

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Go 'Beyond the Rainbow!'

Actors Theatre of Indiana is Central Indiana's newest professional equity theatre company founded in 2005. ATI presents the Indiana premiere of "BEYOND THE RAINBOW, Judy Garland – Her Story" at the Pike Performing Arts Center in Indianapolis.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN JULY 6 - 15, 2007 -- Actors Theatre of Indiana, Central Indiana's newest professional equity theatre company, is proud to present the Indiana premiere of William Randall Beard's **BEYOND THE RAINBOW**, the new Judy Garland book musical, Friday July 6 through Sunday July 15, 2007 at the Pike Performing Arts Center in Indianapolis.

Judy Garland's 1961 Carnegie Hall concert will provide the backdrop for Beyond the Rainbow, William Randall Beard's original musical based on the legendary star's fascinating and all-too-brief life. Garland, born in Minnesota as Frances Gumm, is played in the piece by three actresses, one who embodies her performance persona at her electrifying comeback concert at age 38, one who portrays her complex young adult self from age 15 to age 35 and the other portraying her innocence and wide-eyed optimism as a child.

Remembering an Icon...

William Randall Beard, whose career spans 15 years as a diverse writer, working in Opera, Children's Theatre and adapting the classics, paints a portrait of survival and celebration of Garland's life and music with this current piece. *"I wanted to put a human face on the public image. These songs trigger the memories of her personal life. The Carnegie Hall performance is her quintessential moment of triumph,"* Beard said.

Among the 27 songs to be accompanied by Beyond the Rainbow's hopping four-piece band, are such classics as "Get Happy," "Come Rain or Come Shine," "Swanee," "Stormy Weather," "The Man That Got Away," and the quintessential Garland standard, "Over the Rainbow."

Beyond the Rainbow originated at the Great American History Theatre in Minnesota, the first developmental home of last summer's hit musical *Sisters of Swing*. Actors Theatre of Indiana's Producing Artistic Director **Don Farrell**, whose celebrated career includes 10 years as a national director / choreographer with over 50 directorial credits, will serve as director and choreographer for *Beyond The Rainbow's* Indiana premiere production.

Jody Briskey, portraying Garland at her Carnegie come-back, will head the cast. Stage, concert and recording artist Briskey will be reprising what the twin-cities' Star Tribune called the "POWERHOUSE PERFORMANCE" she originated at The American History Theatre for which she was awarded Star Tribune's Best Actress in a musical. In 2006, she reprised the role in the Florida Stage east coast premiere and was nominated for a Carbonell Award. She went on to perform Judy's Carnegie Hall concert in the Keys at the Tennessee Williams Performing Arts Center.

MORE ABOUT... *BEYOND THE RAINBOW*

CAST: Jody Briskey, Katy Gentry, Kennedy Martin, Chuck Goad, Bradley Reynolds; DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER: Don Farrell; MUSICAL DIRECTOR: Terry Woods; MASTER OF PROPERTIES: Maclare Park; COSTUME DESIGN: Jim Alford; SET DESIGN: Scott Sargent; LIGHTING DESIGN: Ross Graham

SHOWTIMES: July 6-15, 2007 (Friday and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m.; Sunday afternoons at 2:00 p.m.)

PLEASE NOTE: THE CORRECT PHONE NUMBER FOR ALL ACTORS THEATRE OF INDIANA 2007 SEASON TICKET PURCHASES IS THE PIKE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER'S BOX OFFICE **(317) 216-5455**.

Actors Theatre of Indiana @ Pike PAC | 6701 Zionsville Road | Indianapolis | IN | 46268

<http://www.actors theatreofindiana.org> <http://www.pikepac.org>

Central Indiana's newest professional equity theatre company and nationally recognized **ACTORS THEATRE OF INDIANA (ATI)** sets the highest artistic standards, creating the powerful experience of shared theatre for its community. Since its incorporation in 2005, ATI has produced the world premiere of such works as - ***A ROSIE EVENING: The Music of Rosemary Clooney*** and the Indiana premieres of ***MY WAY: A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra***, ***A YEAR WITH FROG & TOAD***, and ***SISTERS OF SWING: The Story of the Andrews Sisters***. Now in its third season, Actors Theatre of Indiana continues its strong growth under the leadership team of Co-Founder/Resident Choreographer Cynthia Collins, Co-Founder/Producing Artistic Director Don Farrell and Co-Founder/Artistic Director Judy Fitzgerald. The 2007 season continues its tradition of new work with the Indiana premiere of William Randall Beard's ***BEYOND THE RAINBOW – Judy Garland, Her Story*** and the world premiere of ***BROADWAY BRASS: A Tribute to the Great Ladies of Broadway*** to prove that Actors Theatre of Indiana is where great theatre lives. For more information, call 317-669-7983 or visit our website at www.actors theatreofindiana.org.

