

LAWRENCE HELMAN *PUBLIC RELATIONS* – E MAIL - lhelman@sbcglobal.net

Tel. 415 /661- 1260 / Cell. 415/ 336- 8220 (*DO NOT PUBLISH THIS #*).

PRESS CONTACTS:

Joseph Tally 510-506-4924 joseph.g.tally@gmail.com

John Fisher 917-553-7165 jofish94117@yahoo.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: **Oct. 2, 2018**

For press materials and hi-res color press photos, visit:

<http://therhino.org/press-room/#ozboy>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1970689923228133/>

Go Down Under with Peter Allen

Theatre Rhinoceros presents

The Theatre Rhinoceros Premiere of...

The Boy From Oz

by Nick Enright & Martin Sherman

Music and Lyrics by Peter Allen

Oct. 26 - Nov. 17, 2018

Limited Engagement - 4 Weeks! - 18 Performances.

Opening Night: Sat., Oct. 27, 2018 - 8:00 pm

(Champagne Reception to follow)

Musical Direction by Sheela Ramesh

Choreography by Kevin Hammond and Christina Lazo

Directed by John Fisher

Gateway Theatre - 215 Jackson St., (at Battery St.) SF, CA 94111

www.TheRhino.org

Running time: 2.5 hours

Synopsis:

The Boy From Oz is a raucous musical biography about the life of the most famous gay man from Australia - entertainer, singer/songwriter, **Peter Allen** - featuring songs written by him and with other collaborators. The original book is by Nick Enright, with a revised book by Martin Sherman (*Bent*). The show begins in the 1950s with his humble beginnings growing up in an Australian bush town. He then experiences a meteoric rise to fame as an international star opening for Judy Garland and selling out week-long engagements at Radio City Music Hall. Allen was Judy Garland's good friend and Liza Minnelli's first husband, but, first and foremost, singer-songwriter Peter Allen was a performer. Within a few years, Allen and Minnelli split due to Allen's homosexuality. Eventually, Allen dies from AIDS - but before he dies, he is able to give one final concert back in his homeland.

The Boy From Oz is a tale of humor, heartbreak, self-discovery, forgiveness and love, all told using Allen's own songs, including "I Honestly Love You", "Don't Cry Out Loud", and "I Go to Rio." *The Boy From Oz* premiered in Australia in 1998 starring Todd McKenney, playing to over a million people, before debuting on Broadway in 2003 with Hugh Jackman in the lead role playing almost 400 performances. Jackman won the 2004 Tony Award for *Best Leading Actor in a Musical* and the Drama Desk Award for *Outstanding Actor in a Musical*.

Shows are at the **Gateway Theatre, 215 Jackson St.**, (at Battery St.) SF, CA 94111
– Embarcadero BART

Tickets are \$15 - \$45 and available at <https://therhino.audience1st.com/store/12>
or 1-800-838-3006. (All Previews are pay-what-you-wish at the door.)

The Boy From Oz features Bay Area Actors:

SuzyJane Edwards (Dee/Trio/Ensemble); **Max Fischer** (Young Peter - W/Th); **Justin Genna*** (Peter); **Larissa Kelloway** (Marion/Trio); **John-Thomas Hanson** (Stage Manager/Mark/Trio/Ensemble); **Kim Larsen** (George/Dick/Announcer/Dealer/Ensemble); **Grace Liu** (Josie-Leslie/Girl/Trio/Rockette/Trio/Ensemble); **Justin Lopez** (Announcer/Trick/Greg/Trio/Ensemble); **John Charles Quimpo** (Chris/Trio/Ensemble); **Leandra Ramm*** (Judy); **Carol Ann Walker** (Liza); **Cameron Zener** (Young Peter - F/Sat).

The role of young Peter is double cast.)

**Appears courtesy of Actors' Equity Association*

Tech Credits:

David Draper (Costume Designer); **John Fisher** (Director); **Kevin Hammond** (Choreographer); **Colin Johnson** (Lighting Designer); **Christina Lazo** (Choreographer); **Stephanie Rose Niemann** (Ass't. Director/Stage Manager); **Sheela Ramesh** (Music Director); **Joe Tally** (Ass't. Director); **Bert van Aalsburg** (Scenic Design).

