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FAR OUT! It's 2025 already.

*Welcome to the 125th anniversary year of
PNOS / AMT / ATP*

*(aka Palmerston North Operatic Society / Abbey Musical
Theatre / ACT THREE PRODUCTIONS).*

*There is so much happening this year that we don't
know where to start – so let's start at the very
beginning ...*



- 22 February 2025:
Matilda Reunion evening
- 14-16 March 2025:
Whakakā – MTNZ National Training & Networking Weekend
- 24 March 2025:
ACT THREE PRODUCTIONS AGM
(The 1st Notice of AGM and Nomination Form will be sent out shortly.)



Your ACT THREE PRODUCTIONS membership is due for renewal. The renewal fees for **current** financial members (i.e. your membership card expires on 31 January **2025**) are as follows;

- **Adult Membership – \$30.00**
 - This will include a free membership gift if paid before the AGM on 24 March 2025 (which can be picked up from 75 The Square).
- **Child Membership (under 16) – \$15.00**
 - This will include a free membership gift if paid before the AGM on 24 March 2025 (which can be picked up from 75 The Square).
- **Family Membership (2A & any children under 16) – \$60.00**
 - This will include two free membership gifts per family membership if paid before the AGM on 24 March 2025 (which can be picked up from 75 The Square).

Membership renewal rates, if paid after the AGM on 24 March 2025, will be;

Adults – \$40.00

Child (under 16) – \$20.00

Family (2A + any) – \$80.00

Pro-forma invoices for membership have already been sent out. Membership fees can be paid to **PN Operatic Society: 06-0729-0024947-00**



ACT THREE PRODUCTIONS
He Whānau Tuatini

Musical Theatre Dance Classes
With
Sienna Malcolm

Wednesdays 6:30pm-7:30pm
6 weeks: 29/01 - 05/03

All dance levels welcome!

To register click the link in the post!
Limited spaces, get in quick!

ACT THREE are offering **two** dance classes this year! To start off with we have our six week Musical Theatre Dance class sessions, with local choreographer Sienna Malcolm!

"Hi. My name is Sienna Malcolm and I'd love for you all to come along to my open classes I'll be taking with ACT THREE! I currently teach dance at DanceWorks and have been dancing since I was eight with experience in jazz, ballet, contemporary and hip hop!"

We are so excited to host Sienna for six Wednesdays, starting 29 January 2025! With these classes you will be learning a dance from a musical over the six sessions. These sessions are for all dance levels so please don't be afraid and share the love of dance with us! If you have any questions or concerns please send an e-mail to leanora@actthree.co.nz.

To register please click this link <https://forms.gle/Efg8dnLB2L5S6iug6>



Interested in Open Ballet Classes ... ???

The second dance class on Wednesday nights from 7:30 p.m. – 8:45 p.m. is our Open Ballet Classes with Chantelle!!



ACT THREE PRODUCTIONS
He Whānau Tuatinitini

Open Adult Ballet Classes
With
Chantelle Vivian-Christensen

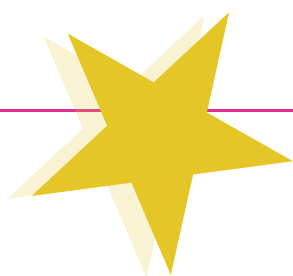
Wednesdays 7:30pm-8:45pm
Start date 29/01, Term schedule!

\$10 Members | \$15 Non Members p/class

These classes are back by popular demand and running on term schedules – \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members with a pay as you go structure!

We are so excited to be offering these classes again after **rave reviews** from the attendees last year! We are so lucky to have Chantelle teaching at ACT THREE!

To register please click the link below ...
<https://forms.gle/n4ApUMr97Aj51qP76>



Regional Theatre Awards 2024 Theatre Productions

7.30 p.m. – Friday, 14 February 2025
PN Conference & Function Centre

ACT THREE PRODUCTIONS NOMINEES

CREATIVES

Technical Design & Operation

Much Ado About Nothing (MSS)
The Year of Magical Thinking (TP)
A Time Like This (NZ) (MTS)

Matilda (ATP)

Annie (LLT)
Alice in Cuckoo Land (LLT)

Choreography

Ruby Jamieson – Matilda (ATP)

Nicole Field – Kinky Boots (ATP)

Amy MacDonald-Te Huki – *Annie* (DTC)
Charlette Taylor – *Alice in Cuckoo Land* (LLT)

Musical Direction

Barry Jones & Kirsten Clark – Matilda (ATP)

Catherine Carr – Kinky Boots (ATP)

Shasa Pene & Cindy O’Sullivan – *Annie* (DTC)

Direction (Musical)

Graham Johnston – *Disney Frozen Jr* (MYTH)
Linda Buckley – *The Spongebob Musical, Youth Edition* (HYPE)

Phil Anstis – Matilda (ATP)

