

ALBURY WODONGA THEATRE COMPANY

AUDITION DETAILS

COME FROM AWAY

A NEW MUSICAL

Book, Music and Lyrics by
IRENE SANKOFF and DAVID HEIN



A TRIUMPH OF BOTH THE HUMAN SPIRIT
AND MUSICAL THEATRE.

SUUNDAT EXPRESS



IRRESISTIBLE AND INSPIRING. IT'S A MUSICAL THAT GETS
EVERYTHING RIGHT.

THE TIME

MAY/JUNE 2025
ALBURY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE

Licensed exclusively by Music Theatre International (Australasia).

THE STORY

On the morning of September 11, 2001, the townsfolk of Gander (including Claude the mayor, Oz the police constable, Beulah the teacher, Bonnie the SPCA worker, and others) describe life in Newfoundland and how they learn of the terrorist attacks taking place in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Shanksville, Pennsylvania ("Welcome to the Rock").

The attacks result in the closure of US airspace, diverting 38 international aircraft to Gander International Airport. The passengers on these aircraft doubled the population of the small Newfoundland town, which is unequipped for the influx of stranded travellers ("38 Planes").

The Gander townspeople spring to action and prepare to house, feed, clothe, and comfort the nearly 7,000 passengers, along with 19 animals in cargo ("Blankets and Bedding"). Meanwhile, the pilots, flight attendants, and passengers are initially forbidden from leaving the planes, forcing them to contend with confusing and conflicting information about what has happened and why they were suddenly grounded ("28 Hours / Wherever We Are").

Once allowed off the planes and transferred to nearby emergency shelters ("Darkness and Trees"), the passengers and crew watch replays of the attacks on the news and learn the true reason why they were grounded ("Lead Us Out of the Night"). The frightened and lonely passengers desperately try to contact their families and pray for their loved ones while the townsfolk work through the night to help them in any and every way they can ("Phoning Home / Costume Party"). The travellers are initially taken aback by their hosts' uncommon hospitality, but they slowly let their guards down and begin to bond with the quirky townsfolk and each other. The "islanders" in Gander and the surrounding towns open up their homes to the "plane people", regardless of their guests' race, nationality, or sexual orientation. Two women, Beulah (from Gander) and Hannah (from New York), bond over the fact that both of their sons are firefighters, but Hannah's son remains missing after the attacks ("I Am Here"). Hannah asks Beulah to take her to a Catholic church, and a number of characters make their way to other houses of worship around town ("Prayer").

To alleviate rising fear and mounting tensions ("On The Edge"), the townspeople invite the passengers to be initiated as honorary Newfoundlanders at the local bar ("Heave Away / Screech In"). The gravity of the attacks nevertheless continues to set in as US airspace is eventually reopened. One trailblazing pilot, Beverley Bass, comments on how her once optimistic view of the world has suddenly changed ("Me and the Sky"). While one pair of passengers develops a romance despite the terrible circumstances ("The Dover Fault/Stop the World"), another couple's long-term relationship falls apart under the stress of the

event. As the passengers and crew fly away to their homes, they joyously exchange stories of the immense kindness and generosity that the Newfoundlanders showed the strangers in their time of need ("Somewhere in the Middle of Nowhere"), but not before a Muslim traveller, faced with increasing prejudice from his fellow passengers, undergoes a humiliating strip search prior to boarding. The townsfolk in Gander return to normalcy but comment on how empty their town now seems and how different the world now feels. The passengers and airline staff who return to the United States are faced with the horror of the attacks' aftermath – including Hannah, who learns that her firefighter son died during the rescue efforts ("Something's Missing").

Ten years later, the crew and passengers of the once stranded planes – the "come from aways" – reunite in Gander, this time by choice, to celebrate the lifelong friendships and strong connections they formed in spite of the terrorist attacks ("Finale"), as Claude the mayor professes, "Tonight we honour what was lost, but we also commemorate what we found."

THE CHARACTERS



CLAUDE & OTHERS:

40s-60s. The gregarious and well-liked Mayor of Gander, Claude loves his work, the townspeople, and his daily traditions, but he's never before had to deal with a crisis of this magnitude. Also plays Derm, mayor of the nearby town of Appleton and a very vocal Texan passenger.

