THE WILD ROVERS
Inspired by the Music & Magic of The Irish Rovers™
WINTER GARDEN THEATRE
OCT 14 - NOV 5
Terra Bruce Productions would like to thank George Millar and The Irish Rovers for lending us a bit of their legend for this production...

SHOW NOTES

 ايضاً، هذا الإنتاج يحتوي على تأثيرات إضاءة متباعدة وآسيوية.

Running time is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

Any video/audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

Please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices during this performance.

TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We ask that you pause for a moment to consider the land on which this theatre is located – people have lived on this land for generations and generations and generations. We are gathered on the traditionally lands occupied by Indigenous peoples. They continue to care for this land and to shape Ontario. We honour all First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and their valuable contributions to this land past and present – and in this space we pay our respects to the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

The Irish Rovers™️is being used under licence from George Millar and The Irish Rovers Company Ltd.
WALTER SCHROEDER and TERRA BRUCE PRODUCTIONS present

THE WILD ROVERS

Book by STEVE COCHRANE

Inspired by the Music and Magic of THE IRISH ROVERS™

with

Julia Dunne Philip Goodridge Vicki Harnett Liam Lynch* Steve Maloney Powell Nobert Melanie O’Brien Sean Panting Nicole Underhay*

and

Alex Abbott Sultan Dharamshi Keith Doiron Kelly-Ann Evans Grant King Paul Kinsman Dan Smith Josh Ward

PRODUCTION DESIGN
Graham McMonagle ‡

LIGHTING DESIGN
Leigh Ann Vardy ‡

SOUND DESIGN
Don Ellis

PUPPET CONSULTANT
Baptiste Neis

STAGE MANAGER
Jaimie Tait *

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS
Kelly Lewis, Jordan Vincer

ORCHESTRATIONS
Alex Abbott

ASSOCIATE LIGHTING DESIGN
Imogen Wilson

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Brendan Agnew

ARTISTIC ASSOCIATE
Courtney Brown

ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Mark Feener

PRODUCER
Walter Schroeder

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Bob Hallett

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER
David Miller

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
Krysta Rudofsky

PUBLICITY
B-Rebel P.R.

MUSIC SUPERVISOR
Wayne Warren

TOUR COORDINATOR
Caroline Ngarachu

CONTROLLE
Bettina Yau

Directed by JASON BYRNE

Music Direction, Arrangements & Additional Music by KELLY-ANN EVANS & JOSH WARD

* The participation of these Artists is arranged by permission of Canadian Actors’ Equity Association under the provisions of the Dance Opera Theatre Policy (DOT).

‡ Indicated designers on this production are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.
NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Growing up in St. John’s, traditional Irish music was around us all the time – it never felt like something old-fashioned or exotic. We heard it on the radio, from passing cars, from speakers during ice skating, half heard up the stairs, the voices of my parents’ friends, laughing and singing in our kitchen... It was part of the soundtrack of our lives.

A big reason for that was The Irish Rovers. Their CBC variety show came on every Sunday night in Newfoundland, right after Walt Disney. My parents loved the Rovers’ music, their quick witted banter and their bountiful charm, while as children we were just entranced with the wonder of it all.

The Irish Rovers were unique – rock stars who looked and sounded like people I knew, but were also somehow larger than life. They were huge stars in Canada, and in an era where most people only had a few channels on their TVs, their show was a must. Radio loved their songs, and their live concerts set records from coast to coast.

When Terra Bruce Productions embarked on this journey, and George Millar kindly gave us permission to create a musical based on The Irish Rovers’ legacy, we thought long and hard about how to capture all this on stage. At the end of the day we decided that we would not focus on the real band members or their lives, but on our collective memory of those classic TV shows. It was this larger than life magic, that wonderful charm, the easy humour and that gift of moving and powerful songs that we decided would be the foundation of the Wild Rovers musical.

And so we tapped not just into their story, but those of our own childhoods. Together we have created a fairy tale world where an imaginary band could tell an imaginary tale, and imbue it with all the incredible spirit that is the lasting gift and legacy of the legendary Irish Rovers.