Megan Hartley – *The Addams Family* (WPA)

Lisa Higginson – *Annie* (DTC)

Erin Hutchinson & Letitia Hodder – *Disney The Little Mermaid Jr* (PRS)

PERFORMANCES

Ensemble (Musical)

The Worms and The Maggots – Matilda (ATP)

Angels (Cameron Baker, Finn Davidson, Alex Dinniss, Clio Exconde, Matthew Lyne, Hannah Newman) – Kinky Boots (ATP)

The Factory Workers – Kinky Boots (ATP)

Annie and the Orphans – *Annie* (DTC)

The Ancestors – *The Addams Family* (WPA)

Connection Between Characters (Musical)

Lucy Bennett (Matilda) and Sophia Parker (Mrs Phelps) – Matilda (ATP)

Myah Snow (Spongebob) and Aidan Tautari (Patrick Star) – *The Spongebob Musical, Youth Edition* (HYPE)

Jo Sale (Pat) and Erica Ward (Trish) – Kinky Boots (ATP)

Lavara Makutu and Briana Howard (Beryl & Cheryl) – *Cinderella* (FLTP)

Toby Walker (Rooster) and Brooke Behague (Lily St Regis) – *Annie* (DTC)

Ava Te Huki (Annie) and Nathan Davis (Daddy Warbucks) – *Annie* (DTC)

Character Actor

Jak Edens (Dogberry) – *Much Ado About Nothing* (MSS)

Kieran Murphy (Escapologist) – Matilda (ATP)

Xavier Zoie (Sheridan J Plankton) – *The Spongebob Musical, Youth Edition* (HYPE)

Reon Materman (Happy the Hare) – *Alice in Cuckoo Land* (LLT)

Monique Smith (Uncle Fester) – *The Addams Family* (WPA)

Emerging Actor

Sonya Enoka (Chastity) – *Up the Guts (NZ)* (FLT)

Leighton Briggs (Roger) – *Up the Guts (NZ)* (FLT)

Anton Wilson (George) – *A Time Like This (NZ)* (MTS)

Clio Excondo (Doctor, Mechanic, Sergei) – Matilda (ATP)

Hannah McDowell (Kali) – *Stockholm* (MTS)

Indie Nicholls (the Baroness) – *Cinderella* (FLTP)

Supporting Actor in a Female Role (Musical)

Jessie Feyen (Mrs Wormwood) – Matilda (ATP)

Sophia Parker (Mrs Phelps) – Matilda (ATP)

Milana Mariu-Reade (Nicola) – Kinky Boots (ATP)

Tamzin Price (Lauren) – Kinky Boots (ATP)

Cindy O'Sullivan (Grace Farrell) – *Annie* (DTC)

Davina Graham (Miss Hannigan) – *Annie* (DTC)

Supporting Actor in a Male Role (Musical)

Jacob McDonald (Mr Wormwood) – Matilda (ATP)

Jayden Colban (Don) – Kinky Boots (ATP)

Kieran Murphy (Harry) – Kinky Boots (ATP)

Toby Walker (Rooster) – *Annie* (DTC)

Actor in a Female Role (Youth)

Tanzi Good (Matilda) – Matilda (ATP)

Lucy Bennett (Matilda) – Matilda (ATP)

Sylvie Muso (Matilda) – Matilda (ATP)

Lucy Hartley (Wednesday) – *The Addams Family* (WPA)

Sasha Borlase (Cinderella) – *Cinderella* (FLTP)

Ava Te Huki (Annie) – *Annie* (DTC)

Actor in a Female Role (Musical)

Phil Anstis (Agatha Trunchbull) – Matilda (ATP)

Danica Manson (Miss Honey) – Matilda (ATP)

Alyssa Hartley (Morticia Addams) – *The Addams Family* (WPA)

Actor in a Male Role (Musical)

Lindsay Yeo (Charlie) – Kinky Boots (ATP)

Max Herdman (Gomez Addams) – *The Addams Family* (WPA)

Nathan Davis (Oliver Warbucks) – *Annie* (DTC)



Dress code for this family friendly event is **Glacial** (*Glamorous casual*)

Ticketing at Ticketek

Tables include platters and one complimentary drink per person

NB: Tables only available for purchase from PN Conference & Function Centre, Main Street, Palmerston North

(Payment using credit card will incur a surcharge)



Whakakā
Whakahou, whakahou i te āhua, me te whakatū anō i te wānanga
Refresh, Rebrand, Rebuild

MUSICAL THEATRE NZ INVITE YOU TO JOIN US IN 2025

PALMERSTON NORTH 14 - 16 MARCH

Friday - Act Three Clubrooms
ACT THREE PRODUCTIONS birthday celebration - 125 years! Sponsored by MDR Sound and Lighting. A social networking event