Vocal Requirements: Tenor or Baritenor with a strong G.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'Welcome to the Rock' (Melody) - Bar 14-21 & Bar 35-50

BEVERLEY & OTHERS:

40s-50s. any ethnicity. An American Airlines pilot, Beverley has always loved flying, but her world is changed when she hears about co-workers who were killed in the attacks, and when she is confronted by passengers who refuse to fly again. Also plays Annette, a local teacher at the Gander Academy and mother to a lot of children.

Vocal Requirements: Mezzo up to an E.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPT - 'Me and The Sky' - up to bar 105 [CLICK](#).

BEULAH & OTHERS:

40s - 60s. Head of the Gander Legion (Canada's veteran support and community service organisation) with a firefighter son, she befriends Hannah and walks to church and prays with her. Quick-witted and open hearted, Beulah loves to share a joke. Also plays Belores, a claustrophobic New Yorker who enjoys Celine-Dion karaoke. Vocal Requirements: Mezzo with strong belt up to B.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'I Am Here' (Hannah part) & 'Welcome to the Rock' (Melody) - Bar 35-50

BONNIE & OTHERS:

30s-50s. A no-nonsense mother of three, Bonnie is the head of the Gander area SPCA. When she discovers animals are trapped on the planes, she stops at nothing to ensure their safety - but in frustration, she often lashes out at those around her.

Vocal Requirements: Mezzo up to a C.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'I Am Here' (Hannah part) & 'Welcome to the Rock' (Melody) - Bar 35-50

DIANE & OTHERS:

40s - 60s. Diane is a traditional divorcee from Texas, who is terrified that her son may have been flying at the time of the attacks. When she finds out he is safe, she's given a new lease on life and discovers a wilder, more carefree side of herself. Also plays Krystal, a waitress at Tim Hortons Cafe.

Vocal Requirements: Contemporary soprano up to an E.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'Stop the World' - Nick and Diane's part & 'Welcome to the Rock' - Bar 35-50 (Melody)

HANNAH & OTHERS:

30s-50s. The mother of a firefighter in Manhattan, Hannah waits for news about her son and is comforted by Beulah. Also plays Micky, a bus driver.

Vocal Requirements: Contemporary soprano with strong soulful vocal up to a C#. AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'I Am Here' & 'Welcome to the Rock' - Bar 35-50 (Melody)

JANICE & OTHERS:

20s. An eager new local TV reporter, Janice is thrown into the deep end on her first day. Initially naive about the world, Janice must face the pain and confusion around her. Also plays a Texan Flight Attendant. Vocal Requirements: Mezzo up to B.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'Me and The Sky' (Hannah part) - up to bar 105 & 'Welcome to the Rock' - Bar 35-50 (Melody)

BOB & OTHERS:

late 20s - 30s. A hardened New Yorker, Bob is suspicious of where he's landed, fearing that it's World War Three, that someone is going to shoot him and steal his wallet, but instead he ends up losing his New York jadedness.

Vocal Requirements: Contemporary Baritone singing up to an E.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'Prayer' - Bar 1-17 (Kevin T part) & 'Welcome to the Rock' - Bar 35-50 (Melody)

KEVIN T & OTHERS:

30s-40s. The head of an environmental energy company in Los Angeles, Kevin was on vacation with his boyfriend (and Secretary, also named Kevin), when they are stranded in Gander. Inspired by the town's generosity, Kevin creates the 'Pay It Forward' Foundation. Also plays the role of Garth, head of the local union representing the bus drivers.

Vocal Requirements: Contemporary Tenor singing up to an A.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'Prayer' - Bar 1-17 & 'Welcome to the Rock' - Bar 35-50 (Melody)

[CLICK HERE FOR AUDITION MATERIAL](#)

KEVIN J & OTHERS:

30s-40s. KevinT's boyfriend and Secretary. Sarcastic and unhappy, he wants to leave and get back to the U.S. as soon as possible. Also plays Ali, a Muslim Egyptian passenger. Vocal

Requirements: Contemporary Baritenor singing up to an F#.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'Prayer' - Bar 1-17 (Kevin T part) & 'Welcome to the Rock' - Bar 35-50 (Melody)

NICK & OTHERS:

50s-60s. An English oil engineer who is focused on his work, Nick's life is turned upside down when he falls for another passenger, Diane. Also plays Doug, the Air Traffic Controller husband of Bonnie.

