

# *Putting It Together*

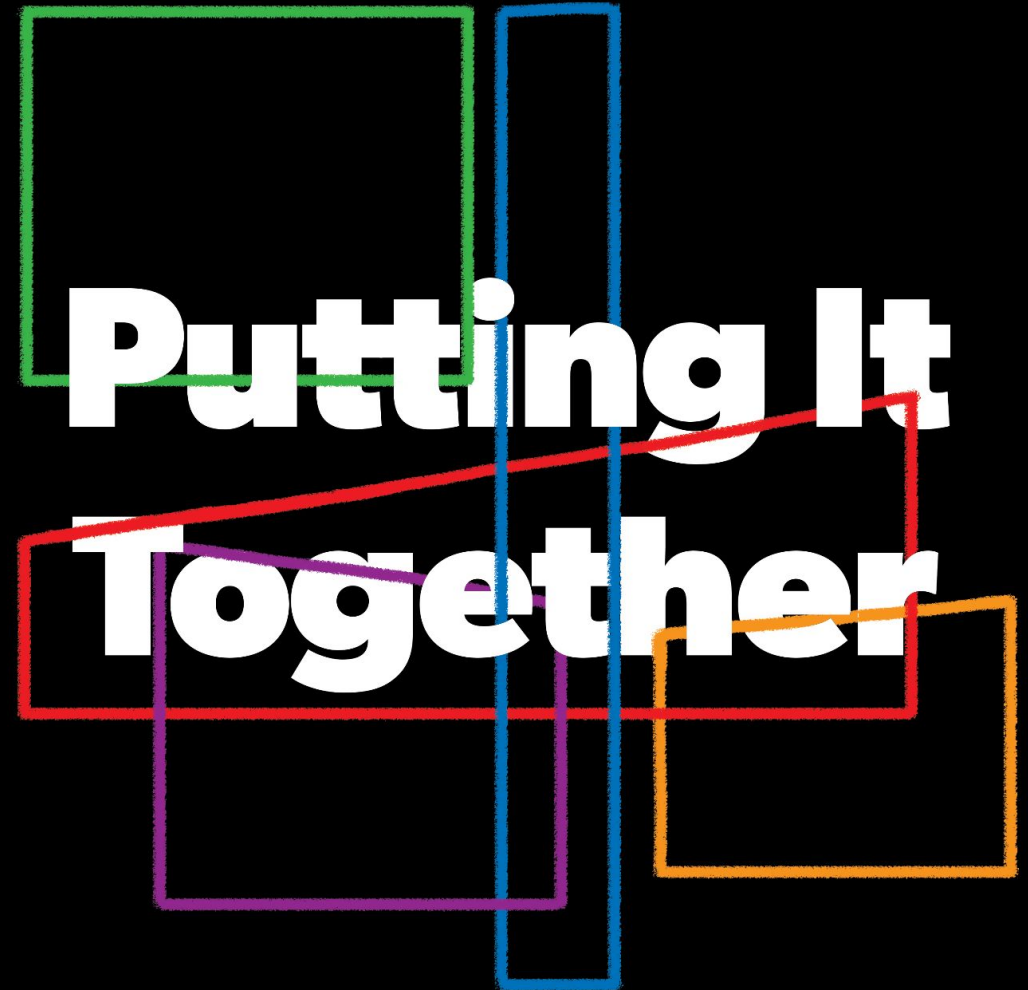
Words & Music by Stephen Sondheim  
Devised by Stephen Sondheim & Julia McKenzie  
Directed & Choreographed by Gerry McIntyre

**March 3-18, 2023**

## **SPOTLIGHT STUDY GUIDE** For Teachers and Students



Pioneer Theatre Company's Student Matinee Program is made possible through the support of Salt Lake County's Zoo, Arts, and Parks Program, The Simmons Family Foundation, and The Meldrum Foundation Endowment Fund.



# Synopsis and History



*Putting It Together* is a musical revue featuring songs by Stephen Sondheim. The show takes place at a party thrown by an older couple facing marital troubles, with guests including a younger couple struggling with their feelings and desires and a commentator who oversees and influences the action. While conflicts occur, all is reconciled before dawn.

Theatre Producer, Cameron Mackintosh invited Stephen Sondheim to create a brand-new revue of some of his notable songs. The show was first staged in 1992 in Oxford, England, in a production directed by Julia McKenzie.