Saturday - Palmerston North Conference Centre

Opening Keynote Speaker
Annual General Meeting
THREE Training Streams: Performance, Leadership and Tech featuring; short deep dives into specific relevant topics
Zone Time, Social Hour and a performance from the MTI Australasia Juniors Stream
iTICKET Gala Dinner & Awards Evening

Sunday - ACT THREE PRODUCTIONS club rooms

Industry Brunch
Performance and Leadership Extended
Workshops & Masterclasses

PLATINUM PARTNER iTICKET

MTNZ | WHAKAKĀ - IGNITE NATIONAL TRAINING & NETWORKING WEEKEND

DISCOVER MORE AT MTNZ.CO.NZ

MTNZ invite the national theatre community here in Aotearoa – whether you are an onstage performer, a behind-the-scenes doer, committee member or total first timer – to join us for our 2025 National Training and Networking Weekend – **Whakakā**.

"This is the premium event for the NZ Theatre community – there is nothing else nationally like it in scale and offering; it is designed for all of us and welcome you" (Kirsty Skomski – General Manager, MTNZ)

We have an action packed line-up planned combining the best of theatre; together we celebrate; learn and grow; network and connect. Check out what's on offer below!

**Early-bird Registrations to the
MTNZ National Theatre Training and Networking Weekend
CLOSE AT THE END OF JANUARY 2025**

Full weekend: Friday & Saturday evening events, full Saturday training and networking line up, all catering, Sunday brunch and Masterclasses – **only \$200**

Why Whakakā is for you!

- Tailored Learning: Choose from three specialised streams (see below) to focus on what matters most to you.
- Inclusive Environment: First-timers and seasoned attendees alike are welcomed and celebrated.
- Unmatched Networking: Build meaningful connections with like-minded theatre enthusiasts.

- Fresh New Format: Exciting changes to enhance your experience, including shorter, high-impact sessions.
- Performance, Stage Intimacy and Leadership Masterclasses.

On our website you can register, find out more about instructors and training topic briefs, view our keynote speaker, read about the Whakakā Partners Lounge, view our sponsors and supporters and more.

[Head to the MTNZ Website HERE to Find Out More](#)

Training Streams

Our training streams are comprised of multiple 15 minute power-sessions which deep dive into the listed topics. You can commit to one stream, or switch streams after The G&T Productions Lunch for session two if you like.

mtnz
MUSICAL THEATRE
NEW ZEALAND

2025 NATIONAL TRAINING
& NETWORKING WEEKEND

Whakakā

Whakahou, whakahou i te āhua, me te whakatū anō i te wānanga

Refresh, Rebrand, Rebuild

STREAM 1 - PERFORMANCE

STREAM 2 - LEADERSHIP

STREAM 3 - TECH

<https://www.mtnz.org.nz/training/conference>



Whakahou, whakahou i te āhua, me te whakatū anō i te wānanga
Refresh, Rebrand, Rebuild

Jennifer Ward-Lealand

Performance Masterclass:

Join Jennifer for an inspiring 1.5-hour performance masterclass. With her vast expertise, she will share invaluable insights to help performers unlock their full potential on stage.

Intimacy for Community Theatre:

Jennifer, a passionate intimacy coordinator, will facilitate a session exploring the principles of creating safe, respectful spaces for performers. Learn how to navigate intimacy in community theatre and support your cast through best practices.



A Theatrical Powerhouse Joins Whakakā 2025!

We are beyond excited to announce that Jennifer Te Atamira Ward-Lealand, one of New Zealand's most celebrated and accomplished figures in theatre, will be joining us at Whakakā 2025 – IGNITE!

Jennifer's extensive knowledge, skills, and experience make her an incredible addition to our lineup, and we're thrilled to offer you the opportunity to learn directly from this powerhouse of Aotearoa's entertainment industry

Introducing our keynote: Carrie Green (Ngāti Porou/Kāi Tahu)

An award-winning actor, writer, and director with an extensive career in New Zealand's performing arts scene. A graduate of Toi Whakaari (2012), Carrie has worked with many leading theatre companies, including Circa Theatre, Silo Theatre, Auckland Theatre Company (ATC), Centrepont Theatre, The Court Theatre, Tawata Productions, Taki Rua, and World of Wearable Art.

Originally from Palmerston North, Carrie began her artistic journey with ACT THREE PRODUCTIONS in 2002 (formerly Abbey Musical Theatre) and credits her time there as the impetus for pursuing a career in the arts.

Carrie's acting credits span theatre, television and film. She is known for her roles in Cellfish (Silo Theatre) and Bless the Child (Tawata Productions), as well as television appearances in Under the Vines, Mystic, Inside and Wellington Paranormal. Her work has earned her numerous accolades, including Actor of the Year at the 2019 Wellington Theatre Awards and Outstanding New Playwright in 2016.

