

BACKGROUND



Creative Team Biographies

BENNY ANDERSSON (*Songwriter*). Andersson was born Dec. 16, 1946, in Stockholm, Sweden. In 1952, he received accordion lessons from his father and grandfather. From 1964-68, he was a member of the Hep Stars, Sweden's most popular rock band of the 1960s. During this time, he began composing music. "Sunny Girl" and "Wedding" were huge hits for the Hep Stars. From 1972-82, he was with the popular group ABBA. From 1982-84, he composed the music (together with Björn Ulvaeus) for the musical *Chess*. In 1987, he began collaborating with Orsa Spelmän and recorded three albums deeply rooted in Swedish folk music: *Klinga Mina Klockor*, *November 1989* and *Fiolen Min*. In 2001, this collaboration led to the formation of Benny Anderson's Orchestra, a 16-man constellation with vocalists Helen Sjöholm and Tommy Körberg. So far, this has resulted in three CD albums and several summer tours. From 1990-95, he composed the music to *Kristina Från Duvemåla* (Björn Ulvaeus - Lars Rudolfsson/Jan Mark), which premiered in October 1995. In 1995 Andersson received the title of professor from the Swedish government. He was inducted into the Royal Swedish Academy of Music in 2007. He was appointed honorary Doctor of the College of Humanities at Stockholm University in 2008. Andersson is married to former TV producer, Mona Nörklit. They have one child, Ludvig Andersson. He also has two children from a previous marriage, Peter Grönvall and Helene Odedal, and five grandchildren.

BJÖRN ULVAEUS (*Songwriter*). Ulvaeus was born in 1945 in Gothenberg on the west coast of Sweden. After a successful local career in Sweden with a folk group in the mid '60s, he began his collaboration with Benny Andersson. They went on to form ABBA with Agnetha Faltskog and Anni-Frid Lyngstad. Even during the ABBA years, the idea of writing a musical seemed appealing, and, in 1981, Ulvaeus and Andersson met Tim Rice and together they co-wrote *Chess*, which opened in the West End in 1986. In 1995, Ulvaeus and Andersson opened a new musical in Sweden titled *Kristina Från Duvemåla*, which played for three years in Sweden. In February 2002, the Swedish version of *Chess* opened in Stockholm.

JUDY CRAYMER (*Producer*). Craymer graduated from the Guildhall School of Music in 1977 and has since worked extensively in the theatre, film, television and music industries. She worked as a stage manager for the Haymarket Theatre in Leicester, the Old Vic Theatre, London, and on the original production of *Cats* for Cameron Mackintosh and the Really Useful Theatre Company. In 1984, Craymer became the managing director of Three Knights Ltd, formed by Benny Andersson, Tim Rice and Björn Ulvaeus and served as executive producer for the West End production of *Chess* at the Prince Edward Theatre. In 1987, Craymer decided to pursue a career in film and television

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and went on to produce and develop television drama and comedy. The idea of *Mamma Mia!* was originated by Craymer who, in 1996, formed Littlestar Services Limited with Andersson, Ulvaeus and Richard East to produce the stage musical. She has produced 19 productions of *Mamma Mia!* around the world. In 2002, Cramer was presented with a Woman of the Year Award in recognition of her international success with *Mamma Mia!* That same year the show was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Musical. In the Queen's birthday honours list of 2007, Craymer was honored with an MBE for her contribution to the music industry. Craymer also produced *Mamma Mia! The Movie*, starring Meryl Streep and Pierce Brosnan; it has become the highest-grossing musical film worldwide. In 2008, she was honored with the Women in Film ITV Achievement of the Year Award. *Mamma Mia! The Movie* was nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy, a BAFTA for Outstanding British Film, and Craymer was personally nominated by BAFTA for the Carl Foreman Award for Special Achievement.

RICHARD EAST (*Producer*). Born in Australia, East is a 1977 fine arts graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne. He has worked in the entertainment industry for 24 years in Australia, London and the United States in various capacities including promoter, producer and artist manager. He is a peer of the Australia Council. East has been involved in *Mamma Mia!* from its inception.

CATHERINE JOHNSON (*Book*). Theatre: *Rag Doll and Renegades* (Bristol Old Vic), *Too Much Too Young* (Bristol Old Vic and London Bubble), *Boys Mean Business*, *Dead Sheep*, *Little Baby Nothing* (Bush Theatre, London), *Shang-a-Lang* (Bush Theatre and national tour) and *Mamma Mia!* (worldwide). Her plays have been produced in Germany, Denmark and Sweden. *Through the Wire*, a musical for NT/Shell Connections. Television: Episodes of "Casualty," "Byker Grove," "Love Hurts," "Gold," "Linda Green," the screenplays of *Rag Doll* and *Where's Willy?* (HTV) and *Sin Bin* (BBC), the series "Love in the 21st Century" (Channel 4). Johnson has won the Bristol Old Vic/HTV Playwriting Award, Thames Television's Writer-in-Residence Award and Thames Television's Best Play Award. She was nominated in 2002 for a Tony Award® for Best Musical Book for *Mamma Mia!* Film: Johnson wrote the screenplay for *Mamma Mia! The Movie* released in July 2008.