The show moved to New York, where it was produced by the Manhattan Theatre Club at the City Center Theatre. In 1998, a new version premiered in Los Angeles with a cast featuring Carol Burnett, George Hearn, John Barrowman, Ruthie Henshall, and Bronson Pinchot. This new production transferred to Broadway, where it began previews at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre on October 30, 1999. *Putting It Together* officially opened on November 21, 1999.



*Putting It Together* ran on Broadway for 22 previews and 101 regular performances before closing on February 20, 2000. The musical revue continues to be performed around the world!

<https://www.filmedlivemusicals.com/putting-it-together.html>

# Musical Revue vs Book Musical

*Putting It Together* is considered a “Musical Revue” but how is that different from a traditional “Book musical?”

**Book Musical:** A book musical is normally made up of three major elements; music, lyrics, and script (book). In most cases, the script or story is created first, and then the score (music and lyrics) is created afterward as a way of developing the characters and furthering the narrative. A book musical is defined as a performance where musical numbers and dances are fully integrated into a proper narrative with defined dramatic goals.

**Musical Revue:** A revue is a type of musical theatre entertainment which loosely combines singing, dancing, music, and sometimes sketches by a common theme. Although a revue can have a sketch of a storyline, this is not always typical and any story is usually secondary to the individual pieces and performances within the revue. Revues may be staged by particular composers or performers to showcase their own work.

Because *Putting It Together* is show created by combining Stephen Sondheim songs already written for other musicals into a loosely based evening built around the theme of relationships, the show is considered a “Musical Revue.”

<http://www.musicalstages.co.uk/different-types-musical/>



# Activity

## HOW MANY MUSICAL REVUES DO YOU KNOW?!

Try and match the revue descriptions below to their titles:

### TITLES

- 1.) *Ain't Misbehavin'* \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) *Oh, Coward!* \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.) *Tintypes* \_\_\_\_\_
- 4.) *Tomfoolery* \_\_\_\_\_
- 5.) *The World Goes 'Round* \_\_\_\_\_

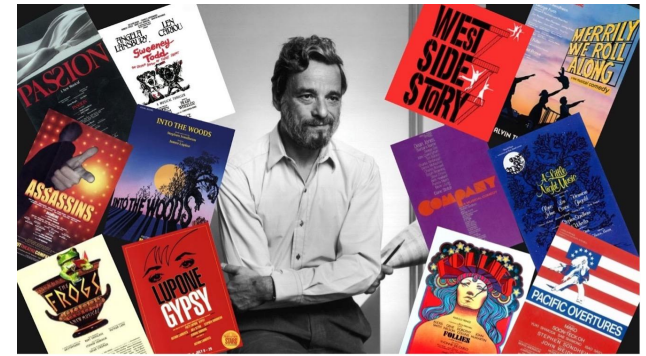
### DESCRIPTIONS

- A) A witty and twisted revue of the satirical songwriter Tom Lehrer.
- B) A look into pre-World War I America using songs from 1890-1917.
- C) Musical celebration of the life and work of Noel Coward.
- D) The songbook musical of the writing duo Kander and Ebb.
- E) The music of American jazz composer and pianist, Fats Waller.

Answers: 1-E, 2-C, 3-B, 4-A, 5-D

# Meet Composer & Lyricist Stephen Sondheim

Stephen Joshua Sondheim is widely recognized as one of the greatest musical theater composers of the twentieth century. How much do you know about the composer and lyricist?



- Stephen Joshua Sondheim was born on March 22, 1930 in New York City.
- Sondheim has traced his passion for musical theater back to a production of *Very Warm for May* which he saw on Broadway at the age of nine. He recalls, “The curtain went up and revealed a piano. A butler took a duster and brushed it up, tinkling the keys. I thought it was thrilling.”
- At age 10, after his parents divorced, Stephen befriended James Hammerstein who was the son of Oscar Hammerstein II (American lyricist, known for his collaboration with Richard Rodgers on shows such as *Oklahoma* and *The King and I*). Sondheim found a new father figure in Oscar Hammerstein, who brought Sondheim with his family to see Broadway shows and became both Sondheim’s writing teacher and inspiration.