In addition to acting, Carrie is a theatre director, children's acting coach for screen, script supervisor, and member of the Circa Theatre council. She describes her practice as "people-focused and collaboration-driven." Her diverse body of work reflects her versatility as both a creator and collaborator, and she continues to captivate and inspire audiences with her compelling storytelling across stage and screen.



Whakahou, whakahou i te āhua, me te whakatū anō i te wānanga
Refresh, Rebrand, Rebuild

Carrie Green (Ngāti Porou/Kāi Tahu)

WHAKAKĀ 2025 KEYNOTE SPEAKER





A Training Programme for our youth at Whakakā!

Running alongside the Whakakā Training and Networking Weekend, MTNZ is excited to offer a unique programme designed for tamariki and rangatahi aged 8–18. Facilitated by the expert team from Junior Theatre Festival NZ, participants will develop the three essential skills of musical theatre – dancing, acting, and singing – in a fun and inclusive environment.

"We wanted our 'theatre families' to be able to participate in Whakakā, so a stream for our young performers was a natural solution" (Emma Bishop, President, MTNZ)

The weekend culminates in a special 10 minute performance at the iTicket Gala Dinner on Saturday night, giving participants the chance to showcase their talent on stage.

When: 5:30 pm Friday, 14 March 2025 – 10:00 pm Saturday, 15 March 2025 @ Globe Theatre, Palmerston North
This fantastic opportunity is proudly sponsored by Creative Communities NZ





We are looking for people to help us for the MTNZ Whakakā National Training and Networking weekend in the following roles;

- Friday evening set up: From 9.00 a.m. on Friday, 14 March 2025
- Welcome/Sign in @ ACT THREE: 6.00 – 8.00 p.m. on Friday, 14 March 2025
- Bartenders at ACT THREE: 6.00 p.m. – 12.00 a.m. on Friday, 14 March 2025
- Registration/Information Desk @ PN Conference & Function Centre: 8.00 a.- 5.00 p.m. on Saturday, 15 March 2025 (will be broken into shifts)
- Saturday evening set up: 4.30 – 5.30 p.m. @ PN Conference & Function Centre on Saturday, 15 March 2025
- Information Desk @ ACT THREE: 9.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m. on Sunday, 16 March 2025 (will be broken into shifts)
- Driver from the airport on Friday, 14 March 2025, and Saturday, 15 March 2025 (vehicle provided) – throughout the day as delegates arrive (will be broken into shifts)

Please note: Volunteers who wish to attend the Friday and Saturday functions and the training streams will need to pay for a ticket to these event/s. If you are volunteering at the Friday night event at ACT THREE, there will be no cost.

If you are able to assist us with any of the above, please contact Lorna Stanley at lorna@actthree.co.nz



If you know of a local business that would like to help us to promote Palmerston North and provide delegates with treats in their registration (goodie) bags, please let Lorna know asap.



BY ARRANGEMENT WITH ORIGIN™ THEATRICAL ON BEHALF OF THE REALLY USEFUL GROUP LIMITED

BASED ON THE PARAMOUNT MOVIE WRITTEN BY MIKE WHITE

BOOK BY

LYRICS BY

MUSIC BY

JULIAN FELLOWES

GLENN SLATER

ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER

THE NEXT GENERATION

SCHOOL of ROCK

THE MUSICAL

18 APR - 3 MAY

REGENT ON BROADWAY 2025

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centre**

**ACT THREE
PRODUCTIONS**
He Whānau Tuwhiri



New musicals confirmed for 2025 (U.K.)

Alex Wood / Tanyel Gumushan – 27 December 2024

We've picked out some new shows opening on stages next year – ranging from giant new shows like *Hercules* through to Scottish musicals about the Loch Ness Monster. Remember – we've only included shows that have **never** been seen professionally on U.K. stages before, and excluding concert productions.

Scissorhandz



Artwork for *Scissorhandz*

From next month, this irreverent tribute to the hit film *Edward Scissorhands* will open at London's Southwark Playhouse, which has long been a bastion for emerging shows that become fan favourites. Emma Williams and Jordan Kai Burnett star, while the tunes include hits by Alanis Morissette and Taylor Swift. Could this be a cut above the rest?

Stalled

A Seattle ladies' room is the backdrop for this new musical, with book and lyrics by Liesl Wilke, music and lyrics by Andy Marsh, and additional contributions from Kyle Puccia. This show is the first of three (!) new musicals at the new King's Head Theatre, which could be an excellent space for new musicals in 2025.

The Parent Agency



David Baddiel and Dan Gillespie-Sells (photos all supplied by the production)

Imagine being a child and being able to select your ideal parents. That's what happens in David Baddiel's best-selling book *The Parent Agency!* It's being adapted for the stage at the Storyhouse, Chester. Dan Gillespie Sells (*Everybody's Talking About Jamie*) will contribute lyrics while Tim Jackson (*Two Strangers (Carry A Cake Across New York)*) directs.

