

PALACE THEATRE

presents

SOMETHING to Damn Yankees at DANCE ABOUT: the Palace Theatre



By Chris Morgan

Damn Yankees has been a hit with audiences since its Broadway debut. This month, London Community Players (LCP) take us out to the ballgame with their production of the beloved baseball musical. The show runs from Nov. 28 – Dec. 8 at the Palace Theatre (710 Dundas Street).

Legendary choreographer and director Bob Fosse worked on Damn Yankees years before he became world-famous for his film Cabaret, which won eight Academy Awards in 1973.

Damn Yankees was the second musical Fosse choreographed and subsequent productions paid homage to his lasting influence. LCP's staging of the show shares this influence, a fact to which choreographers Mel Kern and Mel Stewart readily assent.

"My love of Bob Fosse is what compelled me the most," Stewart said when asked why she got involved with Damn Yankees.

"His choreography is always a source of inspiration. I think most people who are familiar with Fosse have a certain expectation when they see a Fosse musical, so I like to be sure to give each piece a certain 'nod' to his work," she said.

Kern echoed Stewart's sentiments. "It's hard not to be inspired by Bob Fosse when working on a show he is attached to," Kern said.

"He's an icon of innovation in musical theatre. I usually let the music and lyrics inspire the choreography I create, and in this case, always including a tip of the hat to Bob Fosse," she added.

Building on a longtime friendship and over two decades of professional experience in choreography-related activities, Kern and Stewart are grateful to have been able to collaborate together on Damn Yankees.

"The opportunity to work with Mel Stewart was something I couldn't pass up. We've danced together most of our lives and it's rare we have the chance to work together in a choreographic capacity," Kern said.

"I was very excited at the prospect of working with Mel Kern again. It's been years since Mel and I have worked together, and it's always such a treat to work with one of your best friends," Stewart agreed.

Various musicals boast incredible choreography, but Damn Yankees is uniquely endowed in this regard. Many of the dance scenes Kern and Stewart created for the show involve a majority of male performers, which is uncommon for productions of this kind and scale.

"What I really love about this show is the strong male emphasis. One doesn't often see a large number of strong male dancers in community theatre and I'm really excited for audiences to see our ball team!" Stewart mused enthusiastically.

"I think one of the most impressive parts of this production is that we have so many males who are incredibly talented dancers," Kern agreed.

"This is a very rare occurrence in community theatre. The ball players - along with an amazingly talented cast and crew - have created a show that is sure to 'wow' the audience," she said.



Photos: Ross Davidson



Rehearsals

PALACE THEATRE

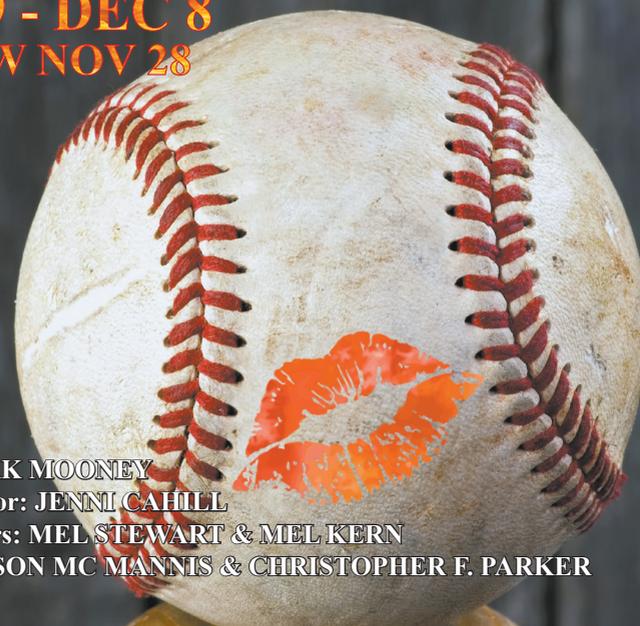
2019 / 2020 Season Presented by London Community Players



DAMN YANKEES

Words & Music: RICHARD ADLER & JERRY ROSS
Book: GEORGE ABBOTT & DOUGLASS WALLOP

NOV 29 - DEC 8
PREVIEW NOV 28



Director: MARK MOONEY
Musical Director: JENNI CAHILL
Choreographers: MEL STEWART & MEL KERN
Producers: JASON MC MANNIS & CHRISTOPHER F. PARKER

"Damn Yankees" is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI, 423 55th Street, New York, NY 10019 Tel: (212) 541-4684 Fax: (212) 397-4684 www.MTIShows.com



710 DUNDAS STREET, LONDON, ON N5W 2Z4
TICKETS: (519) 432 - 1029 | www.palacetheatre.ca



If you go

Thursday Nov 28th – Nov 30th & Dec 4th – Dec 7th @ 7:30pm.
Matinees Saturday & Sunday, Nov 30th, Dec 1st, 7th & 8th @ 2:00pm
Tickets: Adults \$31, Senior/Students \$29, Youth \$19,
Group (10 or more) \$21, Preview Night \$21

Available at the box office 519-432-1029 or online www.palacetheatre.ca