Approved copy:

“Murder, greed, corruption, exploitation, adultery and treachery...all those things we hold near and dear to our hearts”...so begins the international award winning musical, CHICAGO.

Based on real life events back in the roaring 1920s, nightclub singer Roxie Hart shoots her lover and along with Cell Block rival, double-murderess Velma Kelly, they fight to keep from death row with the help of smooth talking lawyer, Billy Flynn.

Created by the musical theatre talents of John Kander, Fred Ebb and legendary choreographer Bob Fosse, CHICAGO’s sexy, sassy score includes “All That Jazz” and “Razzle Dazzle”. With 6 Tony, 2 Olivier, 1 Grammy, 2 Bafta and 6 Academy Awards, CHICAGO truly is “The sharpest, slickest show on the block” The Times

A nightclub singer, a double-murderess, a smooth-talking lawyer and a cell block of sin: it would be a crime to miss it.
CHICAGO’S KEY SELLING POINTS:

- CHICAGO is by the writers of *Cabaret* and *New York, New York*
- It’s a musical comedy that will appeal to all
- This is an exact replica of the current hit Broadway and West End productions
- CHICAGO has the most amazing and innovative choreography by Bob Fosse
- There’s a fantastic musical score of over 20 numbers
- The production is ultra stylish and very beautiful to look at
- If you love dance shows or good musicals, you’ll just love CHICAGO

What’s CHICAGO about?
It’s a musical comedy. The kiss-n-tell tale of Roxie Hart, a nightclub dancer who kills her lover and goes to prison: Billy Flynn, a sharp lawyer who turns Roxie into a celebrity; and Velma Kelly, a dancing jailbird with an ear for the headlines and an eye for talent. CHICAGO is a loving look-back to vaudeville and a timely satire on fame, celebrity trials, corruption, cheque-book journalism and the American legal system.

Who’s in CHICAGO?
A professional cast of 23 of the country’s best dancers and singers, plus an 11-piece jazz orchestra.

Who wrote CHICAGO?
John Kander and Fred Ebb wrote the music and lyrics - the writers of the musicals *Cabaret*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Liza with a Z* and the multi-million selling song made famous by Frank Sinatra *New York, New York*. The show itself is based on a little known 1920’s play by Maurine Dallas Watkins.

Will I know any of the songs?
*All that Jazz* and *Razzle Dazzle* are the best-know numbers, but the whole score of over 20 numbers is in fact very reminiscent in style of both *Cabaret* and *New York, New York* ... big, bold, brassy and very, very catchy!

Is there a CD available?
The 1998 London Cast Recording with Ruthie Henshall and Ute Lemper is available on BMG Classics label (09026 63155-2) from good record shops or on-line from www.amazon.com

Who created the very distinctive choreography in CHICAGO?
The late Bob Fosse, whose work includes the films *Cabaret*, *Sweet Charity*, *All that Jazz*, *Damn Yankees* and *Liza with a Z*.

How long is the performance?
Act One (1hr 5mins), Act Two (55mins) - so that’s 2hrs 20 (including a 20 minute interval)

Is the production exactly the same as the current West End and Broadway productions?
Yes - exactly. Same set, costumes, lighting, choreography - same everything.

Is CHICAGO suitable for children?
There is nothing offensive in the show though because of the style of the show it’s perhaps best appreciated by over 12s. There are a couple of swear words which are used for comedic effect.

Is there strobe lighting used in the show?
We don’t use strobe lighting, however there is flash photography used during the show.
THE PLOT

The 1920s are roaring with hot jazz and coldblooded killers. As the Overture ends, we’re introduced to Velma Kelly - a vaudevillian who shot the other half of her sister act when she caught her husband with her sister. Velma invites us to sample *All That Jazz* while showing us the story of chorus girl Roxie Hart’s cold-blooded murder of nightclub regular Fred Casely. Roxie convinces her husband Amos that the victim was a burglar, and he cheerfully takes the rap.

Roxie expresses her appreciation in song (*Funny Honey*) until the police reveal to Amos that Roxie knew the burglar, shall we say, intimately, and Amos decides to let her swing for herself. Roxie’s first taste of the criminal justice system is the women’s block in Cook County Jail, inhabited by Velma and other merry murderesses (*Cell Block Tango*). The women’s jail is presided over by Matron ‘Mama’ Morton whose system of mutual aid (*When You’re Good to Mama*) perfectly suits her clientele. She has helped Velma become the media’s top murderer of-the-week and is acting as booking agent for Velma’s big return to vaudeville (after her acquittal, naturally).