Clueless the Musical

We're totally buggin'! KT Tunstall has written the tunes for this new stage version of *Clueless*, which had a well-received try-out in Bromley. Emma Flynn will take on the role of Cher Horowitz, with Keelan McAuley as Josh. The book comes from the writer and director of the original 1995 film, Amy Heckerling.

White Rose



Artwork for *White Rose: The Musical* (provided by the production)

One of the refreshing new musicals not based on a film, this show has book and lyrics by Brian Belding and music by Natalie Brice. It is inspired by the true story of a collective of university students in Munich, who secretly met to write, print, and distribute leaflets opposing Hitler and the Nazi party. They were known as the White Rose resistance. The musical premiered off-Broadway earlier this year, and now heads off-West End.

Cry-Baby the Musical



Artwork for *Cry-Baby* (supplied by the production)

A LOT of the shows on this list are based on films (which probably says something about where our musical theatre landscape is right now), and another on the list is *Cry-Baby*, penned by Mark O'Donnell, Thomas Meehan, David Javerbaum and Adam Schlesinger and based on the John Waters classic about a group of delinquents in 1950s Baltimore. It heads to the long-cherished east London Arcola Theatre this spring, directed by the venue's artistic director Mehmet Ergen.

Stiletto



Artwork for *Stiletto*, © Rebecca Pitt

The Robert Stigwood Organisation will usher this 18th century musical, set in Venetian high society, to the stage next spring. The writing team features Matthew Wilder (*Mulan*), who provides the music and lyrics, and Tim Luscombe (*Easy Virtue*), who penned the book. It is grounded in the historical phenomenon of castrati, which isn't something you'd normally expect to find a show about.

Wild Rose



Dawn Sievewright stars in the musical – photo by Matt Crockett and artwork by Louise Richardson

Jessie Buckley starred in the brilliant film *Wild Rose* in 2018, and it's now being brought to the stage thanks to Nicole Taylor, with John Tiffany directing. The tale follows Rose-Lynn, a free-spirited woman dreaming of becoming a country singer in Nashville. The show will also feature a plethora of country music hits!

Alfred Hitchcock Presents – The Musical



Alfred Hitchcock – provided by the production

Alfred Hitchcock Presents ... is one of those quintessential TV series of the last century, but probably not one you'd naturally assume would make a good musical. With an original score by Steven Lutvak and book by Jay Dyer, direction by John Doye, and a cast to die for, springtime in Bath is going to be a whole lot more intriguing than usual.

Midnight Cowboy



Artwork for the *Midnight Cowboy* musical

There's a really impressive team behind this one, based on the novel by James Leo Herlihy. Book is by Bryony Lavery, while music is by Francis 'Eg' White, who helped write songs such as Will Young's "Leave Right Now", James Morrison's "You Give Me Something" and Adele's "Chasing Pavements". Nick Winston directs.

Muriel's Wedding the Musical



Megan Ellis as Muriel Heslop – © Ollie Rosser

There's nothing terrible about this news! The much-loved Australian musical – which mixes original numbers with beloved ABBA hits – will receive its U.K. premiere at Curve in Leicester.

Megan Ellis takes on the title role, while Annabel Marlow plays BFF Rhonda. The story follows an outsider, who dreams of the perfect wedding but is stuck in a dead-end life in Porpoise Spit – until she moves to Sydney and discovers the importance of being true to oneself.

The Great Gatsby



Samantha Pauly (centre) and the Broadway cast in *The Great Gatsby* – photo by Matthew Murphy and Evan Zimmerman

The Tony Award-winning new musical has had the green light and is transferring to London. Based on F Scott Fitzgerald's 1925 novel about a self-made millionaire and his quest for the American Dream, on Broadway the show starred Jeremy Jordan and Eva Noblezada so we can't wait to see who'll be roaring on stage over here, old sports.

A Knight's Tale the Musical



Artwork for *A Knight's Tale The Musical* – provided by the production

Get your joust on – the world premiere of *A Knight's Tale* will take place in Manchester in 2025. Based on the film, it follows a 14th-century peasant squire, William Thatcher, who breaks all the rules when he passes himself off as a nobleman in the hopes of becoming the world champion of jousting. The new comedy will feature chart-topping hits, to make for a fun knight, sorry, night, at the theatre.

Coraline



Artwork for *Coraline* – supplied by the production

Neil Gaiman's award-winning novel is finally coming to the stage! Recommended for audiences aged nine and above, they're invited to explore the darkly imaginative world where heroine Coraline encounters the sinister "Other Mother". It'll receive its world premiere at Leeds Playhouse before embarking on a short tour to Manchester, Birmingham, and Edinburgh.

