

Sunnybank Theatre Group presents

XANADU

Book by Douglas Carter-Beane **Music and Lyrics by Jeff Lynne and John Farrar**

**Based on the Universal Pictures film
screenplay by Richard Danus and Marc Rubel**

**Originally produced on Broadway by Robert Ahrens, Dan Vickery,
Tara Smith/B. Swibel, Sara Murchison/Dale Smith
& Cari Smulyan**

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Directed by Chris O'Leary
Musical Direction by Sarah Landis
Choreography by Lynette Wockner

it is late July, 1980 in Venice Beach, California

From the Director

In our current climate, with the uncertainty around live theatre, what better way for everyone to return to STG than with a musical!

I was 12 years old when Xanadu was released and now, 41 years later, I am lucky to bring it to the Sunnybank stage. If you've seen the movie you'll know its killer soundtrack by ELO and John Farrar – over 3 million albums sold, 6 singles released (all hitting the top 10), countless cover versions and no doubt on every karaoke list. You'll also know what a hot mess the movie is. Luckily the producers took the best bits from it and crafted a new story around them, one that is funny, with a touch of schmaltz and old fashioned high-camp theatre.

Unfortunately our rehearsal period has been very short, but our cast have done a superb job of learning the music, choreo and their lines. Rehearsals have been filled with laughter, a little sweat and lots of enthusiasm.

We've not been without drama also and I'd like to thank Sarah, Lynette, Andy and the cast for their support and encouragement throughout our time together.

Thank you to Sarah Landis, our musical director, who has worked tirelessly in getting our voices singing and the band sounding so magnificent; Lynette Wockner, our choreographer, who has turned some non-dancers into great movers and brought a special 80s vibe to the show; Andy Cosier for all of his support, hard work, suggestions and feedback. A big thank you also to Simone Healey who helped get our skaters on their feet and spending less time flat on the floor. A special round of thanks to David Austin, who agreed to sing his part backstage after an injury forced him to exit the stage two weeks before opening, and also to Brett Elsworthy, who did us a massive favour by coming on board with only 6 rehearsals to learn David's onstage part.

Last, but never least, thank you to all of the volunteers who help make STG a fantastic place to visit as well as an even better place to be a member of.

So please... get your skates on, relax and let yourself be suspended in time back in July of 1980 ... and let the magic of Xanadu take your heart away.



(formerly Gold Coast Theatre Awards)



Sarah Landis

Musical Director

Sarah has been thrilled to work with the fabulous cast, band, and crew as musical director. By day, she teaches classroom music and directs school and community choirs and ensembles. A multi-instrumentalist, Sarah enjoys composing and learning to play new instruments. Some of her musical direction credits include *Guys and Dolls* (STG), *The Addams Family*, *Urinetown*, and *Curtains* among many, but every show had lacked the distinctly 80s flair of Sarah's youth. Luckily, *Xanadu* has addressed this gaping abyss in her repertoire. Sarah hopes you enjoy the three-part harmony and synthesizers because that is *Xanadu*!



Lynette Wockner

Choreographer

Lynette has been involved with theatre for many years either on stage or as a choreographer for various theatre companies in and around Brisbane. Lynette was a Highland Dancer, teacher and adjudicator and has done classes in tap, jazz and ballroom over the years. The last time Lynette was on stage at Sunnybank Theatre was in *Avenue Q* and *The Wedding Singer* and the last show she choreographed for the theatre was *Dusty*. Lynette has choreographed theatre restaurant shows, most recently *Dinner in Transylvania* and *Forbidden Broadway* for Casa Mia Productions. She has also choreographed *Ladies in Black* for the Villanova Players and *Victor/Victoria* for Beenleigh Theatre Group. *Xanadu* has been such a rewarding and uplifting experience to bring to the theatre. Every rehearsal has been so much fun working with the talented cast and production team to bring the show to the stage. Lynette hopes you enjoy the return to the 80's with lycra and leg warmers and leave the theatre with memories of *Xanadu*!



Chris O'Leary

Director

Chris has been a member of STG for 10 years and has appeared in many productions including *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Suddenly at Home*, *A Few Good Men*, *Deathtrap* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. He has also had numerous roles backstage including stage crew, sound and lighting, sets, props and even costumes.

