's singing."
New York Times

"Saucy, sassy and sexy! That's the best way to describe COME FLY AWAY."
Downtown Spokane



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Photo Credit: Ramona Kelley and Christopher Vo in COME FLY AWAY. Joan Marcus 2011

"It's hard to imagine a Broadway show delivering a more dazzling combination of talent than COME FLY AWAY." *USA Today*

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Buzz Extra is a publication of the Community Engagement & Education Department at PlayhouseSquare

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The dancers “explode with vitality, as if the performers all wanted to devour the stage. And what’s more Sinatra than that?” *New York Post*

COME FLY AWAY “sweeps you away in a veritable orgy of nostalgia and romance. That’s life - or it oughta be...Sinatra’s seductive voice and Tharp’s sexy moves are well matched.” *Variety*

“Powerhouse choreography and sizzling dancing.” *Hollywood Reporter*

“There’s an intense physicality to Tharp’s choreography, not to mention a delight in show-biz razzle-dazzle, and both qualities are present in the dancers whose affairs of the heart are examined with astonishing theatricality.” *Associated Press*

“The dancers are magnificent. COME FLY AWAY brings swank, sass and Sinatra.” *Atlanta Intown*

Synopsis

The summer wind blows four couples into a swinging nightclub. They decide "Let's Fall In Love" and find another reason, another season for "Makin' Whoopee." Featuring 14 dancers, a live 14-piece big band on stage, the brilliance of Twyla Tharp's choreography and the amazing vocals of Frank Sinatra, you will "[Face the Music and Dance](#)" as couples fall in love, hearts get broken and romance comes alive.

Awards

COME FLY AWAY won the Drama Desk award for Outstanding Choreography for Ms. Tharp.

She has received many awards, including the Tony Award, Astaire Award, Drama League Award, Drama Desk Award and Outer Critic's Circle Award for the acclaimed dance musical *Movin' Out*.

Additional awards for Ms. Tharp include the Laurence Olivier Theatre Award, the National Medal of Arts, the UK's Critics Circle National Dance Award, two Emmy Awards, the Director's Guild of America Award, Kennedy Center Honor, the Vietnam Veteran's of America President's Award, the Jerome Robbins Prize and 19 honorary doctorates.

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In addition to TV, Broadway productions, and dance concerts, Tharp's choreography has been seen in the films *Amadeus*, *Hair*, *White Nights*, *Ragtime* and *I'll Do Anything*.

Read Twyla Tharp's books:

- *Push Comes to Shove*
- *The Creative Habit: Learn It and Use It for Life*
- *The Collaborative Habit: Life Lessons for Working Together*

For more information on COME FLY AWAY, visit comeflyaway.com.

See videos of Twyla Tharp's choreography [here](#).

Did You Know?

Frank Sinatra may not have been "a puppet, a pauper, a pirate, a poet, a pawn and a king" as he sang in the popular song "That's Life," but he was an actor and one of the biggest selling solo recording artists from the 1930s to the 1990s.

Sinatra appeared in 50 films and produced eight films, made more than 1,800 music recordings, had his own record label, was inducted into the Big Band and Jazz Hall of Fame, and was named the Greatest Voice of the Twentieth Century by the BBC. Here are just some of the honors he has received:

- 11 Grammy Awards
- 3 Academy Awards
- 3 Stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame
- 4 Golden Globe Awards
- 1 Screen Actors Guild Award
- 3 Academy Awards for Best Original Song
- 1 Peabody Award
- 7 Jazz All-Star Male Vocalist of the Year Playboy Awards
- 3 Laurel Awards
- 1 Palm Springs International Film Festival Award
- 4 Golden Apple Awards
- 1 American Cinema Award
- 1 Kennedy Center Honors
- 1 Congressional Gold Medal

- 1 Presidential Medal of Freedom
- 1 Society of Singers Lifetime Achievement Award
- 1 NAACP Lifetime Achievement Award
- 31 gold records
- 9 platinum albums
- 3 double platinum albums
- 1 triple platinum album

After the 80th birthday and subsequent death of Frank Sinatra, The Empire State Building in New York City was bathed in blue light in tribute to [Ol' Blue Eyes](#).

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COME FLY AWAY is not the first all dance musical to hit Broadway. The idea of telling a story totally through dance is not really new.