Here We Are



Artwork for *Here We Are* – supplied by the production

Stephen Sondheim’s final musical was first seen in New York in 2024, and it’s heading to the National Theatre in April. Inspired by two films – *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* and *The Exterminating Angel* – by Luis Buñuel, it follows a group of guests who find themselves unable to leave a dinner party. Starring are Tracie Bennett and Denis O’Hare (*Tartuffe*), who took part in the world premiere. They’ll also be joined by an all-star cast including (deep breath) Rory Kinnear, Chumisa Dornford-May, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Richard Fleeshman, Harry Hadden-Paton, Cameron Johnston, Jane Krakowski, Martha Plimpton and Paulo Szot.

Come Fall in Love – The DDLJ Musical



The artwork for *Come Fall in Love the DDLJ Musical*

Hit romcom and India’s longest-running blockbuster movie *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*, also known as *DDLJ*, is adapted into the rechristened musical *Come Fall in Love* – directed by Aditya Chopra, with book and lyrics by Nell Benjamin, music by Vishal Dadlani and Sheykhav Ravjani and choreography by Rob Ashford. Expect major production values, Bollywood mashed up with musical theatre.

Disney’s Hercules

Bless our souls! *Hercules* is heading to the West End. Productions have been seen in New Jersey and Hamburg, and Luke Brady will “Go The Distance” and play the titular Greek hero during its much-anticipated run at Theatre Royal Drury Lane.

Lovestuck



Artwork for *Lovestuck*, supplied by Theatre Royal Stratford East

A range of major producing houses in London are presenting new musicals this summer – the Lyric Hammersmith, the National Theatre, and here, Theatre Royal Stratford East will prepare *Lovestuck*, written by the two creators of *My Dad Wrote a Porno* while music is by triple-platinum singer-songwriter Bryn Christopher with Martin Batchelar.

King of Pangea



King of Pangea artwork – supplied by the King's Head Theatre

Martin Storrow's new musical is the second of 2025 to open at the King's Head Theatre in north London, and seems to be a folk musical love-letter to the worlds we create for ourselves to escape from the realities we'd rather not face after intense loss. It's based on Storrow's own experiences, so expect something stirring and moving. It's been in development in the U.S. for a number of years, so we're excited to see what lands on our shores.

Sing Street: A New Musical



The artwork for *Sing Street: A New Musical*

A certain 2020 lockdown cut short the dreams of *Sing Street* on Broadway, but led to Dónal Finn, Adam Bregman, and more starring in a Boston staging in 2022. Now, the show, which follows a 16-year-old Dubliner trying to form a band in the 1980s will have its U.K. premiere, and we can't wait for casting news. This new version of the show will feature much-loved hits from the film as well as original additions. It'll light you up!

Nessie



Artwork for *Nessie* , - supplied by the venue

Honestly, we're surprised that it has taken this long for a musical about the Loch Ness Monster to reach U.K. stages. But with book, music, and lyrics by Shonagh Murray, *Nessie* will audiences take the plunge into the rich waters of a fantastical tale of a monster revealed to the wider public. Pitlochry Festival Theatre puts remarkably few steps wrong, so this looks very exciting.

The Show on the Roof



The Show on the Roof artwork – supplied by the King's Head Theatre

Audiences will be welcomed to the 50s in this new musical, penned by Tom Ford and Alex Syiek and directed by Rory Pelsue. It's the third to open at the King's Head next year (that we know of so far!) and looks primed to unearth a fascinating chapter in American history, and the struggle for LGBTQ+ rights. Another show brought over from the U.S. (it had its world premiere in Idaho), the King's Head really is going all-in on musicals next year.

Friends the Musical Parody



Artwork for *Friends! The Musical Parody* – supplied by the production

There have been a fair few musicals based on the tale of that coffee-obsessed sextet that occupied our TV screens in the 1990s and early 2000s, and the Barn Theatre now adds to the list with this touring musical, which is an audience favourite in the U.S., featuring book and lyrics by Bob and Tobly McSmith, with music by Asaf Gleizner.

Anne Boleyn the Musical



Rebecca Knight, Eliane Astor de Merode and Roxana Silbert at Hever Castle – © Daniel Watson

No, not a *SIX* spin-off, but this new musical, directed by Roxana Silbert, with a book by Rebecca Knight and music by Sam Gevers, brings musical fever to Hever (where Boleyn used to live) in a custom-built venue. No casting yet, but we can't think of a more glorious way to bask in the open air over the month of August.

13 Going on 30 the Musical

Based on the 2004 film, this musical comedy follows Jenna Rink, a 13-year-old girl who magically wakes up as an adult and navigates her new life as a fashion magazine editor. As *Freaky Friday* proves, there's no end to the body-swap musical pipeline, but having heard the numbers in the workshop for this, *13 Going on 30* will be a solid addition to the canon. Lucie Jones returns to star after her workshop performance, while *Heathers'* Andy Fickman directs – his second "Manchester-premiering body-swap musical based on a beloved 00s film" on this list!