PHYLLIDA LLOYD (*Director*). Film: *Mamma Mia! The Movie* (Universal Pictures/Playtone/Littlestar Productions), *Gloriana a Film* (TV) (Illuminations Films). London Theatre: *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Hysteria*, *Wild East* (Royal Court), *The Threepenny Opera*, *Boston Marriage* (Donmar Warehouse), *Mary Stuart* (Donmar Warehouse, Apollo and Broadway in 2009), *The Way of the World*, *Pericles*, *What the Butler Saw*, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, *The Duchess of Malji* (Royal National Theatre), *Artists and Admirers*, *The Virtuoso* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Mamma Mia!* (London, Broadway and worldwide). European Opera: *La Bobème*, *Medea*, *Carmen*, *L'Etoile*, *Gloriana*, *Albert Herring*, *Peter Grimes* (Opera North), *Macbeth* (Paris and Royal Opera House, London), *The Handmaid's Tale* (Copenhagen, English National Opera and Toronto), *The Carmelites*, *Verdi Requiem*, *Rhinogold*, *Valkyrie*, *Siegfried* and *Twilight of the Gods* (English National Opera). Awards: For *Gloriana a Film*, she received an International Emmy, an F.I.P.A. d'Or, and the Royal Philharmonic Society Award. She won the South Bank Show Award for both *Mary Stuart* (2005) and *Peter Grimes* (2006). Lloyd was the 2006 Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of Drama at the University of Oxford.

ANTHONY VAN LAAST (*Choreographer*). Van Laast trained at the London School of Contemporary Dance, later joining the company as both a performer and choreographer. Theatre

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credits include *Bombay Dreams* (London and Broadway - Tony Award nomination); *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (worldwide - Laurence Olivier Award nomination, Dramalogue Award); *Jesus Christ Superstar* (UK and Broadway); *Song & Dance* (worldwide - Green Room Award, Australia). Van Laast has made shows for many people including, Kate Bush, Sarah Brightman and Barry Humphries (Dame Edna) and, in Las Vegas, Michael Crawford and Siegfried and Roy. He recently choreographed the new production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* for London's West End, the film of *Mamma Mia!* and *Sister Act*, which opened at the Palladium in June. In 1999, Van Laast was awarded the MBE for Services to Dance and Choreography.

MARK THOMPSON (*Production Designer*). Thompson's work for the National Theatre includes *The Alchemist*, *Once in a Lifetime*, *Henry IV Parts 1 & 2*, *Duchess of Malfi*, *Life x 3*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *The Madness of George III*, *Arcadia*, *Pericles*, *What the Butler Saw* and *The Day I Stood Still*. Recent work elsewhere includes *And Then There Were None* (Gielgud); *Bombay Dreams* (London and Broadway); *The Lady in The Van* (Queen's), *Follies* (New York (set only)); *Dr Dolittle & Blast!* (Apollo Hammersmith). For the RSC: *Hamlet*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Unexpected Man*; at the Royal Court: *Piano/Forte*, *The Woman Before*, *Wild East*, *Mouth to Mouth*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Hysteria*, *The Kitchen*, and *Never Land*; for the Donmar: *Twelfth Night*, *Uncle Vanya* (costumes only), *The Blue Room*, *Insignificance*, *Company* (also Albery), and *The Front Page*; for the Almeida: *Volpone*, *Betrayal*, *Party Time* and *Butterfly Kiss*. Other theatre includes *Art*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Shadowland*. Opera: *Falstaff* (Scottish Opera), *Peter Grimes* (Opera North), *Ariadne Auf Naxos* (Salzburg), *Il Viaggio à Reims* (ROH), *Hansel and Gretel* (Sydney), *The Two Widows* (ENO), *Queen of Spades* (New York), and *Montag aus licht* (costumes; Milan). Ballet: *Don Quixote* (Royal Ballet). Film: costume design for *The Madness of King George*.