Contact: ATI Co-Founders
Don Farrell, Judy Fitzgerald, Cynthia Collins
Actors Theatre of Indiana
317-669-7983 phone
317-669-8083 fax
dfarrell@actors theatreofindiana.org
www.actors theatreofindiana.org

#

Beyond The Rainbow - Director's Notes

Let me first begin by saying that prior to today I never really knew all that much about Judy Garland. Aside from The Wizard of OZ, being Liza Minnelli and Lorna Luft's mother, there really wasn't all that much I knew about her talent, let alone her life story. In doing my preparations and research for this production, I now have a confession to make...I am a huge Judy Garland fan.

What set Judy apart from all the other singers of her day was her innate ability to sing a song honestly. Her amazing voice and emotional commitment to her songs adds to her significance as a genius artist. And unlike many stars of today, whose careers are owed to the talents of film editors and recording engineers, to appreciate Judy as the great entertainer she was, all one had to do was keep the camera on her.

Now no one will argue that she was iconic. No one will dispute the self-destructive battles she fought with drugs, alcohol and depression. She was an amazing survivor and used her singing to escape a reality that became increasingly awful. Her life has been mistakenly categorized as "tragic" but I choose to believe that, despite all odds, she actually was eternally optimistic. She was so full of love, talent, passion and genius and gave every ounce of who she was to millions of adoring strangers.

But what I believe is most important about this play is the ability to humanize the icon by exposing all of the situations and preconditions that were set upon her. If I had lived a life like Judy's, I'm sure I would not have lived to see age 47. But it is age 38 when Ms. Garland performed her one woman concert at Carnegie Hall - April 23, 1961 and this is the setting of our play.

Her comeback performance was an electric moment for all of her adoring fans and what the New York Times called "the concert of the century." Her Carnegie Hall appearance marked a huge comeback for the star. The live recording Judy at Carnegie Hall received five Grammy Awards and went Gold within a year, but I believe what happened that historic night was more importantly a life affirming moment for the woman herself. She had a new found independence with a divorce from her third husband Sid Luft. She had acquired new management with Freddie Fields and David Begelman who brought her stalled career back to life. And she was "back to the top of her form", as Variety put it, "singing far better than ever before."

I believe Jerry Lewis best described what it was that attracted her many adoring fans: *"People now know all the troubles that Judy has been through. And who among us isn't plagued with troubles too? So, people with all kinds of worries and problems and heartaches go see her and they identify with her. When she sings, she is communicating for them all the emotions they can't communicate themselves because they don't have a stage or a microphone or a talent...All the people whose insides have been torn out by misery identify with her, and she sings for all of them. She sings with a thousand voices."*

Don Farrell - director

###

CAST BIOS:



Jody Briskey (*GARLAND*) Ms. Briskey created the role of "Garland" in History Theatre of St. Paul's 2005 premiere of *Beyond the Rainbow* for which she was awarded Star Tribune's Best Actress in a musical. In 2006, she reprised the role in the Florida Stage east coast premiere and was nominated for a Carbonell Award. She went on to perform Judy's Carnegie Hall concert in the Keys at the Tennessee Williams Performing Arts Center. Jody has performed for many theatres in and around the Twin Cities and most recently received Star Tribune's 2006 Best Actress in a Musical for her portrayal of *Mama Rose* in Theatre Latte' Da's *Gypsy*. She has toured the U.S. and Europe in concert harmonizing with Three Hits and a Miss, dueting with Tony Sandler, and in her solo shows paying tribute to Judy, Rosie Clooney, Patsy Cline and more.



Katy Gentry (*JUDY*) Katy was last seen singing and dancing through the land of Oz in

The Wizard of Oz at Beef & Boards Dinner Theater earlier this summer. Katy has been a featured soloist for Plank Road Publishing as well as Hal Leonard Publishing and also can be heard by Music Theater International's nationally distributed *Broadway, JR.* series. She has worked along side the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra in the National Debut of *Gertrude McFuzz*, *Henry Mancini's Greatest Hits*, and *Yuletide Celebration* as well as working with Trenyce from American Idol fame in *Dreamgirls* last summer. Some of her favorite roles have been Little Red (*Into the Woods*), Cinderella (*Cinderella*), and Rose of Sharn (*Grapes of Wrath*). Katy wishes to thank her parents for their unending support of her dreams. May the talent and passion that Judy brought to the stage forever live on!