Velma is not happy to see Roxie, who is stealing not only her limelight but her lawyer, Billy Flynn. Eagerly awaited by his all-girl clientele, Billy sings his anthem, complete with a chorus of fandancers to prove that (quote) *All I Care About Is Love*. Billy takes Roxie’s case and re-arranges her story for consumption by sympathetic tabloid columnist Mary Sunshine, who always tries to find *A Little Bit of Good in Everyone*. Roxie’s press conference turns into a ventriloquist act with Billy dictating a new version of the truth (*We Both Reached for the Gun*) while Roxie mouths the words. Roxie becomes the new toast of Chicago and Velma’s headlines, trial date and career are left in the dust. Velma tries to talk Roxie into recreating the sister act (*I Can’t Do It Alone*) but Roxie turns her down, only to find her own headlines replaced by the latest sordid crime of passion. Separately, Roxie and Velma realise there’s no one they can count on but themselves (*My Own Best Friend*), and the ever-resourceful Roxie decides that being pregnant in prison would put her back on the front page.

Back after the Entr’acte, Velma cannot believe Roxie’s continual run of luck (*I Know a Girl*) despite Roxie’s obvious falsehoods (*Me and My Baby*). A little shy on the arithmetic, Amos proudly claims paternity, and still nobody notices him, *Mr. Cellophane*. Velma desperately tries to show Billy all the tricks she’s got planned for her trial (*When Velma Takes the Stand*). Billy’s forte may be showmanship (*Razzle Dazzle*), but when he passes all Velma’s ideas on to Roxie, down to the rhinestone shoe buckles, Mama and Velma lament the demise of *Class*. As promised, Billy gets Roxie her acquittal but, just as the verdict is given, some even more sensational crime pulls the pack of press bloodhounds away, and Roxie’s fleeting celebrity is over. Left in the dust, she pulls herself up and extols the joys of life *Nowadays*. She teams up with Velma in that sister act (), in which they dance their little hearts out (*Hot Honey Rag*) ’til they are joined by the entire company for the grand Finale.

Plot summary by Bill Rosenfield ©1997 BMG Music, excerpted from the Chicago the Musical Broadway Cast Recording, BMG selection number 09026-68727-2/4

www.chicagothemusical.com
CHICAGO’S TRUE STORY: he really did have it coming. A murder, an arrest, and a surprise ending.

“If you’d been there, if you’d seen it, I betchya you would have done the same!” declares the chorus of merry murderesses in the song “Cell Block Tango”. But the lyrics that the women sing are not far from the truth. Both the characters of Roxie and Velma are based on two actual murderers.

The character of Roxie Hart is based on 23-year-old Mrs. Beulah Annan accused of the 3 April 1924 murder of Harry Kalstedt. According to a report in the Chicago Tribune, Mrs. Annan played a foxtrot record named “Hula Lou” for more than two hours in her apartment and then phoned her husband and reported that she had killed a man who “tried to make love” to her. Harry’s body was discovered hunched against the wall in Beulah’s bedroom. She was found “not guilty” by a jury on 25 May 1924.

The character of Velma Kelly is based on Mrs. Belva Gaertner, a cabaret singer. On 12 March 1924, the body of Mr. Walter Law was found slumped over the steering wheel of a car owned by Mrs. Gaertner. Two policemen observed a woman entering the car and shortly thereafter heard gunshots. The police found an automatic pistol and a bottle of gin on the floor of the car. She was acquitted on 6 June 1924.

Both murders become front-page stories in the Chicago Tribune when reporter Maurine Dallas Watkins realised the sensational appeal the two personalities could draw through her tongue-in-cheek reports. The supposed pregnancy used to speed up the trial, the sleek lawyer who helped define the media frenzy and the acquittal of both ladies sounded like scenes out of Hollywood, when they were actually real life. Tribune reporter Maurine decided to turn her experience with Chicago’s famed murder-row darlings into a comedy titled CHICAGO that reached Broadway in 1926. A film version was created two years later and a second film version, Roxie Hart, starred Ginger Rogers in 1942.

These original productions of CHICAGO eventually inspired the musical that continues to wow audiences today. Nearly 70 years after Beulah Annan rocked Chicago, media manipulation in the justice system continues to seem all too familiar.
BOB FOSSE

The legendary director and choreographer Bob Fosse had the vision for CHICAGO in 1975 when he obtained the rights from the original book writer Maurine Watkins. He joined forces with the musical team of John Kander and Fred Ebb who had previously written Cabaret, to create the first version of the musical CHICAGO. This starred Gwen Verdon, Chita Rivera and Jerry Orbach and ran for two years.

Cut to 1995 when director Walter Bobbie, who was artistic director of New York’s City Center Encores! series, decided to revisit the work, paying homage to the late Bob Fosse in partnership with choreographer and longtime Fosse protege Ann Reinking. With four Tony Awards to its credit, the show moved from the City Center stage to the Broadway stage where it opened on 14 November 1996 and became the most talked about show of the decade.

In the subsequent years this show about notoriety and celebrity has consistently attracted some of the most glamorous and talented performers around: including Ute Lemper, Ruthie Henshall, Denise Van Outen, Sacha Distel, Claire Sweeney, Alison Moyet, Marti Pellow, George Hamilton, Jimmy Osmond, Gary Wilmot, Melanie Griffith, Les Dennis, Gregory Harrison, Michael Greco, Gaby Roslin, Kevin Richardson, Billy Zane, David Hasselhoff, Jennifer Ellison, Patrick Swayze, Jill Halfpenny, Lynda Carter, Ashlee Simpson and Brooke Shields.
EXHILARATING. A MUSICAL FOR ALL AGES. WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THERE COULD BE SUCH BLISS?