Dance in History

Entertainment for nobility during the Italian Renaissance was elaborate and often included grand spectacles of music, recitations and dance. It took place between the courses of a meal and the stories told revolved around the food. If lamb were being served, the dance performed might have been the story of *The Golden Fleece*.

In France, the plays of Molière often included dance. He and Italian musician, dancer, choreographer and composer Jean-Baptiste Lully created the comédie-ballet based on Italian commedia dell'arte. Drama was added to music and dance.

As Ballet grew to become a serious art form, the dances began to focus on ways for dancers to express a character and tell a story.

As the 19th century arrived, composers and librettists began creating stories and writing music to be incorporated into the ballet.

Operas, operettas and vaudeville also had short dance sequences that hinted at story lines.

Dream Ballets

In 1927, *Showboat* became the first musical to incorporate song and dance into the storyline.

Then in 1943, Rodgers and Hammerstein wrote *Oklahoma!*. This show was the first to incorporate a 15-minute Act I dance finale that explained a character's struggle. It was told through the character's dream. Hence the term **Dream Ballet**.

Dream Ballets were not always told in a dream, but usually they consisted of thoughts in a character's mind. Agnes DeMille, Jerome Robbins, George Balanchine and Bob Fosse often used this technique in their shows in the 1930s - 1950s. This type of dance sequence was seen in shows such as *On Your Toes*, *Carousel*, *West Side Story*, *The King and I*, *Allegro*, *Flower Drum Song*, *Singing in the Rain*, *The Pajama Game*, *Pal Joey*, *One Touch*

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of *Venus*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Fosse

In 1978, on the heels of the successful musical *A Chorus Line*, director/choreographer Bob Fosse decided to create a revue with little singing and no plot. *Dancin'* was Fosse's tribute to the art of dance and its many different styles. The show won the Tony Award for **Best Choreography**.

More Dance Musicals

In 1996, Savion Glover's ***Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk*** used dance to tell the history of African Americans from slavery to the present.

1999 brought ***Swing!***, a musical that celebrated the jazz of 1930-1946 with dance, song and acrobatics. And also *Fosse*, the Tony Award winning Best Musical and bookless revue that showcased the choreography of Bob Fosse.

2000 brought the Irish cultural celebration ***Riverdance*** and *Contact* by Susan Stroman and John Weidman.

Contact won the Tony Award for Best Musical of 2000 but with little dialogue, no original music, non-singing actors and pre-recorded music, some questioned what makes up a musical. This controversy created a new category for the Tony Awards called Best Special Theatrical Event.

Twyla's Dance Musicals

In 2002, Twyla Tharp conceived, directed and choreographed the blockbuster jukebox musical ***Movin' Out*** to the songs of Billy Joel. This show told the story of kids from New York's Long Island growing up in the 1960s. There was not much of a plot. A band above the stage sang all the songs, while the dancers acted out the songs on stage below. *Movin' Out* won a Tony Award for Best Choreography.

In 2006, Ms. Tharp choreographed another dance musical for Broadway to the music of Bob Dylan called ***The Times They Are A-Changin'***.

Then came 2010 and COME FLY AWAY.

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Photo Credit: Company of COME FLY AWAY. Photo: Joan Marcus 2011

Twyla Tharp's mom loved Frank Sinatra. She was a concert pianist who thought Frank was a versatile, incredible performer. Twyla told *The Chicago Sun Times*, "I grew up loving the dramatic and emotional

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resonance of his song interpretations. Of course he was a movie star then, too — a fantastic actor, especially in *From Here to Eternity*.”

Tharp explained to *Access Atlanta*, that when she once spoke to Sinatra, he explained that he wanted to be a dancer. “He was a boxer as a young man, so he understood rhythm in a real physical sense. And just as dancers move from their core, he sang from his core.”

Tharp has choreographed five works to Frank Sinatra's music: *Once More Frank* in 1976, *Nine Sinatra Songs* in 1982, *Sinatra Suite* in 1984, *Come Fly With Me* in 2009 and *COME FLY AWAY* in 2010.

When asked by *The Hollywood Reporter* about her fascination with Sinatra, Ms. Tharp replied, “Certainly he was a wonderful musician, with a real ear for contemporary deliveries, mainly jazz vocal rhythms. I always think of his songs as monologues.”

In fact, during *COME FLY AWAY*, Sinatra's voice acts as the narrator of the show and both Sinatra and Tharp themes revolve around love lost and found.

