

MEDIA RELEASE

THE
COURT
THEATRE

30 October 2017

For immediate release

Chicago

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

Directed by Stephen Robertson

Musical Direction by Richard Marrett

25 November 2017 – 20 January 2018

Tonkin & Taylor Main Stage at The Court Theatre

Show sponsor: Golden Healthcare

Murder, Fame and all that Jazz.

Welcome to a world where celebrity is everything, sex sells and you can get away with murder if you razzle-dazzle the media. The Court Theatre's *Chicago* holds a dark mirror up to society in this razor-sharp satire.

In 1920s Chicago, wannabe vaudeville performer Roxie Hart murders her lover in a jealous rage and finds herself at the centre of a media circus. Sent to Cook County Prison, Roxie encounters the Six Merry Murderesses, Velma Kelly, and hotshot lawyer Billy Flynn. With its mix of sex, sin and show-stopping tunes, *Chicago* is the longest-running American musical in Broadway history.

Stephen Robertson and Richard Marrett have helmed a string of hit summer musicals at The Court Theatre, including *Grease*, *Mary Poppins*, and *Legally Blonde the Musical*. As Musical Director, Marrett oversees the sound of iconic musical numbers like "All That Jazz", "Roxie" and "They Both Reached for the Gun"; Robertson takes on the triple tasks of Director, Choreographer and Costume Designer. Working closely with Set Designer Harold Moot, Robertson oversees almost every visual aspect of the show. The role is challenging, but "brings continuity," says Robertson. "I can see the whole production in my mind and visualise the colours, bodies and designs."

The creative team have embraced the setting of prohibition-age Chicago. "We made the decision early on to take it back to its roots and set it in the mid-20s" says Robertson. "I love the era - visually there's so much to tap into for the stage and the costumes. It's more faithful to the original than you'd see on Broadway."

Finding the right double act to play Roxie and Velma was key, with countless performers auditioning for the roles. "It was a juggling act to find the right chemistry" says Robertson. Fortunately, the creative team found their perfect Roxie in Nomi Cohen (previously seen in The Court's *Legally Blonde the Musical*) and Velma in Darlene Mohekey (from TV One's *Facelift*). Robertson says both actresses "blew all of us away" with their auditions.

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As a bonus unknown to the production team during casting, Cohen and Mohekey are good friends who have performed together previously, making their on-stage rapport (and rivalry) that much easier. “We found out at the same time,” says Cohen. “In that moment, I not only realised I got the role but that I completely trust my on-stage counterpart.”

Both Cohen and Mohekey are excited about the style of the production. “The costumes are stunning,” says Cohen. Mohekey agrees. “It will feel more like a transportation back in time. It will have those magic moments of a live musical where the stage is transformed in front of your eyes.”

Artistic Director of The Court Theatre, Ross Gumbley, believes that *Chicago* resonates strongly for modern audiences. “Maurice Dallas Watkins wrote the original stage play as satire, but you’d be forgiven for thinking that she was being prophetic. All around us we increasingly see celebrity trump substance; social media or spin drowning out the truth; and scandal after scandal fighting for the spotlight. With *Chicago*, you get a show that speaks to today wrapped up with some of the best songs in Broadway history.”

Step back into the 1920s and enjoy one of musical theatre’s most iconic shows: a tale of exploitation, adultery, fame, greed, corruption, murder, and all that jazz.

CAST

Velma Kelly: [Darlene Mohekey](#)

Roxie Hart: [Nomi Cohen](#)

Billy Flynn: [Roy Snow](#)

Mama Morton: [Eilish Moran](#)

Mary Sunshine: [Isaac Pawson](#)

Amos Hart: [Rutene Spooner](#)

Male Ensemble/Dance Captain: [Jeremy Hinman](#)

Male Ensemble:

[Olly Humphries](#)

[Jack Marshall](#)

[Fergus Inder](#)

[Oliver Davidson](#)

[Ben Freeth](#)

[Craig Lough](#)

Female Ensemble:

[Kira Josephson](#)

[Melinda Joe](#)

[Bianca Paine](#)

[Jane Leonard](#)

[Brylee Lockhart](#)

[Hillary Moulder](#)

[Allis Oliver-Kerby](#)

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BAND

Musical Director: [Richard Marrett](#)

Trumpet: [Cameron Pearce](#)

Trombone: [Pablo Ruiz Henao](#)

Reeds: [Reuben Derrick](#)

Drums: [Tim Sellars](#)

Bass: [Michael Story](#)

Assistant Musical Director/Repetiteur: [Matt Everingham](#)

2nd Keys Sub: [Hamish Oliver](#)

Trumpet sub: Iain MacLachlan

Bass sub: Richard Pickard

CREATIVE TEAM

Director: [Stephen Robertson](#)

Musical Director: [Richard Marrett](#)

Choreographer /Costume Designer: [Stephen Robertson](#)

Stage Manager: [Ashlyn Smith](#)

Set Designer: [Harold Moot](#)

Lighting Designer (The Light Site): [Grant Robertson](#)

Sound Designers (Bounce): [Ben Rentoul](#) & [Glen Ruske](#)

Assistant Stage Manager: [Emma Shaw](#)

Lighting Operator: [Darren McKane](#)

Sound Operator: [Stephen Compton](#)

Properties Manager: Christy Lassen

Head of Costume: Sarah Douglas

Wigs: Sarah Buchanan

Head Technician: Giles Tanner

Construction & Premises Manager: Bryce Goddard

Production Manager: Flore Charbonnier

Ticket Prices:

- Adult: \$68-\$75
- Child (U18): \$42-\$50
- Senior 65yrs+: \$56-\$63
- Group 6+: \$53-\$60
- Court Supporter: \$53-\$60
- [30 Below](#): \$30

Bookings: phone 03 963 0870 or visit www.courttheatre.org.nz

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Show Times:

- 6.30pm: Monday & Thursday
- 7.30pm: Tue/Wed/Fri/Sat
- Forum 6:30pm Monday 27 November – Discuss the play with cast and creative team after the performance
- 2.00pm Saturday 16 December: Matinee

<ENDS>

Images can be found at The Court Theatre's [Media Centre](#)

For more information or to arrange an interview please contact:
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The Court Theatre, 03 963 0884, 0275 22 9700
samantha.mcconnell@courtheatre.org.nz

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