- He studied piano and organ, and at age 15 he wrote a musical while attending George School in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.
- In 1957, Sondheim was asked to write the lyrics for a new musical re-working of *Romeo and Juliet*, which would become *West Side Story*. It was his artistic introduction to the Broadway stage. Sondheim worked alongside composer Leonard Bernstein to write the show’s lyrics despite their vastly different approaches.
- 1962’s *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* was the first show for which Sondheim wrote both music and lyrics. The musical won many Tonys, including Best Musical, but Sondheim’s score was not well received. This was a recurring theme for many of Sondheim’s musicals: he received consistent criticism that his lyrics were too dark, his tunes were not “hummable,” and the subject matter “wrong” for a musical. Sondheim’s response to those who thought his work inaccessible was “what I write has to be listened to more than once.”
- Sondheim was an avid fan of games and puzzles. In 1968 and 1969, he published a series of cryptic crossword puzzles in *New York Magazine*. In 1987, *Time Magazine* called his love of puzzle-making “legendary in theater circles.”

# Meet Stephen Sondheim

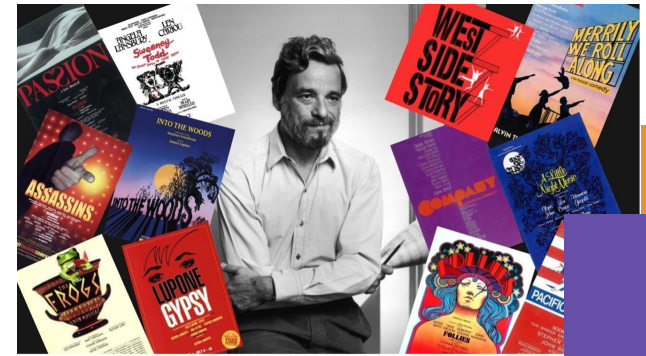
## *(continued)*

- In 2010, in celebration of his 80th birthday, the Henry Miller's Theatre on Broadway in New York City was renamed the Stephen Sondheim Theatre. Stephen Sondheim has a theatre named for him both on Broadway and in the West End of London.



*The Stephen Sondheim Theatre, NYC*

- Throughout his long and prolific career he won an Academy Award, eight Tony Awards, including a Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre award, eight Grammy Awards, seven Drama Desk Awards, a Pulitzer Prize, and six Laurence Olivier Awards. He was also honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Kennedy Center and was given the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2014.



Sondheim's unconventionality greatly changed the face of American theater. "Does it ever occur to me that I am developing any new kind of musical? ... Never!"

Despite the negligible commercial success of his musicals, Sondheim's music is widely celebrated and many of his songs have become standards of musical theater and jazz. The complexity of both his music and lyrics and the unique way he captures the world of his musical through song make his works stand out from the crowd.

Stephen Sondheim died November 26, 2021 at age 91.

## Sources

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_awards\\_and\\_nominations\\_received\\_by\\_Stephen\\_Sondheim](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_awards_and_nominations_received_by_Stephen_Sondheim)
- <https://everythingsondheim.org/about/about-stephen-sondheim/>
- <https://www.broadwayworld.com/article/10-Things-You-Might-Not-Know-About-Stephen-Sondheim-20200730>
- <https://www.factsnippet.com/site/facts-about-stephen-sondheim.html>
- <https://www.broadwayworld.com/theatre/Stephen-Sondheim-Theatre>
- <https://thehobbyhive.com/2018/04/05/30-fun-facts-about-stephen-sondheim/>
- <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Stephen-Sondheim>

# Which Came First: Lyrics or Music?

When he wrote, Sondheim says, he didn't necessarily always write the lyrics first or the music first; the process depended on what popped into his head.

"I will improvise or think of various melodic ideas and sometimes chord sequences. ... At the same time, I'm also jotting down any lyric," he says. "But I never go far without bringing the other one in, because you can paint yourself into a corner if you write a whole tune or even half a tune with no idea what you're going to say in it."

And when he needed to create a rhyme, Sondheim clarified that it was crucial to know what he wanted to say beforehand.

"Know what you want to say and then how you want to phrase what you want to say...as the music develops, you'll start to improvise a rhyme scheme or to sense a rhyme scheme. And then you'll say 'All right, I've got this line that ends with "day" and I want to say "She loves him,"' and then you go through the rhyming dictionary. But there's so many rhymes for 'day.' ... You make a list of rhymes that are in some way relevant, and then you use them."