Charles Goad * (*LOUIS B. MAYER, SID LUFT, and others*)

Known for his annual portrayal of Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* at the Indiana Repertory Theatre, Chuck is also a Founding Member of the Phoenix Theatre with notable performances as Oscar Wilde in *Gross Indecency*, Mason in *Take Me Out*, Harry in *Company* and Charlie in *Running With Scissors*. Other "Hoosier" credits: Brown County Playhouse: *Tuna Christmas & The Odd Couple*, Beef & Boards: *Some Like It Hot, Patent Leather Shoes*. Regional: Syracuse Stage, Depot Theatre, Missouri Rep, Cincinnati Playhouse. New York: *Henry IV: 1 & 2*, LaMama E.T.C., *Tea Among The Tamaracks*, CenterStageNY, *Flights of Angels*, Emelin Theatre. TV/Film: *Law & Order: SVU, One Life to Live, Two Weeks Notice* and *Catch Me If You Can*.

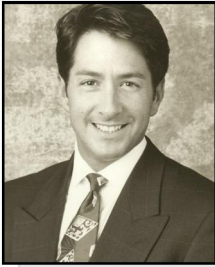


Denise Jaeckel (*ETHEL GUMM, KAY THOMPSON, HEDDA HOPPER and*

others) Denise Jaeckel has worked as a professional performer for over 20 years. Trained in singing and dancing; she began in musical theatre as a teen. When Denise discovered there was more money to be made in commercial acting, she moved into modeling and television. She worked mainly in Chicago and Cincinnati for national and international clients including Oscar de la Rente and Procter & Gamble. Denise relocated to Indianapolis in 2000 with her husband, Ed, and their son, Christopher, and decided to get back into theatre. You may have seen her as Reno Sweeney in *Anything Goes* with Civic, in the Indy Fringe Festival, singing with the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir, pursuing her passion for improvisational theatre with numerous improv groups, or performing in cabaret shows throughout the Midwest. Denise is excited to be working with The Actors Theatre of Indiana for the first time.



Kennedy Martin (*GIRL JUDY*) Kennedy is 10 years old and is thrilled to be making her professional stage debut with Actors Theatre of Indiana. Kennedy recently appeared as the lead character in *The Magical Christmas Bonnet* at ALC Dinner Theater. She has also appeared in *Cinderella* at Carmel Community Players, *Once Upon A Shoe* at Indianapolis Jr. Civic, *Seussical* at Anderson Mainstage, *Joseph* at the Artist's Studio and *Aladdin, Jr.* at Lee's Theatre. Kennedy studies voice, dance and acting and is a member of the drama team at her church. Kennedy has appeared in several independent films and has been cast in a feature film being shot in Indiana this summer. Thanks for coming to see our show!



Bradley Reynolds * (*FRANK GUMM, VINCENTE MINNELLI, MGM ASSISTANT and others*) is a native of Indianapolis, and a graduate of Speedway High School. He was fortunate to have enjoyed many years of performing at Civic Theatre, Footlight Musicals, Old School House Players and Theatre in the Woods. Bradley attended theatre classes at the Junior Civic Theatre program for seven years. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre from the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music. During the summer months of college he performed in shows at Opryland USA in Nashville, Kings Island in Cincinnati, and Geauga Lake in Akron. After graduation, Bradley achieved Actors' Equity Union membership while performing at Atlanta's Theatre of the Stars. During Bradley's tenure in Los Angeles, he acted in several television commercials. Most notably, he was a national spokesperson for Hyundai automobiles, appearing in their first nationally televised commercial. He also performed his one man show, *No Frills*, appearing from San Diego to Sacramento. Bradley resides in New York City and has lived there for 14 years. His New York credits include creating the role of Brian in *Have A Nice Day*, starring in *Manhattan Serenade*, and *When I Get My Name In Lights*, a tribute to the music of Peter Allen. The first Broadway show that Bradley ever saw was *Dreamgirls* starring Jennifer Holliday. He watched wishing he could play the role of Dave. He later was cast in a subsequent national tour as Dave with Ms. Holliday. When Bradley was seventeen he played the role of Albert Peterson in *Bye Bye Birdie* with the Young Artist's program at Footlight Musicals. Recently, and now age appropriate, he played the same role at Virginia Musical Theatre in Virginia Beach. Other favorite roles include George in *George M!*, Dick in *Dames At Sea*, and Billy Lawlor in *42nd Street*. Last Winter Bradley starred as, his favorite role thus far, The Cat in The Hat in *Seussical* in Philadelphia to critical acclaim. One reviewer said, "*Speaking of the Cat, Bradley Reynolds is hilarious and captivating as that troublesome Cat. Reynolds' wacky facial expressions, lithe dance moves, shoulder shrugs, broad gestures, verbal barbs and audience interaction all elevate the show...steal the show...and make the show just plain funny.*" Bradley is happy to be back home again in Indiana after appearing in COLE last year in ATI's inaugural season.