

## THE PRODUCERS

### BACK ROW PRODUCTIONS (PRODUCER)

The Managing Directors of Back Row Productions are Liz Koops and Garry McQuinn.

Back Row has successfully developed and presented innovative productions throughout the world for over a decade. In 1995 Back Row discovered *Tap Dogs* in Sydney, and have since produced the show on 6 continents, in more than 20 countries and over 250 cities – often with a number of companies touring simultaneously.

Back Row has produced a wide range of shows internationally, from *Slava's Snowshow* (presently playing off-Broadway) to the New York debut of Eddie Izzard, and from *Ningali* (the story of a remarkable young Aboriginal woman) to the record-breaking West End season and European tours of *Jerry Seinfeld*. In 1999 Back Row commissioned and developed the award-winning *Gumboots*, a show which features a troupe of dancers, singers and musicians from Soweto, South Africa.

In 2000 Back Row was acquired by Clear Channel, the largest live entertainment company in the world. While working within Clear Channel's London office Back Row consolidated the European and Asian touring circuits for all of their UK theatrical productions, and took responsibility for developing new international theatre markets, partnerships and strategies. In 2001 they launched the European tour of award-winning Broadway show *Fosse* in Hamburg, followed by seasons in Basel, Amsterdam, Tokyo and Paris. During this time Back Row also produced the hit show about motherhood, *Mum's the Word*, for its European, North American and regional tours prior to a West End opening in 2003.

The company's international reputation was consolidated through booking, managing and/or producing seasons of *Slava's Snowshow*, *Cats*, *Chicago*, *Bounce*, *Circus Oz*, *Gumboots*, *Tap Dogs*, *Lady Salsa*, *Fosse* and *Mum's the Word*.

In January 2005, Liz and Garry re-acquired the company from Clear Channel, once again becoming independent producers. They have since expanded the Back Row strategy to include general management and international booking consultancy for external clients. Forthcoming tours include seasons of *Miss Saigon*, (Lisbon), *Starlight Express* and *Chicago* (Athens), and *Cats* (Lisbon and Porto).

Currently on tour is *Matthew Bourne's Swan Lake* which was featured in the film *Billy Elliot* and went on to become the longest running contemporary ballet on both Broadway and the West End. Following a sell-out season in London's prestigious Sadler's Wells theatre, it has now embarked on an extensive international tour of Europe, Asia and North America, arriving in Australia in 2007.

### JOHN FROST (PRODUCER)

John Frost is the Managing Director of The Gordon Frost Organisation.

Born in Adelaide, he began in the business at the age of 16 as dresser for J.C. Williamson on their production of *Mame*. He has worked his way up the showbiz ladder: Wardrobe Master, Stage Manager, Company Manager and now Producer. In 1983 he joined forces with the late Ashley Gordon to form the Gordon/Frost Organisation. Together they negotiated the lease for Sydney's Footbridge Theatre, where they successfully produced a range of shows including, *Jerry's Girls*, *Night Mother*, *The Venetian Twins*, and *Women Behind Bars!*. The company then moved into large scale musicals such as *Big River*, *The King and I*, *South Pacific*, *Hello Dolly!*, *The Secret Garden*, *Smokey Joe's Café*, *Cabaret*, *Crazy for You* and *The New Mel Brooks Musical*.

He co-produced Sir Peter Hall's acclaimed productions of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband* starring Googie Withers and John McCallum and *Lady Windermere's Fan* starring Vanessa Redgrave and Joely Richardson at the Theatre Royal Haymarket in London.

In 1998 John Frost joined forces with James Erskine of Sports and Entertainment Limited (SEL) to produce *Grease – The Arena Spectacular!* The production broke all box office

records for an arena event in Australia. His production of *The King and I* on Broadway won the coveted Tony Award for 'Best Revival of a Musical' as well as the Drama Desk and New York Outer Critics Circle Award. *The King and I* is touring the UK after playing two years at the London Palladium. John has also been the recipient of two Mo Awards and, a Sydney Critics' Circle Award and a Lifetime Achievement Award in 1999 from GLUGS.

In 1999 John Frost and SEL presented *The Main Event*, which toured to critical acclaim and huge box office success. This was followed by a production of the Tony Award-winning play *Art* starring Tom Conti. *The Sound of Music* starring Lisa McCune was followed by *Annie* with Anthony Warlow, *Man of La Mancha*, *The Wizard of Oz* and *Footloose*.

In 2003, John won his second Tony Award for the Broadway smash hit musical *Hairspray* which he is co-producing with SEL. Currently, John is presenting the National Theatre's production of *An Inspector Calls*. During the 1999 Australia Day Honours, John was awarded an OAM for his Contribution to the Arts.