## ACTIVITY: FINISH THE LYRIC

Choose from the rhymes provided below to complete the lyric:

"There's nothing more to SAY,  
I can't believe my \_\_\_\_\_,  
It's quite a switch how I feel rich,  
Okay, I guess I'll \_\_\_\_\_."

(*RHYMES: CLAY, DAY, PAY, PLAY, PRAY, STAY, WAY*)

# “Bit by bit, putting it together...”

Each song in *Putting It Together* has been written for a specific character in another storyline and show. Here are some of the Sondheim musicals that they were originally written for:



## Dick Tracy

Hard-boiled detective Dick Tracy is searching for evidence that proves Alphonse "Big Boy" Caprice is the city's most dangerous crime boss. He may have found the key to unraveling the crimelord's illegal empire in Breathless Mahoney, played by Madonna. "Sooner or Later," "Back in Business," "Live Alone and Like It," and "More," are all Sondheim songs highlighted in this 1990 movie.

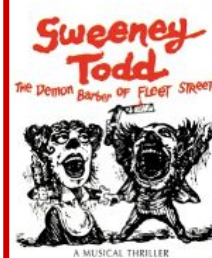
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## A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum

This a fast-paced farce combining the ancient comedies of Plautus with a vaudevillian delivery. Pseudolus schemes to win the heart of the beautiful virgin, Phelia, for his young master, Hero. In exchange, Hero will grant Pseudolus his freedom once and for all. However, chaos ensues with hair-brained schemes, cases of mistaken identity, slamming doors, and convoluted plot twists. Some song favorites include "Lovely" and "Everybody Ought to Have a Maid."

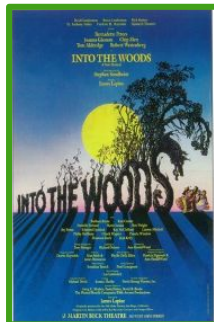
<https://stageagent.com/shows/musical/194/a-funny-thing-happened-on-the-way-to-the-forum>



## Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street

One of the darkest musicals ever written: the unsettling tale of a Victorian-era barber who returns home to London after exile to take revenge. When revenge eludes him, Sweeney swears vengeance by murdering as many people as he can, while his business associate Mrs. Lovett bakes the bodies into meat pies and sells them to the unsuspecting public. "Pretty Women" is a highlighted song in this show.

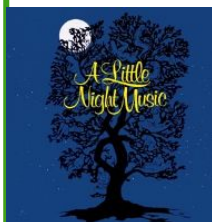
<https://stageagent.com/shows/musical/835/sweeney-todd>



## Into the Woods

The story follows a Baker and his wife, who wish to have a child; Cinderella, who wishes to attend the King's Festival; Jack, who wishes his cow would give milk; and Little Red Riding Hood, who almost gets digested by a wolf, "Hello Little Girl." When the Baker and his wife learn that they cannot have a child because of a Witch's curse, the two set out on a journey to break the curse. Everyone's wish is granted, but the consequences of their actions return to haunt them later.

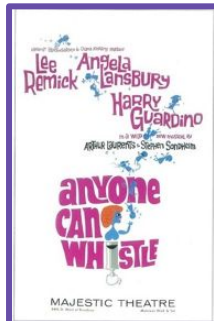
<https://www.mtishows.com/into-the-woods>



## A Little Night Music

It's the turn of the century, Sweden, and trysts abound. Fredrik Egerman has married 18-year-old Anne, with whom Fredrik's son, Henrik, has fallen in love. Desiree Armfeldt, a stage actress is involved with a married Count. But when Desiree spots her old flame Fredrik Egerman in the audience of her production, her interest in him is immediately rekindled. All parties meet for a "Weekend in the Country" where the tangled web of romantic involvements continues to surprise. Features "My Husband the Pig," "Everyday a Little Death" and "In Praise of Women."

<https://stageagent.com/shows/musical/203/a-little-night-music>



## Anyone Can Whistle


Corrupt Mayoress Cora Hoover Hooper and her cronies threaten a money-making scheme for the bankrupt town. When water suddenly springs from a rock, Cora sets her sights on making money from pilgrims desperate to receive the healing waters. But when Nurse Fay Apple, the skeptical nurse of the local insane asylum, brings her patients to the so-called miracle, Cora's plans are threatened and she turns to psychiatrist J. Haggood to straighten out who is mad and who is sane. Instead he declares everyone insane, and the town enjoys its madness in the face of conformity. Songs include "There's Always a Woman."