Bob Hallett
Executive Producer
NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Growing up in St. John’s, traditional Irish music was around us all the time – it never felt like something old-fashioned or exotic. We heard it on the radio, from passing cars, from speakers during ice skating, half heard up the stairs, the voices of my parents’ friends, laughing and singing in our kitchen… It was part of the soundtrack of our lives.

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Bob Hallett
Executive Producer
Our tale begins way, waaaaaay back in 19 and 89. The Wild Rovers (Billy, Jordy, Joe, and their bus driver Sheila) are touring the country. The band is just outside Grand Falls, Newfoundland, when they are suddenly whisked away to a magical world.

Here we meet two fairy tale nations at war, and as fate (and plot) should have it, the band is directly in the middle of it all.

The Wild Rovers battle and seduce a wonderful, mad cap cast of characters along the way, as they try to reconcile their own deepest doubts and fears in order to broker a lasting peace.

Will they save these warring kingdoms from themselves with song?! Or strike a sour note and force an entire world into the ravages of war?!

You'll soon find out.

**Musical Numbers**

1. The Orange and the Green
2. Band Without a Country
3. The Rising of the Moon
4. Wasn’t That a Party
5. Lily the Pink
6. Whiskey in the Jar
7. Come by the Hills
8. No More Bread and Butter
9. The Unicorn
10. Donald, Where’s Your Troosers?
11. Drunken Sailor
12. Black Velvet Band
13. The Wild Rover
14. Molly Bán
15. The Rising of the Moon reprise
16. All Sing Together
Conductor, Auxiliary Percussion
KELLY-ANN EVANS

Percussion
SULTAN DHARAMSHI

Drums
DAN SMITH

Bass
KEITH DOIRON

Piano
ALEX ABBOTT

Keyboards, Accordion
PAUL KINSMAN

Guitar 1, Traditional Instruments
JOSH WARD

Guitar 2
GRANT KING

MUSIC CREDITS

“The Orange and the Green”
New words and music by Anthony Murphy
All rights reserved including public performance for profit
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“The Unicorn”
Words and music by Shel Silverstein
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“No More Bread and Butter”
Written by George Millar
Used by permission of Potato Records obo The Irish Rovers Company Ltd.

“We Had That Party”
Written by Thomas Richard Paxton
Used by permission of EMI U CATALOG INC.
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“All Sing Together”
Words and Music by Bryan Adams, James Douglas Vallance
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JULIA DUNNE
Josephine
Julia is a singer, actor, dancer & choreographer from St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador. She’s a graduate of Sheridan College with an Honours Bachelor’s Degree in Music Theatre Performance. Recent credits include: Assistant Choreographer for Come From Away (Gander), Belle in Beauty and the Beast, Mary Poppins in Mary Poppins and Sophie in Mamma Mia! As a company member of Red Hot Productions, Julia continues her dance training in hiphop, heels and jazz funk. Enjoy the show!

PHILIP GOODRIDGE
Jordy
Philip has worked with several Newfoundland companies including Artistic Fraud of Newfoundland, TaDa! Events, Resource Centre For The Arts, Rising Tide Theatre, Untellable Movement Theatre and many others. He is a co-founder and head writer of Ladies Who Lunch Productions, producing original live radio plays for the theatrical stage. He is one-half of the MusicNL nominated duo The Duds.

VICKI HARNETT
Sheila
A passionate and proud supporter of new musical theatre, Vicki is thrilled to call herself a Wild Rover! Most recently, she was featured in Terra Bruce Productions’ No Change in the Weather. Thanks and love go out to her nearest and dearest, and to her fellow castmates, with whom she is grateful to share the joy of singing these well-loved and timeless Irish Rovers tunes.

STEVIE MALONEY
Billy
Steve Maloney is an award-winning balladeer and actor, known for his velvet-tinged baritone and expansive range. He has toured his own music to festivals and listening rooms across Canada and can be heard on various NL albums as a vocalist, multi-instrumentalist, and producer. He has also been involved in a variety of theatre and film productions as an actor and composer.