Vocal Requirements: Baritone up to an F#.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'Stop the World' - Nick and Diane's part / 'Welcome to the Rock' - Bar 35-50 (Melody)

OZ & OTHERS:

30s-50s. The quirky Constable in the two-person Gander police force. When the town's population suddenly doubles, Oz helps out in unexpected ways. Also plays the role of Joey, a rambunctious passenger on one of the planes who enjoys a good drink, and the orthodox Jewish Rabbi from NYC and Terry, who drives a bus.

Vocal Requirements: Contemporary Baritenor up to G.

AUDITION SONG EXCERPTS - 'Prayer' - Bar 1-17 (Kevin T part) & 'Welcome to the Rock' - Bar 35-50 (Melody)

AUDITION SONGS

All auditionees are asked to prepare song excerpts for one character from *Come From Away* as listed above, and another musical theatre song which you feel comfortable with and which highlights your emotional connection to the song. This could be a musical theatre piece that incorporates an acting element, or it could be a song that you have a personal connection to. The main intention is that it allows you to convey one or more emotions throughout the song.

Please provide a backing for your second song, either on phone or other electronic device, preferably with the option to connect via a 3.5mm audio plug. Please do not sing acapella.

AUDITION NOTES

- **DICTION** - The importance of speaking and singing clearly and intelligibly cannot be overemphasised in musical theatre, and particularly in a fast-paced production like *Come From Away*. Keep this in mind when practising your audition pieces and presenting your audition. The songs and dialogue are continually blended in *Come From Away*, and dialogue mostly takes place over underscoring (music), so there is a constant challenge to keep all words instantly digestible by the audience to keep them engaged with the journey. There will be an ongoing focus on keeping our diction as clean and clear as possible throughout rehearsals.
- **AUTHENTICITY** - *Come From Away* is based on many interviews with real people and many of their stories. Even the character names are based on real people, for example, Claude Elliott was the actual mayor of Gander at the time. These authentic people and stories are part of the reason audiences have connected with *Come From Away*, so keep in mind that all characters have to be played truthfully, not for laughs, funny accents or caricatures. The engagement, emotional connection and humour comes from the authenticity in the characters and their story.
- **ACCENT CONSISTENCY** - This is more important than strictly accurate accents. Most characters will need to be able to speak at times with a Newfoundland accent and at times with a North American (or other country of origin) accent. For our purposes this essentially means an Irish or Irish/American accent and an American (or Nick's case British) accent. The main thing is to avoid lapsing into an Australian accent, and to maintain a level of consistency with whatever level you can achieve.
- **LIMITED TIME** - There may not be time to go over every part of the audition items that we have requested you prepare. This is not a reflection on anything else, or how your audition is going, it is just the nature of the limited time in every audition process. Your audition choice will not limit you to being considered only for that role.
- **PRODUCTION STRUCTURE** - This production will use the original casting format of 12 performers playing multiple roles. This should prove to be a rewarding challenge for performers, however it also means the number of available roles is fewer than in many musicals.



KEY PRODUCTION TEAM PERSONNEL

DIRECTOR - Joseph Thomsen CHOREOGRAPHER/ASST

DIRECTOR - Susan Vaccaro

MUSIC DIRECTOR/CONDUCTOR - Katja Jorgensen

PRODUCER - Belinda Mead

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals: Sunday afternoons, Tuesday evenings, and Thursday evenings February - May 2025

PERFORMANCE DATES

30/31 May 2025

5/6/7 June 2025

Venue: Albury Entertainment Centre

AUDITION DATES

Saturday, 30 November 2024

Sunday, 1 December 2024

Wodonga Senior Secondary College Theatrette, 69 Woodland St, Wodonga (note that the Theatrette is at the Woodland St entrance to WSSC)

CALLBACKS (If required)

Tuesday evening 3 December 2024

Please be prepared for the possibility of a call-back.

We will provide any required music or script pages to you upon booking your call-back audition. Getting a call-back does not guarantee a role, and similarly you may be cast even if you are not called back. Please ensure that you have entered a current contact telephone number on your audition application form where we can easily reach you during the audition dates.

AUDITION OUTCOME NOTIFICATION

You will receive notification regarding the outcome of your audition via email.

BACKSTAGE, FRONT-OF-HOUSE AND SET-BUILDING CREW

If you are interested in assisting with stage management or helping sew, cut, paint, light, lift, making props or special effects for this production of Come From Away then please email us with your areas of interest. We are always looking for volunteers so please send an email to: alburywodongatheatrecompany@gmail.com to register your interest.