Performance Dates: Oct. 26 - Nov. 17, 2018

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 Sat., Oct. 27 - 3:00 pm
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To arrange interviews with director **John Fisher**, any of the actors or for additional info,
PRESS CONTACTS:

Joseph Tally **510-506-4924** joseph.g.tally@gmail.com
John Fisher **917-553-7165** jofish94117@yahoo.com

Selected Bios:

JUSTIN GENNA (Peter Allen) is an actor and dancer from Madison, Wisconsin. At the age of 19 he was hired into the professional company of Milwaukee Ballet. After leaving the company, Genna moved to SF to study at ACT's Master Of Fine Arts program. Bay Area credits include Oakland Ballet and SF Symphony's performance of Broadway's *On The Town*. While in the Master of Fine Arts program he performed such roles as Satan in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, Paris in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Colin in *Clickshare*. He also directed and performed the title role in *Faustus* presented in ACT's 2017 *Skyfest*. This is Genna's first production with Theatre Rhinoceros.

JOHN FISHER (Director) Recent playwriting: *Transitions* (March 2017); *Shakespeare Goes to War* (nominated for six 2016 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards) and *To Sleep and Dream* (2014 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award Winner for Best Script.) He directed and acted in the TBA Award Recommended Productions of *Breaking the Code* (nominated for five 2016 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards) and *Equus*. In 2016 John received two nominations from the BATCC as Best Leading Actor for his performances in *Shakespeare Goes to War* and *Breaking the Code*. John is the only two-time winner of the Will Glickman Playwriting Award for *Medea: The Musical* and *Combat!* His plays have been performed in NY, LA and across the country. John appeared as Lear in *Lear!* In July 2017 and at the United Solo Festival in Manhattan in his one man show *A History of World War II*, for which he won the award for Best Actor. He has subsequently made an encore appearance at the United Solo Festival in 2018 and will perform HISTORY at Pangea in NYC and at The Marsh in SF for a six-week run starting Nov.8 2018. John's up-coming projects include playing the title role in John Cheever's "The Swimmer" at Word-for-Word in Dec. 2018. www.johnfisher.biz

SHEELA RAMESH (Music Director) is a music director, composer, and arranger/orchestrator. Other Bay Area theater credits include musical direction of eight short musicals for Musical Cafe's showcases of new musical theater, original music for Inferno Theatre's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which she also played Peasblossom, and upcoming musical direction of new musical *The Right Note* with Spare Stage. Sheela trained as a singer at Carnegie Mellon University (BFA) and the Royal College of Music (PgDip). She has performed in musical theater and opera with companies in in the US and UK. Sheela also holds degrees in psychology/cognitive science (BS, Carnegie Mellon; MSc, University College London) and law (JD, Yale Law School).

PETER ALLEN (Feb. 10, 1944 - June 18, 1992) was an Australian-born singer-songwriter, musician and entertainer, known for his flamboyant stage persona and lavish costumes. His songs were made popular by many recording artists, including Elkie Brooks, Melissa Manchester and Olivia Newton-John, with one, "Arthur's Theme (Best That You Can Do)" by Christopher Cross, winning an Academy Award - Best Original Song in 1981. In addition to recording albums, he enjoyed a cabaret and concert career, including appearing at the Radio City Music Hall in NYC riding a camel. Allen was the first husband of Liza Minnelli, with the couple divorcing after 7 years of marriage; he later came out as gay. He and his long-term partner died from AIDS-related illnesses 8 years apart, with Allen becoming one of the first

well-known Australians to perish from AIDS. Several years after his death, the musical *The Boy from Oz* was written about his life.

NICK ENRIGHT (playwright) (1950-2003) trained for the theatre at NYU School of Arts after early experience in Australia including with *Nimrod* and *MTC*. He was an actor, director and teacher as well as a writer. His plays include: *On the Wallaby*, *Daylight Saving*, *St James Infirmary*, *Mongrels*, *A Property of the Clan*, *The Quartet from Rigoletto*, *Blackrock*, *Good Works*, *Spurboard* and *A Man with Five Children*. With Justin Monjo he adapted Tim Winton's *Cloudstreet* for the stage. He has also written for film and TV, including co-writing with George Miller the screenplay for *Lorenzo's Oil* which was nominated for an Oscar. He has written a number of musicals including *The Venetian Twins* and *Summer Rain* with composer Terence Clarke. He wrote the book for the Australian production of *The Boy From Oz*. Among many awards were two Green Room Awards for Best Play, and four Gold AWGIE Awards, the 1998 Sidney Myer Performing Arts Award and the NSW Premiers' Special Award.