Chris has also directed *Guys and Dolls*, *The 39 Steps* and *The Tally Hall Radio Plays*.

He hopes you enjoy the magic that is *Xanadu*.



Andrew Cosier

Assistant Director

Andrew joined STG in 2017 working back stage on *The 39 Steps*. Since then he has worked on numerous productions backstage as well as onstage in *Ladies Day*, *Avenue Q* and *The Wedding Singer* with STG as well as *Flashdance* and most recently *The Belles of Burlesque*.

Andy hopes you enjoy the strange magic of *Xanadu*.



Liana Hanson

Clio / Kira

Liana is thrilled to be making her Sunnybank Theatre Group debut in *Xanadu* with her most challenging role yet. She has recently moved from Sydney where she played Nicola in Rockdale Musical Society's *Kinky Boots* and ensemble member in *Beautiful*. In 2015 she graduated from QUT Drama School and now works as a high school teacher. Her most memorable on stage roles include: Suzanne in *Figaro*, Ado Annie in *Oklahoma*, Lina Lamont in *Singin' In The Rain*, Karen in *The Boy From Oz*, Audrey in *Little Shop of Horrors* and Bet in *Oliver!*.

Liana hopes you enjoy *Xanadu* and you are prepared to catch her if you're in the front row.



Matt Domingo

Sonny

A keen performer from a young age, Matt was originally a trained musician. After being cast in several productions throughout high school, Matt developed his vocal and acting skills and quickly became a passionate artist.

Despite the heavy workload of university, he made the most of performance opportunities that arose and subsequently developed a keen interest in dance. This presented Matt with the opportunity to teach and perform with a leading Bollywood group in Melbourne, where he first performed on live television for Channel 7's 'Good Friday Appeal' and for international audiences as part of the 2015 ICC Cricket World Cup opening ceremony.

After returning to his studies and working as a medical professional, Matt couldn't contain his creative drive any longer and made the decision to reduce his clinical workload to focus on his unquestionable passion for the performing arts.

Matt's commitment to his creative pursuits along with his broad skill set as a vocalist, actor and dancer has ensured his renewed focus on performing has been quickly rewarded; in the last 12 months alone, Matt has attained major roles in independent film and TV productions, lead roles as Prince Goodheart in the Brisbane Arts Theatre's *Sleeping Beauty*, 'Marcus Matthius, the man with the iron abs' in Inside Outside Theatre's *Belles of Burlesque*, and now cannot wait to slip on his roller skates as Sonny Malone in STG's production of *Xanadu*.



Jason Lawson

Danny / Zeus

Originally from Melbourne, Jason has become a familiar face on stages in and around Brisbane in a theatre career spanning over 30 years. His most notable credits include *Les Miserables* (Javert), *Guys & Dolls* (Nathan Detroit), *Spamalot* (Sir Bedevere) and *Oklahoma* (Will Parker). Regular STG patrons may also recognize him from *Avenue Q* (Rod) and more recently as the announcer in *The Tally Hall Radio Plays*. Jason also appeared on TV quiz show *The Chase Australia* where he and his team won a share of \$27000. When not gracing the stage, Jason works as a Payroll Officer and has a keen interest in horse racing, gridiron and trivia. As a teenager growing up in the 80's, Jason has always had a nostalgic fondness for both the era, and this film. He hopes that you will enjoy the trip down memory lane as much as he does.



Jane Rapley

Melpomene / Medusa

Jane Bartholemew Rapley the 3rd was initially born. She then grew up and learned to walk and talk. Her other accomplishments include attaining a black belt in mime, understanding what at least three of the buttons on a scientific calculator can do, and learning to say "where am I?" in at least 30 languages. She appeared as stormtrooper #57 in *Star Wars* (1977), was a featured tap dancer in Bob Fosse's *Cabaret* (1971), and played the young Diana in *Wonder Woman* (2017). When she's not hosting the Oscars or writing Taylor Swift's next album she's working on string theory and knitting car covers.