LIAM LYNCH
Roguish Rick Castley
You may recognize Liam from his heavily plagiarized and critically underrated performance in his self-produced one act backyard play in Grade 3. Since then: The Winter’s Tale, Cyrano (St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival), The Glass Menagerie (Theatre on the Ridge), Into the Woods (Theatre Sheridan – Class of 2018). On screen: Dying for Admission (Neshama/MarVista Entertainment), Murdoch Mysteries (Shaftesbury Films), 2022 White Ribbon Campaign (Untitled Films). For Ma, Da, and K-man.

POWELL NOBERT
Prince Farid
Powell is a graduate of the St. Lawrence College Music Theatre program and is beginning his studies at Queen’s University. His previous credits include Dr. Frank-N-Furter in Rocky Horror, Gus/Growltiger/Bustopher Jones in Cats, and Charlie Brown in You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown. He also received the Best Supporting Actor Award for his work as Pepper in Mamma Mia! Powell hopes you enjoy the show!
MELANIE O’BRIEN
Princess Hiya
Melanie is a singer, songwriter & actor based in St. John’s. She is a Sheridan College Honours Graduate & scholarship recipient and MusicNL award winner. She released her debut album in 2016 and toured across Atlantic Canada. She is part of the stylized duo, The Duds with Philip Goodridge. In 2020 they released their first EP, which is available on streaming platforms, along with her solo work. Melanie is a resident artist with Terra Bruce Productions and is thrilled to be playing Princess Hiya!

SEAN PANTING
Maggie
Sean Panting is a veteran musician and actor from St. John’s. Over the course of a career spanning 30+ years, he has appeared on stage, television and film as various and sundry lawyers, drinking buddies, spies, fast food employees, and scumbags. He has released six full-length albums under his own name, played guitar on a score of others, and written songs on topics ranging from love and despair to vampires, municipal politics, poisonous sandwiches and car trouble.

NICOLE UNDERHAY
Queen Keerthi
This is Nicole’s first adventure with Terra Bruce Productions. Other theatre includes 8 seasons at the Shaw Festival, Soulpepper, Tarragon and theatres across Canada and the U.S.A. She currently plays Fox’s mom on Son of a Critch and can be seen on Hudson & Rex, Murdoch Mysteries and many other local and national shows including Saving Hope and Random Passage.

ALEX ABBOTT
Piano
Alex Abbott is a collaborative pianist based out of St. John’s, Newfoundland. He studied with Marilyn Murphy, Brian Way, and attended the MUN School of Music. Alex has been teaching young pianists and accompanying musical theatre performers for the last 10 years. He is currently the resident rehearsal pianist with Terra Bruce, and plays regularly with NL-based bands The Singles and Judith Morrisey and The Roadside Attractions. Past credits include Into The Woods, and No Change In The Weather.

SULTAN DHARAMSHI
Percussion
Sultan has worked in studio session recording and live touring performances across Canada, Europe, and the U.S. with many acts, including Ria Mae (Sony Music recording artist), DRUM! (Juno-nominated musical theatre production), Garrett Mason, Steve Marriner (Monkey Junk), Jim Henman (April Wine), The Junkbeats, Bill Durst (Thundermug), Keith Hallett, Blue Rodeo, and Dolly Parton.
PAUL KINSMAN
Keyboards, Accordion
Paul has been contributing to the NL music scene for 40+ years, performing on TV, stage, and film. Credits include: No Change in the Weather – Arranger/M.D. (Terra Bruce Productions), Dooley Gardens TV series – Co-Composer (Rink Rat). Paul has recorded and toured with many well-known NL artists: Alan Doyle, Cory Tetford, and with arguably NL’s greatest songwriter, Ron Hynes, for the last 20 years of Ron’s life. He is grateful to be able to perform and learn from the Terra Bruce team every day.

KEITH DOIRON
Bass
Keith Doiron started his career as a professional musician at 14, playing at jazz festivals with Halifax’s Salsa Picante. He received a scholarship to Humber College. Since 2016, he’s been a vital member of psych rock band Walrus, touring globally with renowned acts. His solo album as his alias Verry Gerry was released in 2023, highlighting his skills as a writer, producer, and instrumentalist. Keith’s passion for music and commitment to excellence drive his artistic journey.