# Did you know that CHICAGO has been performed in English, Dutch, German, Swedish, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Italian and French?

# Did you know that there are cast recordings of CHICAGO in English (U.S. and U.K.), German and Dutch?

# Did you know that the many stars who have starred in CHICAGO in the UK have included Bebe Neuwirth, Ann Reinking, James Naughton, Joel Grey, Marcia Lewis, Jasmine Guy, Charlotte d’Amboise, Sharon Lawrence, Marilu Henner, Sandy Duncan, Michael C. Hall, Wayne Brady, Melanie Griffith, Paige Davis, Jennifer Holliday, Robert Urich, Alan Thicke, Angie Stone, Louis Gossett, Jr., Taye Diggs, Vicki Lewis, Nana Visitor, Brent Barrett, Tom Wopat, Brooke Shields, Kevin Richardson, Huey Lewis, Robin Givens, John O’Hurley and Usher?

# Did you know that CHICAGO has given the opportunity for the stars of foreign productions to make their Broadway debuts including Bianca Marroquin (Mexico), Denise Van Outen (U.K.), Terra C. Macleod (France and Canada), Petra Nielson (Sweden), Ute Lemper (U.K. and Germany), Ruthie Henshall (U.K.), Anna Montanaro (Germany and Austria), Pia Dowes (Holland), Marti Pellow (U.K.) and Caroline O’Connor (Australia)?

# Did you know that CHICAGO received 6 Tony Awards (including Best Musical Revival), 5 Drama Desk Awards, 5 Outer Critics’ Circle Awards, 1 1998 Critics Circle Award, 1 Grammy Award (for Original Cast Recording), 2 Astaire Awards, 1 Drama League Award, 2 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards, 2 L.A. Drama Critics Circle Awards, 2 L.A. Ovation Awards, 1 Helen Hayes Award, 1 Black Theatre Alliance Award, 7 E.W. Awards, 2 Joseph Jefferson Awards and 1 Elliott Norton Award for the Broadway and National Touring Companies?

# Did you know that CHICAGO received 1 Olivier Award (Best Musical Production), 3 ACE Awards, 3 El Heraldo Awards, 3 Asociacion Mexicana de Criticos de Teatro Awards, 2 Helpman Awards, 4 Guldmasken Awards, and 2 Premio Qualidade Brasil Awards for its international productions?

# Did you know that CHICAGO has played worldwide since its opening in 1996 in the following countries: England, Belgium, The Netherlands, Austria, Germany, Ireland, Scotland, Switzerland, Italy, France, Portugal, Greece, Israel, Russia, South Africa, China, Japan, South Korea, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Australia, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates?

# Did you know that CHICAGO has grossed over $300 million on Broadway since it opened in 1996, and grossed over $850 million worldwide?

# Did you know that CHICAGO has played over 15,000 performances worldwide?

# Did you know that an estimated 17 million people around the world have seen CHICAGO?

# Did you know that CHICAGO celebrated its 10th anniversaries on Broadway November 14, 2006 and in the West End on December 5, 2007?

www.chicagothemusical.com
WHAT THE PAPERS SAID

1997:
“THIS GREAT PRODUCTION OF A MAGNIFICENT SHOW BRINGS THE OLD RAZZLE-DAZZLE BACK TO THE WEST END WITH A VENGEANCE, SHEER THEATRICAL BLISS”
Sunday Times

1998:
“STILL THE HOTTEST SHOW IN TOWN, BUT IT JUST GOT BETTER”
Independent

1999:
“Chicago is as hard and shiny as lacquered nails”
What’s On

2000:
“CHICAGO REMAINS A PHENOMENON”
Sunday Express

2001:
“THE SHOW REMAINS AS TAUT AND SEXY AS THE SASSY ENSEMBLE’S G-STRINGS”
Evening Standard

2002:
“THE CAST IS PROBABLY THE BEST IN THE SHOW’S WEST END HISTORY”
Sunday Express

2003:
“...LOOSE-LIMBED, FINGER-CLICKING SLINKINESS - IT REMAINS DYNAMIC ENTERTAINMENT”
The Times

2004:
“THE SHARPEST, SLICKEST SHOW ON THE BLOCK”
The Times

2005:
“A SLEEK PACKAGE OF SEX, MURDER, GREAT SONGS AND ARCH WIT”
Evening Standard

2006:
“RACY, DARK AND BRUTALLY FUNNY”
Sunday Times

2007:
“STILL THE SEXIEST, MOST SENSATIONAL MUSICAL”
Sunday Express

2008:
“AFTER 10 YEARS AND 23 ROXIES, CHICAGO IS STILL A FRESH AND TERRIFIC SHOW”
Daily Mail

www.chicagothemusical.com