Tharp's first Sinatra creation, *Once More Frank*, was choreographed for an American Ballet Theatre gala and was performed by Tharp and Mikhail Baryshnikov.

Nine Sinatra Songs

Five years later Tharp choreographed ballroom style dancing for the Milos Forman Hollywood film *Ragtime*. A year after her work on that film came *Nine Sinatra Songs*. Costumed in beautiful dresses and tuxedos by designer Oscar de la Renta, the cast performed a variety of ballroom dances from Flamenco to Tango to Apache. Critics often call *Nine Sinatra Songs* the best work of Tharp's career.

In 1983, when Frank Sinatra received the Kennedy Center Honors Award, he requested that Baryshnikov perform a selection from Tharp's *Nine Sinatra Songs*.

1984 brought *Sinatra Suite*, a series of five songs for two dancers featuring [Mikhail Baryshnikov](#) and [Elaine Kudo](#).

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Tharp was not finished with Frank yet. It took 25 years before she brought Ol' Blue Eyes back singin' and swingin' in *Come Fly With Me*. The show opened at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta to great reviews. Featuring Frank's vocals, a live big band on stage and four couples, it was a precursor to COME FLY AWAY.

When asked by *The Hollywood Reporter* why she has done so many projects using Frank Sinatra, Tharp replied, "They're all very different. The first was a completely abstract piece; the second one has some sense of place and relationship to it but just between individual couples. Baryshnikov's version had a much stronger character persona - the lonely-guy-that-we-all-love-in-his-misery type thing. COME FLY AWAY is an examination of four of the couples from *Nine Sinatra Songs* in much more depth-about their relationships and how they did or didn't stick together."

Sinatra Family

[Tina Sinatra, Frank's daughter](#), is a big fan of Twyla's claiming that Tharp can truly "interpret her father's swagger, his flair. She really captures the essence of him." Tina recalls her father declaring, "Twyla gives me class."

The Sinatra family has been very supportive of COME FLY AWAY. So supportive, in fact, that they provided new vocal tracks from the family archives.

Ms. Sinatra said of COME FLY AWAY, "all the dancers who work in this show say that while it's great to perform to classical music, there is something about dancing to these love songs from the American songbook that is special. It just feels so natural."

Tharp told *Access Atlanta* that she did have dinner with Sinatra several times and that Frank said when he watched her choreography to his music, "it made him cry because he's never seen his songs danced to."

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THE DANCER: TALKING WITH ANTHONY BURRELL

Mr. Burrell's career has taken him dancing around the world with Beyoncé and Katy Perry. He has performed as a principal dancer with the famed Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Burrell has been seen in commercials, videos and feature films and now joins the national tour of Twyla Tharp's COME FLY AWAY.



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EXTRA: When did you start dancing?

BURRELL: I started my dance training when I was 12 at the Point Breeze Performing Arts Center in Philadelphia. At the end of the summer, I took a free ballet class. Then, I attended the Technology and Performing Arts High School in Philadelphia. I studied five days a week. After school, I was in the studio from 4:00 'til 9:00 taking classes, brushing up my technique and working on my own choreography. That was my life for my entire high school years. Coming from the inner city in Philadelphia there's not much to motivate you, but when you find something that you truly love, it becomes an escape. It allowed me to have an outlet. I didn't have to talk about it; I could just dance it and get it off my chest.

I don't like committing myself to one style of dance. Dance is universal and it is important to know all mediums of dance. I have gone back and forth from ballet to hip hop to Broadway to jazz and back to ballet. It keeps me fresh and on my toes. I believe if you can dance one style, you can dance them all.

EXTRA: After high school, what did you do?

BURRELL: I went to the University of the Arts for a year and at the end of that year the director of [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#), Judith Jamison, was receiving an award. The studio I taught at was performing. So I thought, how brilliant would it be if I did a solo for Judith Jamison? After that performance she gave me her number, arranged transportation for me to audition and they put me in the junior company for a year. The following year, she took me into the first company. It's not too often that you get to work with a dance legend. But I have gotten to work first hand with all these women who are influential in the arts...been fed knowledge, under the tutelage of such great artists. Judith Jamison, Joan Brown from Philadanco!, Beyoncé, Twyla Tharp...

EXTRA: How did you get to work with Beyoncé?