GRANT KING
Guitar 2
Grant King holds a Bachelor’s degree from Berklee College of Music and a Masters degree from Longy School of Music. His guitar trio Big Space won the 2023 ECMA for Jazz Recording of the Year. He is also an award-winning film scorer. He is currently the senior sound and music producer for m5 the agency, where he has composed and produced countless pieces of music for ads. Grant has also performed in many theatre productions and with the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra.

DAN SMITH
Drums
Dan Smith is a drummer from St John’s known for impeccable timing and sense of feel, with over 40 years experience in blues, pop, rock, country, folk and traditional genres. Dan has been the foundation for a long list of local artists including Shanneyganock, Sean Panting, Mark Bragg, Mick Davis, as well as local and touring productions at the Stephenville Festival. Dan regularly performs with a number of groups including 709, Black Cherry, and Darrell Cooper DC3.

JOSH WARD
Guitar 1, Traditional Instruments
Josh Ward is a performer. His early years found him playing electric bass in several terrible rock bands, and jamming traditional music with his family. He later went on to study double bass at Memorial University of Newfoundland, and was fortunate to get tons of opportunities on stage and in studios, churches, barns, etc. Today you can still find him on stage, in studios, churches, barns, etc., and still with a smile on his face.

KELLY-ANN EVANS
Conductor, Auxiliary Percussion
It’s been many, many years since Kelly-Ann has waved a music wand about! In fact, the last time was when she was completing her B.MUS at Memorial University. Normally found on the performer side of the deck, this departure has been joyous. The arranging process of this project was inspired by many years of performing across multiple genres and rooted in a deep love for harmonies and texture. As conductor of Earth, Wind & Choir and band leader of numerous projects in the pop/rock world, her passion for musical direction in the theatre realm has been fully ignited!

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Paul has been contributing to the NL music scene for 40+ years, performing on TV, stage, and film. Credits include: No Change in the Weather – Arranger/M.D. (Terra Bruce Productions), Dooley Gardens TV series – Co-Composer (Rink Rat). Paul has recorded and toured with many well-known NL artists: Alan Doyle, Cory Tetford, and with arguably NL’s greatest songwriter, Ron Hynes, for the last 20 years of Ron’s life. He is grateful to be able to perform and learn from the Terra Bruce team every day.

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BANDTORONTO 2023
CREATIVE & PRODUCTION TEAM

STEVE COCHRANE
Writer
Steve Cochrane is from Mount Pearl, NL. Theatre: Birthday Balloon, Woke Island, No Mummers Allowed In, The Innocence of Catherine Snow. Television: The Hardy Boys (Daytime Emmy-Nominated Outstanding Youth Series), The Porter, Ransom, Lost Girl, Taxi Brooklyn, Endgame, Republic of Doyle, The Imperfects, Three Chords from The Truth (Gemini-Nominated Best Comedy or Variety Program/Gemini Winner Best Ensemble). Steve won the Cannes Digital Emmy for Best Cross Platform Fiction for the interactive gaming experience for Endgame.

JASON BYRNE
Director
Jason is the Artistic Director of Loose Canon for whom he has directed over 30 productions. He has also directed several productions for The Abbey Theatre including A Month in the Country by Brian Friel (after Turgenev), Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet; and at the Shaw Festival Theatre – Tom Murphy’s adaptation of Anton Chekhov’s The Cherry Orchard. Also, Whistle in the Dark by Tom Murphy, Festen by David Eldridge, and Die Probe by Lukas Barfuss, for The Company Theatre, Toronto.

KELLY-ANN EVANS
Musical Director, Arranger, Additional Music
Based in St. John’s, NL, Kelly-Ann is owner/operator of Rock City Studio & Red Dress Entertainment. She has won multiple MusicNL Awards & is an ECMA nominee. Theatre credits include We Will Rock You (Mirvish), Cabaret & The Trojan Women (Stratford), Into the Woods & Phantom of the Opera (OOTA), Next to Normal(Best Kind Productions), Evita, Rock of Ages, CATS, Chicago and J.C. Superstar (Tada!). Kelly-Ann is a regular featured soloist with the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra and works as a Resident Artist, Music Director, Vocal Coach & Arranger with Terra Bruce Productions.