Clare Patrick

Calliope / Aphrodite

Clare began singing at the tender age of three with an enthusiastic rendition of Carole King's "You've Got A Friend" sung into the end of her mum's vacuum cleaner. She finally made it onto a real stage in high school, playing lead roles in *Godspell*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and *Sweet Charity*. After school, she discovered the wonderful world of community theatre and performed in variety of shows, including several musicals at Sunnybank Theatre Group, until she moved to the UK in the late 90s. At this point, Clare's stage career went into hiatus. It wasn't until 2009, several years after coming home to Australia, that she took to the stage once more playing Rizzo in BAMS Theatre's hugely successful production of *Grease*. In 2010, Clare returned to STG for *Little Shop of Horrors*, where she played Crystal, followed by *Breaking Up Is Hard to Do* in 2013, where she became the ditzy redhead from Brooklyn, Lois. But it was in 2015 that Clare landed one of her dream roles, playing the iconic Dusty Springfield in STG's production of *Dusty - The Original Pop Diva*. In 2018, Clare returned to BAMS Theatre in Beaudesert and had a ball playing "Sebastian" - a Jamaican crab with a heart of gold. In 2019, Clare co-directed her very first shows - *The War of the Worlds: The 1938 Radio Script* and *Seussical* for BAMS Theatre. Now it's 2021 and Clare is so excited to be part of such a fun, energetic show that celebrates all things 80s. Open your eyes and see, what we have made is real... you are in *Xanadu*!



Josephine Stockdale

Euterpe / Siren / Andrews Sister /
Thetis

Xanadu is Josephine's first production with STG and she is very excited to be a part of this wonderful project. She is trained in singing, dancing and acting and was a member of Queensland Theatre's Youth Ensemble for four years. She has also played lead roles in numerous school productions. In 2019, Josephine was a Rotary Youth Exchange student and lived in Italy for a year and can speak Italian fluently. She is currently studying a Bachelor of Humanities/Laws (Honours) at the University of Queensland. She hopes you have a fantastic time enjoying STG's season of *Xanadu*!



Bec Teese

Erato / Siren / Andrews Sister / Eros /
Hera

Bec is a Beaudesert girl who discovered her love of performing during dance lessons at the age of 2. She has been dancing at BeauDance Academy for over 20 years and now teaches there. Bec has recently taken over as coordinator for our youth program teaching our young performers all about the stage and performance skills. She was involved with BAMS Theatre inc's junior group, Bambinos for 7 years before becoming one of the co-ordinators 10 years ago. Bec has performed in many theatrical productions over the last 10 years and has enjoyed her time in roles including Liesl in *The Sound of Music* in 2011, Vicky in *The Odd Couple* in 2016, and Neuro in *A Little Box Of Oblivion* in 2017. Her most recent roles have been as vocal director and performer for The Bamettes in a production of *In The Mood - Music of the 1930s* and as Gertrude McFuzz in *Seussical*. Bec is absolutely loving her first production with STG and cannot wait for you to enjoy the magic too.



Christopher Morphett-Wheatley

Terpsichore / Siren / Tubes Singer /
Hermes / Centaur

Chris has always had a love for Performing! He started with Musical Theatre in his home town of Beaudesert when he played Tweedledum in *Alice in Wonderland* in 2010, Since then he has starred in numerous plays and musicals. The most memorable roles he has played are Friedrich Von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* in 2011, Francis Fryer in *Calamity Jane* in 2013, Shang in *Mulan* in 2014, Robbie Hart in *The Wedding Singer* in 2017, Prince Eric in *The Little Mermaid* in 2018 and Macavity in *Cats* 2019.

He studied Acting and Performance at The Southbank Institute of Technology for 2 years. While studying he performed in *The Ballad of Reading Goal* by Oscar Wilde and *Leaves of Grass* by Walt Whitman.

Chris is over the moon to finally be able to channel his inner Muse powers and take on the role of Terpsichore, the Muse of Dance in this hilarious show.