Disney's Freaky Friday



Artwork for the *Freaky Friday* musical – supplied by the production

Could you, like, chill for a sec? The fun-filled body-swap comedy will have its professional U.K. premiere in Manchester over the festive period. With music by Tom Kitt and lyrics by Brian Yorkey (*Next to Normal, If/Then*) a movie adaptation was first seen in 2016 before being adapted into a Disney Channel Movie two years later.

Lin-Manuel Miranda reveals *Warriors* musical with Eisa Davis will head for the stage

Alex Wood – 26 December 2024

Warriors, come out to play!



The *Warriors* – © Jimmy Fontaine

Speaking to the *New York Times*, Lin-Manuel Miranda has revealed that his and Eisa Davis' hit musical *Warriors* is likely to find a stage life soon. As he plugs the music for the new *Mufasa* film, currently in cinemas across the globe, Miranda talked about other projects in the pipeline – including the hit concept album based on the cult classic film *The Warriors*. The album received a full five-star write-up from *WhatsOnStage* earlier this year, and you can hear it being discussed on the *WhatsOnStage* Podcast. Discussing the album's success, Miranda teased some plans to bring it to the stage, saying, "I think at the top of the year, Eisa and I will just start having conversations about how to adapt [*Warriors*] to the stage." Miranda has said that part of the reason for this is because the world is a "visual culture". Dates, venues and possible timespans for the stage version haven't been disclosed, but we're incredibly excited to see what might be in the works. *Warriors* is inspired by the 1979 Paramount Pictures film and the novel of the same name by Sol Yurick. Described as an "immersive listening experience," the story follows a New York City gang from Coney Island to the Bronx and back when they're framed for the murder of a respected gang leader. It can be streamed now.

What Happened to the Real Von Trapp Family from *The Sound of Music*?

Here's Where They Ended Up After Fleeing Austria (No, they didn't climb over the hills!)

Emily Blackwood – 7 January 2025

The von Trapp Family Singers performed across the globe until their final performance in 1955. When *The Sound of Music* premiered in 1965, fans across the globe were enchanted by the von Trapp family's catchy tunes and impeccably coordinated outfits. The film – available to stream on Disney+ – starred Julie Andrews as Maria, a free-spirited nun who falls in love with a widowed naval officer, played by the late Christopher Plummer, and his seven children whom she teaches to sing. Together, the family flees from Austria to escape the Nazi regime and seeks refuge in Switzerland.

Nealy 60 years later, the Oscar-winning movie continues to be a beloved classic – and it all began with the 1949 memoir of Maria von Trapp, the real-life matriarch of the von Trapp family. Long before they were portrayed as a charming, musical household on-screen, the von Trapps were a real family singing troupe who captured the hearts of audiences across Europe and North America for decades. But how accurate is *The Sound of Music* and what became of the singing von Trapps after they left Austria?

Here's everything to know about the real von Trapp family and their lives after *The Sound of Music*.

Is *The Sound of Music* based on a true story?

Yes, *The Sound of Music* was inspired by the lives of the real-life von Trapp family, which included patriarch Georg von Trapp, matriarch Maria von Trapp and their 10 children (seven of whom were from Georg's first marriage). However, the film took many liberties in its story, including altering the timeline of events (the movie is set in the late 1930s even though the real Georg and Maria wed a decade earlier) and how the family fled Austria (they did not, in fact, climb over the hills). The names and genders of the seven eldest von Trapp children were also changed for the movie. When asked how closely the film is to his family's history, Johannes, the youngest von Trapp sibling, compared the similarities to playing the game of telephone. "The Hollywood film is based on the Broadway play, which is based on the German film, which is based on the book that my mother wrote," he told *Insightful Vacations* in 2023. "So each time things change a bit, and each version is aimed at perhaps a slightly different audience. But the final Hollywood film? A documentary of my family's life, it is not. However, as a film it's superb; magnificently cast and located in stunning scenery."

Who was Maria von Trapp?

Andrews' character Maria in *The Sound of Music* was inspired by Maria Augusta Kutschera. According to her bio on the Trapp Family Lodge's website, she was born on January 26, 1905, while on a train to Vienna. When Maria was two years old, her mother died, and her father left her in the care of a strict elderly cousin. Even though she grew up an atheist, a chance meeting with a priest in college inspired her to become a nun. Like in *The Sound of Music*, Maria told *The Washington Post* in 1980 that she too lacked discipline while in the convent – only she rebelled a lot more than Andrews' character portrayed on-screen. She spoke during periods of silence, slid down banisters, climbed on the roof and ran through the courtyard. Maria said, "I was horrid, the worst you can imagine." Maria was eventually sent to Baron Georg von Trapp's house to tutor his sick daughter (not act as governess to all the children like *The Sound of Music* depicts). The future baroness claimed it was love at first sight for the former navy captain and that she "grew to love" her husband after they married in 1927.