JOSH WARD
Musical Director, Arranger, Additional Music
Josh Ward doesn’t know very much about musical theatre. He has spent the past twenty something years playing in varieties of ensembles though, and in as many different genres as he could get away with. Through all those hours and hours and hours of rehearsals and gigs, he developed a taste for orchestrating and arranging music for groups, and was blessed with many opportunities to try it out in most every style of music. Oh, and he loves a good mash-up.

GRAHAM MCMONAGLE
Production Design
Graham McMonagle is an award-winning interdisciplinary production designer, performer, and teacher. Working in a range of styles from ballet and music-theatre to text-based theatre from the classic canon, their work has received national and international recognition. Recent collaborators include Pacific Opera Victoria, Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre, Crimson Coast Dance, Terra Bruce Productions, and UVic Phoenix Theatre. They are currently a PhD Theatre History candidate at the University of Victoria.

LEIGH ANN VARDY
Lighting Design
Recent credits: Come From Away (Michael Rubinoff / Arts and Culture Centre), Richard II, Hamlet 911 (Stratford Festival), Fall on Your Knees (Can Stage, NAC, Vida Brevis), For A Look or a Touch (Pacific Opera Victoria). Current: Noli Timere, (Rebecca Lazier / Janet Echelman); February (Opera on the Avalon). Upcoming: Guilt (Tarragon Theatre / world premiere); Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (Neptune Theatre). Leigh Ann teaches and coaches at the National Theatre School of Canada.
DON ELLIS
Sound Design
Sound design: Richard II, The Neverending Story (NAC/Stratford Festival); Anne and Gilbert, A Christmas Carol (NAC); Bakkhai, The Diary of Anne Frank, As You Like It (Stratford Festival); I Forgive You, The Colony of Unrequited Dreams, Oil and Water, Under Wraps, Afterimage, Fear of Flight (Artistic Fraud of Newfoundland). Film/TV: Production Sound: Danny (NFB); Misery Harbour (UIP Denmark). Producer/engineer: Hunter Hunter, Spectators (Amelia Curran); Dardanelles, The Eastern Light (Dardanelles).

BAPTISTE NEIS
Puppet Consultant
Baptiste works in puppetry, theatre, and film. She is co-founder of Clever Crones, which created the puppet show “The Sleeping Prince” with Waterloo Chamber Players and co-created “Kate Crackerberry” with White Rooster. Baptiste’s live performances span C2C, Artistic Fraud, Caravan, 30for60, and more. She trained with The Old Trout Puppet Workshop and holds a B.F.A. from Concordia University. Baptiste served as vice-chair of RCAT, president of the Nickel Film festival, and was a founding director of Perchance Theatre. She is a parent.

JAIMIE TAIT
Stage Manager
Jaimie is very happy to be a part of the Wild Rovers team. For Terra Bruce Productions, Jaimie has stage-managed No Change in the Weather and Let’s Bop! Some favourite past credits include: Betroffenheit with Kidd Pivot, Offensive to Some for Persistence Theatre Company, and Chelsea Hotel: The Songs of Leonard Cohen for The Firehall Arts Centre. Originally from B.C., Jaimie is now proud to call St. John’s her home. Jaimie is a graduate of Studio 58.

KELLY LEWIS
Assistant Stage Manager - Rehearsal
Kelly Lewis is a stage manager who hails from North Bay, Ontario. She holds a diploma in Dance Performance from Holland College and now studies at Memorial University, where she is concurrently pursuing a B.A. in Communication Studies and a diploma in Stage and Screen Technique. Recent credits include Stage Manager for RIG (RCA Theatre), Assistant Stage Manager for Let’s Bop! (Terra Bruce Productions), Hamlet (Perchance Theatre) and As You Like It (Perchance Theatre).

JORDAN VINCER
Assistant Stage Manager - Production
Jordan is from St. John’s, NL and holds a BFA from Ryerson University’s School of Performance. Select credits include Come From Away (ACC) Let’s Bop!, No Change in the Weather (TBP), Second Shot (BKP), Area of Uncertainty, The Tempest (Perchance Theatre), The 25th Annual..Spelling Bee, Honky Tonk Laundry, To The Girls (STF), and Once: The Musical (Theatre St. John’s). Jordan is thrilled to be back with Terra Bruce. You can find Jordan on Instagram @jordanvincer.