### **MICHAEL HAMLYN (PRODUCER)**

Michael Hamlyn began his career in the film industry in 1976 as an assistant director. In 1980 he went on to form Midnight Films with the director, Julian Temple. Midnight Film's credits included *The Secret Policeman's Other Ball* for Amnesty International, *It's All True* for the BBC and numerous music videos for bands such as the Rolling Stones and the Kinks.

In 1983 Michael took over Midnight Films and continued to produce music videos and films. While under Michael's control the company produced *Party Party* directed by Terry Windsor and *White City* with Pete Townsend, directed by Richard Lowenstein.

In 1987 Michael moved across the Atlantic to the United States to make *U2 Rattle and Hum*, directed by Phil Joanou. While in America Michael established Midnight Films Inc as a leading music video producer which had a client list boasting names such as U2, INXS and Bruce Springsteen. Between the years 1987 and 1989 Midnight Films Inc won 12 MTV awards including Best Video Award for INXS's, *Need You Tonight* and the Viewers Video of the Year Award for U2's *With or Without You*. In 1989 Midnight Inc went on to win the Best Video Grammy for U2's *Where the Streets Have No Name*.

In 1991 Michael returned to the UK and in partnership with Polygram formed Specific Films Ltd. Under Specific Films Ltd Michael produced *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* directed by Stephan Elliott which went on to win several awards including an Oscar for Best Costume Design, the Audience Award for Most Popular Film at the Cannes Film Festival and Best Film Award at both the San Francisco Film Festival and the Seattle Film Festival. To date Michael has produced a number of features including *Mr Reliable* directed by Nadia Tass, *Paws* directed by Karl Zwicky and *The Last Seduction II* directed by Terry Marcel. In 2005, Michael was Executive Producer on *The Proposition* written by Nick Cave and directed by John Hillcoat. *The Proposition* is scheduled for general release across the UK in the Spring 2006.

*Priscilla* will be Michael's first theatrical presentation.

### **ALLAN SCOTT (PRODUCER / BOOK)**

Allan Scott was born in Scotland, educated at Gordonstoun School and McGill University, Montreal where he obtained a BA (Hons) in English Literature. He began his twin-career life after management training in the whisky industry when he also worked as a writer of television both in the USA and the UK during the seventies. In 1979 he became Chairman and Chief Executive of Macallan-Glenlivet plc, a role he held for the next eighteen years as the company's reputation for innovative marketing and management helped it to establish a highly successful, international brand, increasing its market capitalization over two hundredfold.

He was appointed to The Broadcasting Council of the BBC in 1982 and in 1986 he succeeded Sir Denis Forman as Chairman of the Film Production Fund. This and his subsequent Chairmanship of the Film Council and of Scottish Screen lasted for seven years and coincided with a significant resurgence of film making in Scotland.

Subsequently, as a director of both Caledonian Newspapers and Scottish Television plc he was instrumental in helping to effect the take-over of the former company by the latter and he remains a director of what is now SMG plc, owners of the STV and Grampian TV franchises, Ginger Media Group, the national radio franchise Virgin Radio, PrimeTime, an outdoor advertising company, and the cinema advertising company Pearl & Dean.

In 1992 he was appointed a Governor of The British Film Institute and served that Board for some six years. He is also a former Chairman of The Writers' Guild of Great Britain, thus perhaps the only person in the UK ever to chair a trades union and a public company at the same time.

In recent years he has produced several feature films including, as Executive Producer, the cult thriller *Shallow Grave* (Ewan McGregor, Chris Eccleston, director Danny Boyle.) He also wrote and produced the BAFTA-nominated First World War film, *Regeneration* (Jonathan Pryce, Jonny Lee Miller) as well as *THE FOURTH ANGEL* (Jeremy Irons, Forest Whitaker, Charlotte Rampling.)

He has written or co-written over a dozen films both in the UK and in Hollywood, including *Don't Look Now* (with Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland, director Nicolas Roeg), *The Awakening* (with Charlton Heston, director Mike Newell), *The Witches* (Anjelica Huston, Rowan Atkinson), *Castaway* (Amanda Donohoe and Oliver Reed), *Cold Heaven* (Theresa Russel, Mark Harmon), *Two Deaths* (Michael Gambon, Sonia Braga.) He was co-writer of *The Preacher's Wife* (Denzel Washington, Whitney Houston, director Penny Marhsall) and *In Love and War* (Sandra Bullock, Chris O'Donnell, director Richard Attenborough).

His stage play *Abra-Cadaver*, produced by Matthew Byam Shaw, is due to go into the West End in 2006. He is currently preparing to shoot his most recent screenplay, *The Mating Birds* (Kristin Scott Thomas, Bill Nighy, Chewitel Eijofor, Derek Jacobi), in South Africa and is developing several other theatre and feature film projects.

His awards include a Writers' Guild Award and The Mystery Writers of America Award.