Who was Georg von Trapp?

Baron Captain Georg von Trapp was the patriarch of the von Trapp family. He was born in 1880 and served for 24 years in the Austro-Hungarian Navy, where he achieved the country's highest award for his service during World War I, per his bio on the Georg & Agathe Foundation's 'Website. He married Agathe Gobertina Whitehead in 1911, and together, they had seven children; Rupert von Trapp, Agathe von Trapp, Maria Franziska von Trapp, Werner von Trapp, Hedwig von Trapp, Johanna von Trapp and Martina von Trapp. Georg and Agathe were both musically inclined and cultivated their children's talents from a young age. The patriarch played multiple instruments and even formed a small family quartet with his wife and two of their children. Agathe died of scarlet fever in 1922.

Who were the von Trapp children?

Georg welcomed sons Rupert, Werner and Hedwig and daughters Agathe, Maria, Johanna and Martina with his first wife. Though he later welcomed three additional children – Rosmarie, Eleonore "Lorli" and Johannes – with his second wife Maria, the seven eldest von Trapp children were the inspiration behind the family in *The Sound of Music*. In the film, however, their names were changed to Leisl, Friedrich, Louisa, Kurt, Brigitta, Marta and Gretl. While Georg, Maria and the von Trapp kids had been making music all their lives, they didn't officially start performing until 1934, when they entertained an opera singer named Lotte Lehmann with their songs. She told the family they had "gold in their throats" and encouraged them to enter a local folk singing competition, per vonTrapp.org. Winning that competition launched a decades-long career for the family singing group, which held over 2,000 performances across 30 countries. Two years after Georg died in 1947, Maria wrote her memoir, *The Story of the Trapp Family Singers*, which inspired *The Sound of Music*.

How did the von Trapps really escape Austria?

The 1965 film shows the von Trapps fleeing the Nazi regime in Austria by escaping over the Swiss Alps. But in reality, their exit was far less dramatic. Georg's daughter, Maria, reportedly told *Opera News* in 2003 that though her family did tell people that they were going to America to sing, they didn't climb over the mountains with "heavy suitcases and instruments." Instead, she said they "left by train, pretending nothing." The von Trapps left Austria for Italy, not Switzerland, as Georg was an Italian citizen by birth, per *Forbes*. By then, they had already visited and performed in America and had a contract with a booking agent there who paid for their boat tickets to New York. After the Immigration and Naturalization Service denied their visa extension, the von Trapps briefly returned to Europe before they eventually settled in Vermont.

Why did the von Trapps settle in Vermont?

In 1942, the family purchased a farm in Stowe, Vt., and named it Cor Unum, a Latin phrase that translates to "one heart." It later became known as the Trapp Family Lodge where they held music camps. Maria lived in the Trapp Family Lodge and ran the gift shop until her death in 1987. She is buried in the family's cemetery on the property. Fans can still visit — and stay — in the lodge, which has an on-site brewery, apple orchards, a working farm and other amenities, per the lodge's website. During an interview with *Insightful Vacations*, the youngest von Trapp child, Johannes, said that the family held daily rehearsals at the lodge and that everyone in the family "was with the program" because of his mother's strong leadership. "My mother was a very strong leader," he said. "Yes, everyone was with the program. Everyone had to be. That's right. And it was a survival matter for us. You know, as one of my sisters once said, 'If it weren't for mother's leadership, we would have all ended up as cooks and maids.'"

What happened to the von Trapp children and are any alive today?

According to the Music Museum of New England, the von Trapp Family Singers stopped touring in 1955 as the band had consisted mostly of outsiders since the children had grown up and moved on to other careers. While some of the 10 von Trapp kids chose creative careers, many opted for other pursuits. Rupert was a medical doctor who served in the Army, Maria and Rosmarie were missionaries and Werner started a farm that still produces von Trapp Farmstead Cheese. Agathe, a music teacher, wrote the book *Memories: Before and After the Sound of Music*, which was later adapted into a German film. Georg and Maria's youngest son, Johannes is the last living member of the von Trapp Family Singers. Most recently, his older sister Rosmarie died in May 2022 at age 93.

Who are the next generation of von Trapps?

Many of Georg and Maria's descendants have carried on the family legacy. Johannes' two children, Sam and Kristina, serve as directors and executive vice presidents of the Trapp Family Lodges. In 2001, Werner's grandchildren — Sofia, Melani, Amanda and August — formed a band called The von Trapps. The musical group released five studio albums, some of which included songs from *The Sound of Music*, according to *Entertainment Weekly*. "Our family story has been shared in nearly every corner of the world," the band said in a 2016 statement announcing their final show. "It has been a surreal honor to continue this musical tradition and be a part of such a hopeful message to the world for these last 15 years."



(Real von Trapp Family)