ALEX ABBOTT
Orchestrations
In addition to his work as a pianist, Alex Abbott is also a vocalist, copyist, arranger, and music director. He studied Musical Theatre Performance at Sheridan College. This is his second show as Assistant MD for Terra Bruce Productions. Past performance roles include Jean-Michel in La Cage Aux Folles, and The Lion in The Wizard of Oz. Past MD Credits include Into the Woods, and original Canadian musicals No Change In The Weather, The Nobleman’s Wedding, and The Naming Of Port Rexton.

IMOGEN WILSON
Associate Lighting Designer
Imogen is a Toronto based Lighting Designer who has designed all over Canada including at the Stratford Festival, Canadian Stage, Crows Theatre, Against the Grain, Summerworks, and Toronto Dance Theatre. Imogen has also worked as an assistant lighting designer for Mirvish, Canadian Opera Company, Stratford Festival, Musical and Canadian Stage. She is also a scenic painter, proud member of ADC 659, and loves to go for a canoe at sunset.
COURTNEY BROWN
Artistic Associate
Courtney is from Musgravetown, NL, In addition to her work with Terra Bruce Productions, Courtney has also worked with the National Arts Centre, Soulpepper, Artistic Fraud, Mindless Theatrics, c2c theatre, Rabbittown Theatre Company, RCAT, the Women’s Work Festival, newfoundlandartistx, Rising Tide Theatre, Red Sky Performance, and Project Humanity. She holds a BFA in Theatre (Acting) from York University. Courtney is excited to be directing Hymnal with Terra Bruce in the spring of 2024.

BRENDAN AGNEW
Production Manager
Brendan Agnew is a production and stage manager who has worked with companies across Canada including Pacific Opera Victoria, Repercussion Theatre, Carousel Theatre for Young People, the Belfry Theatre, Perchance Theatre, and PerSiStence Theatre Company. He is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada and holds a BFA in Theatre from the University of Victoria.

MARK FEENER
Assistant Technical Director
Mark Feener is a sound designer, engineer and producer currently based out of St. John’s Newfoundland and Labrador. A designer and engineer for the past ten years. Select credits include No Change in the Weather (Terra Bruce Productions), Dead Man Walking, Sound of Music (Opera on the Avalon), Circus Glorious (Wonderbolt Circus), Out of it, Eyes of the Gull, Birthday Balloon (Rising Tide Theatre), Abandon Hope Mabel Dorothy (Lighthouse Productions) and more.

BOB HALLETT
Executive Producer
A native of St. John’s, in 1993 he and three friends started Great Big Sea, a band which went on to sell over a million and half records over a twenty-year career. The band had twelve gold and multi-platinum albums, and several number one albums in Canada. A musician steeped in traditional styles, Bob can play a dozen instruments, and has written many songs, including the classic Old Black Rum, which has been recorded by dozens of acts around the world. He has played thousands of concerts, made countless appearances on television and radio, managed bands, produced records, created radio specials, and promoted many live concerts. Before joining Terra Bruce Productions, Bob worked at the Stratford Festival as a Composer & Music Director, and works with the producers of the Tony & Olivier award winning Broadway musical Come From Away as a Music Consultant. He has written dozens of magazine articles, essays and several books, including the best-selling memoir Writing Out The Notes.

DAVID MILLER
Associate Producer
TERRA BRUCE PRODUCTIONS

Producer
WALTER SCHROEDER

Executive Producer
BOB HALLETT

Associate Producer
DAVID MILLER

Artistic Associate
COURTNEY BROWN

Executive & Program Director, Regent Theatre
FRANCO BONI

Music Director - Vocal
KELLY-ANN EVANS

Music Director - Instrumental
JOSH WARD

Orchestrator
ALEX ABBOTT

Resident Artists
JULIA DUNNE, PHILIP GOODRIDGE, VICKI HARNETT, STEVE MALONEY, MELANIE O’BRIEN

Production Manager
BRENDAN AGNEW

Resident Stage Manager
JAIMIE TAIT

Assistant Technical Director
MARK FEENER

Sound Assistants
SULTAN DHARAMSHI, PAUL KINSMAN

Head of Aesthetics
SARA HODDER

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Please Note: At the discretion of management latecomers may be admitted at a suitable break in the performance. The use of cameras, cell phone cameras, recording equipment, radios or any playback devices are not permitted in the theatres. Patrons are asked to ensure that alarms and cell phones do not sound during the performance. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building.