HOWARD HARRISON (*Lighting Designer*). Theatre: *Mary Poppins*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Heroes and Donkeys' Years* in the West End, *Mamma Mia!* worldwide, *Mammals* at the Bush and on tour, *Rebecca* on tour, *Skellig* at the Young Vic and *Edward Scissorhands* at Sadler's Wells and on tour. West End includes *Suddenly Last Summer* (Albery), *Oleanna* (Garrick), *The Master Builder* (Albery), *Ragtime* (Piccadilly), *The Witches of Eastwick* (Drury Lane/Prince of Wales) and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Lyric). Broadway includes *Putting It Together* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Opera and dance: *Il Trovatore*, *Aida*, *I Masnadieri* and *Otello* (Royal Opera), *Beatrice and Benedict* and *Cavalleria Rusticana/Pagliacci* (WNO and Opera Australia), *Swan Lake* and *Romeo and Juliet* (ENB at the Albert Hall), Matthew Bourne's *Nutcracker!* (Sadler's Wells), *Albert Herring* (Opera North), *The Elixir of Love* (ENO) and *The Makropulos Case* and *Nabucco* (Metropolitan Opera, New York). Harrison has been nominated six times as Best Lighting Designer in the Laurence Olivier Awards and was the recipient of the 2001 Australian Green Room Award for his work on *Mamma Mia!*

BOBBY AITKEN (*Sound Designer*). Aitken has been involved with theatre sound for more than 20 years, designing sound for productions in the UK and around the world. His work in musical theatre includes *My Fair Lady* (Denmark), *Dirty Dancing* (The Aldwych Theatre), *Showboat* (Royal Albert Hall), *Lennon* (Broadway), *Cyberjam* (Queen's Theatre), *We Will Rock You* (Dominion Theatre, Las Vegas, Australia, Moscow and Madrid), *Mamma Mia!* (London, Broadway and 13 other productions around the world), *Blast!* (London, USA), *Grease!* (Dominion Theatre and UK tour), *Five Guys Named Moe* (Albery Theatre and tours), *Return to the Forbidden Planet* (Cambridge Theatre, USA, Japan and Australia), *Which Witch?* (Piccadilly Theatre), *Metropolis* (Piccadilly Theatre), *Pete Townshend's The Iron Man*, (Young Vic), *In the Midnight Hour* (Young Vic), *High Society* (Victoria Palace Theatre), *Time*

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(Dominion Theatre), *A Saint She Ain't* (Apollo Theatre), *The Best of Times* (Vaudeville Theatre), *Soul Train* (tour), *From a Jack to a King* (Ambassador's Theatre and tours), *Sweeney Todd* (Israeli National Opera), *Bitter Sweet* (Sadler's Wells Opera), *Children of Eden* (Prince Edward Theatre), *The Fix* (Donmar Warehouse), *The Beggar's Opera* and *Bartholomew Fair* (Royal Shakespeare Company). Regional work in the UK includes productions at Belgrade Theatre Coventry, Derby Playhouse, Sheffield Crucible, Manchester Royal Exchange, Palace Theatre, Watford and Leicester Haymarket. Opera: For the past six years, Aitken has been working to create techniques to deliver credible sound reinforcement for large-scale in-the-round opera production. Credits include *Carmen*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Tosca*, *Aida*, *Cav and Pag* and *La Bobème* (Royal Albert Hall and various arenas).

ANDREW BRUCE (*Sound Designer*). Bruce began his theatre career at Glyndebourne Festival Opera in 1968 and was appointed head of sound at the Royal Opera House in 1971. A year later, he co-founded Autograph Sound Recording, a leading British sound design and equipment rental company now responsible for numerous productions worldwide. He was associate designer on several landmarks of British musical theatre, such as *Evita*, *Cats* and *Starlight Express*. Original design credits include *Song and Dance*, *Abbacadabra*, *Little Me*, *Les Misérables*, *Chess*, *Follies*, *Into the Woods*, *The Card*, *Miss Saigon*, *Children of Eden*, *City of Angels*, *Martin Guerre*, *The Fix*, *The Witches of Eastwick*, *The Secret Garden*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Mary Poppins*. He is currently working on two ballets, *Seven Deadly Sins* and *Isadora*, for the Royal Opera House.

MARTIN KOCH (*Musical Supervisor & Additional Material & Arrangements*). *Les Misérables* (eight productions worldwide), *Miss Saigon* (four productions worldwide), *Cats* (London), *Oliver!* (London), *Martin Guerre* (UK Tour), *Mamma Mia!* (14 productions worldwide). Orchestration: *Just So*, *Moby Dick*, *Tutankhamun*, *Which Witch*, *Mamma Mia!* (Tony nomination 2002), *Jerry Springer The Opera*, *Billy Elliot* and "Kombat Opera," five half-hour operas for television. Koch & Gilpin: Koch started this music production company with longtime friend and collaborator Nick Gilpin. They have been responsible for the production and composition of numerous TV programs and produced many albums, including *Mamma Mia!* (Grammy nomination 2002), *Jerry Springer The Opera* and *Billy Elliot*. www.kochandgilpin.co.uk.

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