<https://stageagent.com/shows/musical/2417/anyone-can-whistle>



# “Bit by bit, putting it together...” (continued)

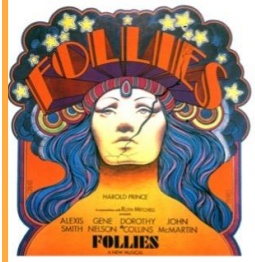
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**Assassins**

Feeling betrayed by the failed promise of American democracy and the American Dream, nine misfit men and women strike out at the symbol of America: the American President. Though only some were successful, all left their mark on American history. *Assassins* spans several musical styles and many decades in a dizzying series of musical and theatrical inventions that culminate in the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Songs included in this show include "Unworthy Of Your Love."


<https://stageagent.com/shows/musical/1424/assassins>



**Follies:**

In *Follies*, the time is 1971, and theatrical impresario, Dimitri Weissmann, hosts a reunion of ex-*Follies* performers in his crumbling theatre, setting the stage for a parade of brilliant pastiche numbers, including "Could I Leave You" "Buddy's Blues" and "The Road You Didn't Take." Amid the reminiscing, two middle-aged couples confront some unpleasant truths about their past and present, coming face-to-face with the future.

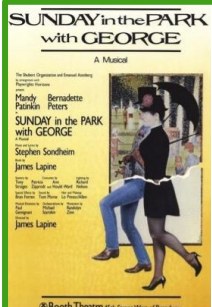
<https://www.mtishows.com/follies>



**Company**

On his 35th birthday, lone bachelor Robert struggles to think of a wish to make as he blows out his birthday candles. Over a series of dinner parties, first dates, and thoughtful conversations, Robert attempts to understand marriage from his diverse friends and begins to make sense of his own persistent bachelorhood. Sondheim's groundbreaking modern musical, is a mature, intelligent, and wildly funny look at relationships, vulnerability, and "being alive." Other songs highlight wedding days "Not Getting Married Today", getting older "Ladies Who Lunch," and "Marry Me a Little."

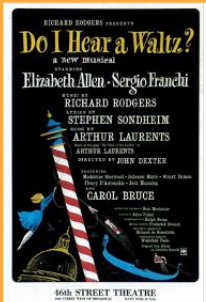
<https://stageagent.com/shows/musical/1472/company>



**Sunday in the Park with George:**

Inspired by George Seurat's painting, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, the musical begins with George and his model & lover Dot. As George struggles to find his artistic voice, he becomes more and more distant from the one woman who truly sees him for who he really is. Meanwhile, the characters that inhabit George's painting have lives unto themselves. A century later, George and Dot's descendants, themselves struggling artists, grapple with the same issues of artistic ingenuity, and a public who just doesn't understand.

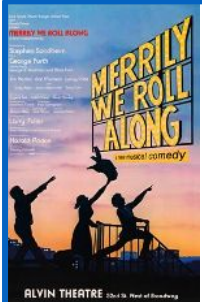
<https://stageagent.com/shows/musical/1249/sunday-in-the-park-with-george>



**Do I Hear a Waltz**

Leona is a woman who has dedicated her life to her family after the death of her parents. She decides to travel to Venice in search of the love she has never known and finds Renato - who sadly fails to match up to her romantic ideals. Too late she realizes she has finally thrown away her last remaining chance of true love. Songs included in this show include "Do I Hear A Waltz?"

[http://www.guidetomusicaltheatre.com/shows\\_d/doihearawaltz.htm](http://www.guidetomusicaltheatre.com/shows_d/doihearawaltz.htm)



**Merrily We Roll Along**

Based on George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart's 1934 play of the same name, *Merrily We Roll Along* follows the successful career of Broadway composer turned Hollywood producer Franklin Shepard backward in time with his best friends and collaborators Charley and Mary. Although time regresses from 1976 to 1957, Franklin learns the cost of fame and fortune: losing and alienating his beloved friends and family along the way. He ultimately realizes that he has left himself with nothing of any value. Other songs include "Rich and Happy," "Good Thing Going," and "Like It Was."