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BURRELL: Beyoncé's choreographer called a dancer at the Ailey Company and was looking for guys six feet or over to do something technical with Beyoncé. I went to audition and all the other guys were shorter than I was. I didn't look like what they expected and they didn't expect me to be a good dancer. They had me do a couple dance steps; I did it and they asked me what I thought about joining the tour. I told them I had a job. They asked, "at a restaurant?" I said, "no, I work as a principal dancer for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater." They said, "That's a job to you?" I said, "of course it's a job, I have a salary, I get benefits." It was weird, but I accepted the job to tour with Beyoncé internationally. I've toured with Destiny's Child, Rhianna and Katy Perry.

EXTRA: How has travel influenced your dance?

BURRELL: I've been traveling since 1999. Every city is different, the culture, the food, but we can all communicate through the language of dance. And with COME FLY AWAY, relationships are relationships. Everyone can understand a first kiss, a first fight. Alvin Ailey has this quote, "Dance is for everybody. I believe that the dance came from the people and that it should always be delivered back to the people." Dance always has a story. As an audience member, it always has a story for you to follow.

EXTRA: What was your first experience with Frank Sinatra?

BURRELL: My first experience was probably in college, hearing of the Rat Pack and the song, "New York, New York."

A lot of people think Frank Sinatra is for old people, but this show is very vibrant, uplifting, fun, sexy, glitz, non-stop and an array of colors. It is a show for all ages and I encourage the 18-30 crowd to come out because it is an excellent production.

I learned that his music transcends time and is relatable to this generation. I like to see myself dancing like Frank's vocals, not forced or straining. His vocals and Twyla's choreography are genius.

EXTRA: How has it been working with Twyla Tharp?

BURRELL: Twyla Tharp is known universally and to be under her tutelage learning "That's Life" and "One For My Baby" is awesome. Mikhail Baryshnikov did that with Twyla Tharp and now I'm learning it from her first hand! How often do you get a golden opportunity like that? I feel so blessed and honored to be a principal with her and an ambassador of dance.

EXTRA: What's next for Anthony Burrell?

BURRELL: I love the arts. I took voice lessons, acting, Karate. At school I was trained in all aspects of the arts, being well-versed is important. Never, ever stop growing as an artist. This has stuck with me throughout my career. And when I was injured, I wanted to focus on my acting. Being injured, you think, "this could be the end for me" (of dance). So I have been acting and will be filming "[War Zone 3](#)" next summer. I know that acting is where my career will go for the next level.

EXTRA: How did you get hired for [COME FLY AWAY](#)?

BURRELL: I got a call from my agent saying Twyla was looking for a big guy and I fit the demographic. I'm 6' 1 ½", 200 pounds. They were looking for someone with a bit of acting as well as dancing and that's what sold me. I learned the combination and they offered me the job the next day.

EXTRA: I'd be remiss if I didn't ask you about [So You Think You Can Dance](#). You had so many fans that were angry you got voted off.

BURRELL: I guess what really happened during the competition was that they gave me accolades saying I was the one to watch and if I joined the show, the All-Stars would be honored to dance with me considering the great background that I had.

But when it came time, they told me I was too experienced. They wanted to be able to mold and shape someone. I already had two careers with Ailey and Beyoncé. That's what all those dancers are working towards. They wanted to nurture someone and give someone that chance. I was seven years older than everyone in the rest of the [competition](#).

I was glad to do it though and show America that you could wear tights and

be masculine and dance. Let everyone know men are capable of dancing and being great at it. It did reach an audience worldwide because I got messages from Norway, Africa, New Zealand...saying the passion that I exuded inspired them.

That's what dance is about for me. I don't do it for the money or the fame. I do it to inspire someone, because I was once that kid who was once inspired.

Visit the Anthony Burrell [YouTube channel](#)

Photo Credit: Tarrice Love

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Native Canadian Trumpeter Mike Herriott has played not only for *Jersey Boys*, *Guys and Dolls*, *West Side Story*, and *Chicago*, but for the famed group Canadian Brass, the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Victoria Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, and [Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra](#). He has recorded TV themes, jingles and film soundtracks for Universal, Sony and Disney. In demand by orchestras and bands all over the world, Herriott was asked to record music that Twyla Tharp used to choreograph one of the songs in COME FLY AWAY.