Hearing Enhancement: The Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre is equipped with a hearing enhancement system. Please ask an usher for assistance.

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By: Andie Bulman

The Irish Rovers weren’t like other bands, and The Wild Rovers (this musical you’re about to watch) isn’t like other musicals, but that’s part of the magic.

The Irish Rovers formed in 1963 in Toronto, but you can trace their start to Northern Ireland. There, founding members George and Will Millar would sing Irish folk songs, dance, and banter, transforming their tiny kitchen into a rocking party. Eventually, The Irish Rovers landed a month-long gig at the Purple Onion in San Francisco, where they had their first big song. ‘The Unicorn’ was a poem by Playboy Cartoonist turned children’s author Shel Silverstein; The Irish Rovers adapted it to music and turned ‘The Unicorn’ into a certified hit of a folk song, selling eight million copies. Since that first big break, the band has traveled the world, broke up, hosted television variety shows on the CBC, got back together, won Junos, and even became Canadian citizens representing their new country at various World Expos.

Their lyrics reflect on Irish emigration and the troubles in Northern Ireland or lean heavily into folklore, surrealism, and myths. These themes: political uncertainty born of colonialism, leaving home, and the extinction of unicorns all make themselves known in The Wild Rovers. So, sit back and enjoy this tale. If we’ve done it right, the story should speak to a pain that resides deep in the hearts of most: the pain of seeing a world divided, torn apart by silly things that shouldn’t matter. Also, there are puppets and dancing, there are jokes and playfulness.

Let’s Talk About the Musical Direction and Arrangement in The Wild Rovers

This vivid musical you’re about to adore and tell your friends about? The driving force isn’t the melancholy songs in The Irish Rover’s repertoire. Musical Directors, Arrangers and Additional Music Composers Kelly-Ann Evans and Josh Ward agree that the sillier tunes move the fairy tale inspired musical forward. Kelly-Ann explains. “My uncle would take me to his cabin, and we’d listen to The Irish Rovers. I was always intrigued by the more playful songs. I loved ‘Donald, Where’s Your Troosers?’ We got to have so much fun on this project; adapting this music has been a joyful and fun puzzle.”
And it looks like fun, too. In most productions, musicians are off to the side or hidden in the pit, never to be seen, but here, there’s no separation between the actors and musicians; everyone is on stage together. While the actors dance, sing, and banter, the musicians tune their instruments, ready themselves, and reach for pipes and percussion instruments in a surreal on-stage ballet.

**What’s the deal with the puppets and Production Design?**

The costumes and set pieces remind you of an acid trip (a good one), and the sizes of the objects on stage are entirely out-of-whack. Production Designer Graham McMonagle made this choice consciously. “I wanted to challenge the audience with small things being big and big things being small. The scale of things, fairy tale scale, that’s something I thought about when designing.”

There are puppets galore.

Puppet Consultant Baptiste Neis is excited to hear from the audience. “For me, this was a dream contract. As an artist, things like this don’t always come along. We’re hoping that audiences are delighted, it won’t be what people expect.”

**The Direction**

Dublin-based director Jason Byrne woke up one morning and found a random e-mail in his inbox inviting him to direct The Wild Rovers. “I was intrigued. I had never directed a musical, and I was overwhelmed with this strange but good feeling about the company and about coming to Newfoundland. It felt like a call to adventure.”

Byrne dove in, reading versions of the script and dabbling in the music of The Irish Rovers; he was immediately drawn to working with writer Steve Cochrane. “Steve wasn’t precious at all...so we began conversing about what drew us into the world of The Irish Rovers. We were thrilled by this fantasy landscape.” Morals still sneak into the musical, but it’s effortless now. “We talk about race and gender and war, but the morals are woven into the story’s fabric; they aren’t driving the tale.” Creating a jovial atmosphere in rehearsals was a part of Byrne’s process. “There has to be ease and adaptability in rehearsals. I’m interested in the actors’ small discoveries because those small things aren’t small.”
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