<https://stageagent.com/shows/musical/2284/merrily-we-roll-along>

# Putting It Together

## Musical Numbers

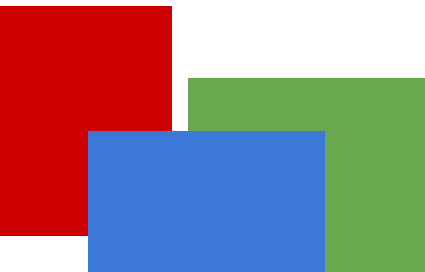


### Act I

- Invocation and Instructions to the Audience (from *The Frogs*)
- Putting It Together (from *Sunday in the Park with George*)
- Rich and Happy (from *Merrily We Roll Along*)
- Do I Hear a Waltz? (from *Do I Hear a Waltz?*)
- Merrily We Roll Along #1 (from *Merrily We Roll Along*)
- Lovely (from *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*)
- Hello Little Girl (from *Into the Woods*)
- My Husband the Pig (from *A Little Night Music*)
- Everyday a Little Death (from *A Little Night Music*)
- Everybody Ought to Have a Maid (from *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way to the Forum*)
- Have I Got a Girl for You (from *Company*)
- Pretty Women (from *Sweeney Todd*)
- Sooner or Later (from *Dick Tracy*)
- Bang! (from *A Little Night Music*)
- Country House (from *Follies*)
- Unworthy of Your Love (from *Assassins*)
- Merrily We Roll Along #2 (from *Merrily We Roll Along*)
- Could I Leave You? (from *Follies*)
- Rich and Happy (Reprise)

### Act II

- Back in Business (from *Dick Tracy*)
- It's Hot Up Here (from *Sunday in the Park with George*)
- The Ladies Who Lunch (from *Company*)
- The Road You Didn't Take (from *Follies*)
- Live Alone and Like It (from *Dick Tracy*)
- More (from *Dick Tracy*)
- There's Always a Woman (from *Anyone Can Whistle*)
- Buddy's Blues (from *Follies*)
- Good Thing Going (from *Merrily We Roll Along*)
- Marry Me a Little (from *Company*)
- Not Getting Married Today (from *Company*)
- Merrily We Roll Along #3 (from *Merrily We Roll Along*)
- Being Alive (from *Company*)
- Like It Was (from *Merrily We Roll Along*)
- Old Friends (from *Merrily We Roll Along*)



# Activity



## MAKE YOUR OWN MINI MUSICAL REVUE

- 1) Choose one of your favorite singers or musicians.
- 2) Pick 3 different songs of theirs that you love.
- 3) Create a character who might sing one of the songs in the world of musical theatre and then decide to whom they might sing it. This is your first song in your revue.
- 4) From the remaining two songs, choose a song that would best be a response that your 2<sup>nd</sup> character would sing back to the first character. What is the relationship between them?
- 5) Then think of a reason why either character, or both characters, would sing the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final song.
- 6) Now give your musical revue a title.

*Congratulations! You have put together your own mini musical revue!*

# The Cast

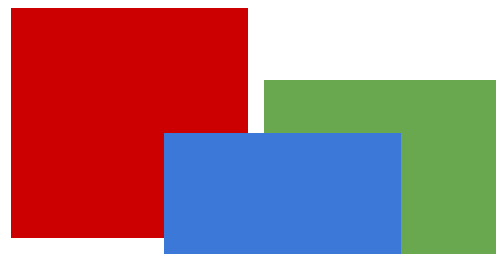


**JUDY MCLANE\*** (*The Wife*) is thrilled to be back at Pioneer where she played Diana in *Next to Normal*. Broadway credits include starring in *Mamma Mia!* as Donna and Tanya (over 4000 performances), *Kiss of the Spider Woman*—performing duets with Chita Rivera, *Aspects of Love*, and *Chess*. Off-Broadway: *Romeo & Bernadette* (Outer Critics Circle Award) and *Johnny Guitar* (Drama Desk Nomination and Drama League Honor). National/ International Tours: *Into the Woods*, *Side By Side By Sondheim* (dir. by Rob Marshall), *Joseph...Dreamcoat* (with Donny Osmond), *Big*. Select Regional: LaChiusa's *Los Otros* (World Premiere), *Follies* (Helen Hayes nomination), *Master Class*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Evita*, *Victor/Victoria*, *Man of La Mancha*. Film: *Were the World Mine*, *Hiding in Daylight* (Cannes Film Festival, Southampton International Film Festival Nomination). TV: *Madame Secretary*, *Elementary*, *The Blacklist*, Showtime Series *The Loudest Voice*. Instagram: @Judy.McLane