MARTIN SHERMAN (playwright) is an American dramatist and screenwriter best known for his 20 stage plays which have been produced in over 60 countries. He rose to fame in 1979 with the production of his play *Bent*, which explores the persecution of homosexuals during the Holocaust. *Bent* was a Tony nominee for Best Play in 1980 and won the Dramatists Guild's Hull-Warriner Award. It was adapted by Sherman for a major motion picture in 1997 and later by independent sources as a ballet in Brazil. Sherman is an openly gay Jew, and many of his works dramatize "outsiders," dealing with the discrimination and marginalization of minorities whether "gay, female, foreign, disabled, different in religion, class or color." He has lived and worked in London since 1980.

*The Actors appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Theatre Rhinoceros - Founded in 1977, The Rhino is the longest running LGBT theatre in the nation. We develop and produce works of theatre that enlighten, enrich, and explore both the ordinary and the extraordinary aspects of our queer community. Our emphasis is on new works, works about under-represented members of the larger queer community, and revivals of lesser known queer classics. Over the years Theatre Rhinoceros has received many awards of recognition including: Theatre Rhinoceros Day in the City Proclamation from Mayor Gavin Newsome, State Assembly Certificate of Recognition from Senator Mark Leno, recognitions from Congressperson Nancy Pelosi and Assembly Persons Tom Ammiano and Carole Migden, numerous Cable Car, BATCC and TBA Awards and Nominations, and the GLAAD Media Award for Best LGBT Theatre.

Musical Numbers -

All songs written by Peter Allen except as noted

Act 1

- The Lives of Me - *Peter Allen*
- When I Get My Name in Lights - *Boy and Ensemble*
- When I Get My Name in Lights (Reprise) - *Peter*
- Love Crazy - *Chris Bell, Peter and Ensemble* (Allen & Adrienne Anderson)
- Waltzing Matilda - *Peter and Chris* (in Mandarin)
- All I Wanted Was the Dream - *Judy Garland*
- Only an Older Woman - *Judy, Peter, Chris and Mark Herron*
- Best That You Can Do - *Peter and Liza Minnelli* (by Burt Bacharach, Carole Bayer Sager, Allen & Christopher Cross)
- Don't Wish Too Hard - *Judy* (music by Allen, lyrics by Sager)
- Come Save Me - *Liza and Peter*
- Continental American - *Peter and Ensemble* (music by Allen, lyrics by Sager)
- She Loves to Hear the Music - *Liza and Ensemble* (music by Allen, lyrics by Sager)
- Quiet Please, There's a Lady On Stage - *Peter & Judy* (music by Allen, lyrics by Sager)
- I'd Rather Leave While I'm in Love - *Liza and Peter* (music by Allen, lyrics by Sager)
- Not the Boy Next Door - *Peter & Marion Woolnough* (music Allen, lyrics Dean Pitchford)

Act 2

- Bi-Coastal - *Peter and Trio* (written by Allen, David Foster & Tom Keane)
- If You Were Wondering - *Peter and Greg Connell*
- Sure Thing Baby - *Dee Anthony, Greg, Peter, Trio and Male Ensemble*
- Everything Old is New Again - *Peter & The Rockettes* (music by Allen, lyrics by Sager)
- Everything Old is New Again (Reprise) - *Marion, Dee & Greg* (music Allen, lyrics Sager)
- Love Don't Need a Reason - *Peter & Greg* (by Allen, Michael Callen & Marsha Malamet)
- I Honestly Love You - *Greg* (by Allen & Jeff Barry)
- You and Me - *Liza and Peter* (music by Allen, lyrics by Sager)
- I Still Call Australia Home - *Peter and Ensemble*
- Don't Cry Out Loud - *Marion* (music by Allen, lyrics by Sager)
- Once Before I Go – *Peter*
- I Go to Rio - *Peter and Company* (by Allen & Anderson)

Calendar Editors:

WHAT: *Theatre Rhinoceros i presents...*
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By Nick Enright and Martin Sherman. Music by Peter Allen.
Musical Direction by Sheela Ramesh
Choreography by Kevin Hammond and Christina Lazo
Directed by John Fisher

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WEB PAGE: www.TheRhino.org

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PRESS INFO: For press materials and hi-res color press photos, visit:
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Public Service Announcements (PSA's) for

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15 seconds:

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30 seconds:

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1 minute:

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