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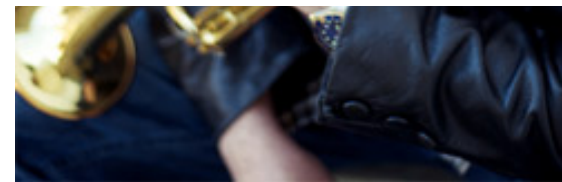
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EXTRA: When did you start playing the trumpet?

HERRIOTT: I was six years old when I started playing the trumpet. My family was musical, even our sewing machine was a Singer. I heard some trumpet playing on the TV, so I asked my dad what that was. He happened to have his trumpet in the basement from his college days. He gave me that, showed me where the mouthpiece went, gave me a fingering chart; some melodies to play and I figured it out. I just fell in love with the sound of the instrument. So, I never really turned back, ever since, I always imagined myself playing the [trumpet for a living](#).

EXTRA: How did you get into jazz, big band music and improvisation?

HERRIOTT: I spent a year with a military reserve group in Ottawa where I was surrounded by a lot of jazz players and that got me curious about it. In university, I joined the jazz band because it was cool to play. But my first foray into the world of improvisation was with a former teacher of mine who was in the band I was playing in at a wedding gig. He played all the jazz solos and on this one piece, all of sudden, four beats before he was to start playing, he said, "Mike, you take this one." I didn't really have time to think. I just stood up and did what I figured he might do. I muddled around with the melodic line and added some information of my own. I got a real kick out of it and from there on I did whatever I could to explore the language of jazz. I really dig playing on this show because I get to do some improvisation and to play lead trumpet in a big band.

EXTRA: How many musicians are in the band that travels with you in COME FLY AWAY?

HERRIOTT: It is a 14-piece big band with three trumpets, three trombones, four saxes and a four-piece rhythm section.

EXTRA: What's the difference between playing in a traditional Broadway show and a show like COME FLY AWAY?

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HERRIOTT: One of the cool things about this show is that we are right there on stage where the audience can see us. Most traditional shows, the band is sitting in the pit. You can see the featured musicians at work. Since the show takes place in a jazz club in the 1960s, we are the band and we interact with the dancers. I love being able to see what's happening on the stage and watching the dancers. Whereas when you have a singer, the band is basically accompanying whatever is happening on stage. For this show, the band is very much a part of the show. For my part, I memorized all the music so I could watch the dancing. I find the dancing is fascinating. It is almost like they are weightless and I find it gives a new perspective to where the music is coming from. This is something I can sink my teeth in.

EXTRA: How does it work with you improvising the music with the choreography?

HERRIOTT: When I'm playing a solo, what I'm doing is not as crucial to what's going on as what the rhythm section is doing. The choreography doesn't really have to match what I'm playing.

EXTRA: Frank Sinatra's voice is pre-recorded but the band is playing live. How does that work?

HERRIOTT: From the Sinatra estate, they took original recordings and they put what they call a "click track" to those recordings. They match up a click or tapping sound on a separate track and that matches up with what the drummer is doing on the original recording. Then using the original Sinatra recording, they digitally remove the orchestra. A lot of times, he was in an isolated booth when it was recorded. Then, our music director, who's playing piano, and the drummer both have the click track in their ear, and at the beginning of each tune there's a count in. That's how they know when to start. The rest of the band gets a count in or a drum roll from the music director that lets us know when the tune is about to begin. All we hear is Frank's voice and go with what the rhythm section is doing. For us, it is the same as what we would experience if we were playing with any band with a live singer.

EXTRA: Were you familiar with the man and his music?

HERRIOTT: I have always been a huge fan of Frank Sinatra. One of the

main things musicians gravitate towards with Sinatra's singing is the way he would phrase a musical line. I know a lot of instrumentalists that have spent a lot of time just listening to Frank Sinatra singing a ballad to figure out how to musically phrase a ballad when playing it on a horn. For me, it is just a real thrill to be able to play with a singer who sings like that.

For more information on Mike Herriott go to: mikeherriott.com

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vocals by
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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 performances of COME FLY AWAY 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.

Can't make it to the Pre-Show Talk? Listen live on opening night (May 8) at 6:30 p.m. on WCLV 104.9 FM or watch live on wclv.com. The video will be available for viewing after opening night at playhousesquare.org/broadwaybuzz.

Catch our Post-Show Chats with the Cast following Thursday evening performances (May 10 and 17).

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