**NICHOLAS RODRIGUEZ\*** (*The Husband*) most recently appeared in the Tony Award-winning revival of Stephen Sondheim's *Company* on Broadway opposite Patti LuPone and Katrina Lenk. Other Broadway/National Tour credits include: *Tarzan* (Tarzan) and *The Sound of Music* (Captain Von Trapp) directed by Jack O'Brien. He is perhaps best known for his role as Nick Chavez on ABC's *One Life to Live* (GLAAD Award). His other television credits include *Tommy* (CBS) and *Madam Secretary* (CBS). Film: *Sex in the City II* (also soundtrack), *Still Here*, and *Double Exposure*. Off-Broadway: *Toxic Avenger*, *Almost Heaven*, *Death For Five Voices*, *Collette Collage*, and *Bajour*. He has been a soloist with many symphonies across the world and serves as Artistic Director for the Broadway Dreams Foundation. His debut CD *The First Time...* is available at PSClassics.com. TheNickRod.com

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association



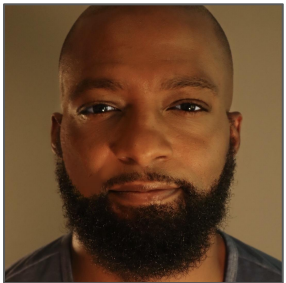
# The Cast *(continued)*



**BRENT THIESSEN\*** (A Young Associate) was born in Thunder Bay, Canada—a winter sports town. He loves to travel and, having been to more than 275 cities in over 30 countries, is excited to be in Salt Lake City for the very first time. The work of Stephen Sondheim has had an indescribable impact on Brent's life and he is honored to make his PTC debut with *Putting It Together*. In recognition of this production and Mr. Sondheim's legacy, Mr. Thiessen has made a donation to the Jonathan Larson Grants, which aim to support and cultivate the work of new musical theatre composers, lyricists, and librettists. Instagram: @BrentThiessen



**CAYLEIGH CAPALDI\*** (His Date) is thrilled to be making her PTC debut! She is an NYC-based actor, singer, and content creator. Regional credits: *Mary Poppins* (Mary Poppins); *Into the Woods* (Cinderella); *Little Women* (Jo March); *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Janet Van de Graff); *Macbeth* (Lady Macbeth); and *Our Town* (Emily Webb). TV: *Law & Order: Organized Crime* (NBC) and *Mrs. Fletcher* (HBO). Her short film *The Trail* premieres later this year. Cayleigh has reached over 275K followers and 35 million video views across all social media platforms with her singing, harmony, riff challenge, and lifestyle content. Recent magna cum laude graduate of Columbia University and Berklee College of Music, and fluent Mandarin speaker. A universe of love to M+D, Nana, Banjo & Ori, Angie, and Kimberly! @Cayleigh.Capaldi | CayleighCapaldi.com



**TYRICK WILTEZ JONES\*** (The Observer) Broadway/NY credits include: Jagwire in *Bat Out of Hell*, Howard in *Finian's Rainbow*, *Hairspray*. Broadway National Touring credits include: *Bat Out of Hell*, *Miss Saigon*, *Seussical*, *Fosse*, and *Show Boat*. Regional credits include: *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Stick Fly*, *Mom's Gift* w/Cindy Williams, *The Wiz*, *Once On This Island*, *Witness Uganda*, *From My Hometown* (WILDE Award), and many others. Other credits include: Grammy Awards 'Sam Smith Performance', *PHISH 2011 New Year's Eve concert at Madison Square Garden*, *Mary Wilson of the Supremes Motown/Rock and Roll North America Tour*, and US Premiere of *Sacred Ellington* starring Jessye Norman with the Carnegie Hall 'HONOR' Series. Some Film Credits include: *Fresh Kills* (upcoming), *Back to Me* (Independent Short), *Joyful Noise* (Assistant Choreographer), and Nickelodeon's *Shimmer and Shine* (Choreographer).

IG: @tyrickwjones. LOVE

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association