Brett Elsworthy

Thalia / Siren / Young Danny / Tubes
Singer

Brett has vast experience in both amateur and professional theatre, having performed and choreographed for numerous companies throughout Australia. After graduating from Queensland Dance School of Excellence, Brett worked as a dancer with Darc Swan and Queensland Ballet. He also performed extensively in professional Children's Theatre Companies, touring Brisbane and regional schools. Brett's favourite musical roles over the years have included Harris Ritchie in *Brigadoon*, Daniel in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, Lucky in *Dames at Sea* and Phaedra in *La Cage au Folles*. Under the pseudonym of Jacklyn Hyde, Brett has also been performing at The Sportsman Hotel in such shows as Club Cabaret and Peep Show. This is Brett's debut with Sunnybank Theatre and hopes his role of Thalia, will aMUSE you

David Austin

Thalia (vocals) / Cyclops

This is David's first show with STG, however he has been a part of the theatre scene for a very long time. He has been associated with Ipswich Little Theatre for 30 years acting and directing. He has directed for Ipswich Musical Theatre Company, in which he won the Golden Palm Award for Best Direction of a Musical for *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, and recently he performed the role of Toddy in Beenleigh Theatre Company's *Victor Victoria*. David jumped at the chance to be in the iconic camp musical *Xanadu*, because it's just good fun. With what we all have been through in 2020, we all deserve a good laugh and *Xanadu* is just that. So sing, clap and enjoy a show that is just so much fun.



Connie Acevedo

Ensemble

Connie is a new face at STG and made her adult debut to the stage in early 2020 with Nash Theatre's *Casablanca*. Her love of theatre however, started in high school but was put on hold to pursue study in biomedical science. Currently working in the pharmaceutical industry, but a theatre kid at heart, Connie is passionate about theatre and is always looking for ways to get involved both on and off-stage. Connie is thrilled to be a part of the amazingly campy musical that is *Xanadu* and she is certain you will love it too.



Roselie Chase

Ensemble

Roselie loves singing, usually at home or randomly at karaoke. It's been over 12 years since her second (and almost last) musical, STG's *Aladdin*. One day, she decided she would give it another crack and so she sang and had fun dancing her way back onto the musical theatre stage once more. Roselie hopes you enjoy your time in the 80s with this wonderfully funny musical.



Venessa Kohl

Ensemble

Venessa is a kiwi-born Australian citizen with a British accent who started her artistic journey in a little town called 'Charleville' (yes, the one Slim Dusty sang about). At 20 she ventured off into the great unknown, in which she sang, danced and bar-tendered her way across the globe.

In 2012, Venessa started a Bachelor of Behavioural Science in Adelaide, where she soon discovered the drama department. Starting in lighting and sound, she landed the Assistant Director (and Guard) role in Flinders University's production of *12 Angry Jurors* (2014). Following with the role of Sandra in the Bulgarian play *Pleasantly Scary* (2015). Afterwards, Venessa moved to Brisbane and played the villain (Naomi) in STG's version of *Secret Bridesmaids Business* (2016), and the old crone (Mrs Thistlewat) in *Avenue Q* (2017). Over the last few years, she has been writing her playscript *Behind Closed Doors*, which should be finished by the year 2050. Outside of the theatre, you will find her drinking margaritas, bodysurfing and embodying the archetype of 'crazy cat lady'.



Jacqui McKell

Ensemble

Jacqui is no stranger to the STG stage. You may have seen her as 'Gary Coleman' in *Avenue Q*, 'Sr Robert Anne' in *Nuncrackers*, 'Gertie' in *Oklahoma* or in many of her ensemble roles. When not treading the boards, she can be found singing with the Ignite Choir as a featured soloist and chorister.

Jacqui is thrilled to be in STG's latest production of *Xanadu*.

Our Creatives

Director	Chris O'Leary
Musical Director	Sarah Landis
Choreographer	Lynette Wockner
Assistant Director	Andrew Cosier
Stage Manager	Laura Parkinson
Production Design	Chris O'Leary
Guitar	Declan Fletcher
Keyboards	Dominic Brennan
Percussion	Craig Waddell
Sound Design	Ryan Luppi
Lighting	Joanne Sephton
Set Building/Scenic	Georgia Cooper
	Andrew Cosier
	Christopher Morphett-Wheatley
	Chris O'Leary
Costumes	Lesley Davis
	Corinne Tease
	Lynette Wockner
	Chris O'Leary
Skating Wrangler	Simone Healey
Centaur Herdsman	Mark Westby
Cast Feeder	Jane Rapley

THE SUM OF US

by David Stevens

Directed by Dierdre Robinson

April 9 - 24

