

THE STRAND THEATRE



**A FUNNY THING
HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM**

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STRAND THEATRE

Proprietors SEND MANOR TRUST LTD
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Evenings Monday to Friday at 7.45. Matinee Thursdays 2.45. Saturdays 5.30 & 8.45



By arrangement with SEND MANOR TRUST LTD

HAROLD PRINCE, TONY WALTON and RICHARD PILBROW present

FRANKIE HOWERD

KENNETH CONNOR
ROBERTSON HARE

JON PERTWEE
"MONSEWER" EDDIE GRAY

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM

A Musical Comedy based on the plays of Plautus

Book by **BURT SHEVELOVE** and **LARRY GELBART**

Music and Lyrics by **STEPHEN SONDHEIM**
with

ISLA BLAIR

LINDA GRAY

and **LEON GREENE**

JOHN RYE

Musical Numbers originally staged by **JACK COLE**

re-staged by **GEORGE MARTIN**

Settings and costumes by **TONY WALTON**. Lighting by **JEAN ROSENTHAL**

Musical direction **ALYN AINSWORTH**

Orchestrations by **IRWIN KOSTAL** and **SID RAMIN**. Dance Arrangements by **HAL SCHAEFFER**

Production Directed by
GEORGE ABBOTT

First performance at the Strand Theatre, Thursday, October 3rd, 1963.

NO SMOKING

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FRANKIE HOWERD

Born in York, Frankie Howerd joined a Church Dramatic Society and made his stage debut as Tilly's father in "Tilly Of Bloomsbury". He came to London and tried without success to get into drama schools, and was also turned down by Carroll Levis no less than four times! So he got a job in an insurance office. Then the war came and he tried to get into "Stars In Battledress", but they wouldn't have him. He did numerous unofficial shows for the troops. At the end of the war he was doing a free show in the Stage Door

Canteen when Jack Payne spotted him. After this break he became a household name on radio, has since worked in many films, including "The Runaway Bus", in such plays as "Charley's Aunt", "Hotel Paradiso", and "A Midsummer Nights Dream" at the Old Vic as Bottom. He frequently appears in cabaret and on television—topped by his "That Was The Week That Was" sensation. In "A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum" he has the greatest rôle of his career—the slave, Pseudolus.



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KENNETH CONNOR

Kenneth Connor made his stage debut as a child actor in 1936. In "The Boy David", which starred Elizabeth Bergner. His versatile comic talents have kept him continually busy in a wide range of radio shows, including "Ray's A Laugh", "The Goon Show" and many others, also in seven of the "Carry On . . ." film series, latest being "Carry On Cabby". He has also appeared brilliantly in West End revue, on television, and now has the rôle of the slave, Hysterium, in "A Funny Thing . . ."



Jon Pertwee, who comes from an old theatrical family, is famous the world over as a comedian and is known as "the multi-voiced entertainer with the satirical outlook". He has innumerable film and television credits, as well as such famous radio shows as "The Navy Lark" and now is in his first big West End musical, "A Funny Thing . . .", as Lycus the Merchant of Love.

JON PERTWEE

The original London cast recording



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30 MANCHESTER SQUARE, LONDON W.1.



Robertson Hare—now in his seventies—has been making audiences laugh at his misfortunes for more than half a century. He first won fame in the Aldwych farces, which started with "Tons Of Money" in 1922 and, when the Ben Travers' team of Ralph Lynn, Tom Walls and Robertson Hare eventually broke up having made theatrical history, he teamed in equally big comedy successes with Alfred Drayton and others. He has been in no less than seven productions at the Strand, topping them with his rôle of Eronlus in "A Funny Thing..."



ROBERTSON HARE

MONSEWER EDDIE GRAY

Eddie Gray—known the world over as "Monsewer" Eddie Gray—was originally a juggler, with the late Sir Harry Lauder's vaudeville company. Then he developed a highly original juggling act on the Continent, hence the "title", and was one of the original Crazy Gang founders and pioneers, subsequently going into Palladium shows and other West End revues. In "A Funny Thing..." he is Senex, an old man with naughty young ideas.



CAST

(In order of appearance)

Prologus FRANKIE HOWERD

The Proteans BEN ARIS
GEORGE GILES
MALCOLM MACDONALD

Senex, a citizen of Rome "MONSEWER" EDDIE GRAY

Domina, his wife LINDA GRAY

Hero, his son JOHN RYE

Hysterium,
slave to Senex and Domina KENNETH CONNOR

Pseudolus, slave to Hero FRANKIE HOWERD



Lycus, a dealer in courtesans JON PERTWEE

Tintinabula NORMA DUNBAR

Panacea JACQUI MILBURN

The Geminae SANDRA BURVILLE
VYVYAN DUNBAR

Vibrata FAYE CRAIG

Gymnasia SULA FREEMAN

Philia ISLA BLAIR

Erronius, a citizen of Rome ROBERTSON HARE

Miles Gloriosus, a warrior LEON GREENE

The time is two hundred years before the Christian era, a day in spring

*The place is a street in Rome,
In front of the houses of Erronius, Senex and Lycus*

The action is continuous, with a single interval.

TITUS MACCIUS PLAUTUS, the Roman playwright, flourished about 200 B.C. Twenty-one of his comedies survive and his characters and situations, adapted freely by Shakespeare, Moliere and many others, have become the basis for almost all low comedy since



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MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

COMEDY TONIGHT	Prologus, the Proteans and the Company
LOVE, I HEAR	Hero
FREE	Pseudolus, Hero
THE HOUSE OF MARCUS LYCUS	Lycus, Pseudolus and the Cortesans
LOVELY	Hero, Philia
PRETTY LITTLE PICTURE	Pseudolus, Hero, Philia
EVERYBODY OUGHT TO HAVE A MAID	Senex, Pseudolus, Hysterium, Lycus
I'M CALM	Hysterium
IMPOSSIBLE	Senex, Hero
BRING ME MY BRIDE	Miles, Pseudolus, Cortesans and Proteans

ACT II

THAT DIRTY OLD MAN	Domina
THAT'LL SHOW HIM	Philia
LOVELY	Pseudolus, Hysterium
FUNERAL SEQUENCE AND DANCE	Pseudolus, Miles, Courtesans and Proteans
COMEDY TONIGHT	The Company

THE CREATORS

BURT SHEVELOVE & LARRY GELBART have created programmes for American Television's top performers, Judy Garland, Bob Hope, Danny Kaye and others, winning many awards. Shevelove co-authored and staged the Broadway hit revue "Small Wonder". Gelbart recently wrote two films, "The Notorious Landlady" and "The Thrill Of It All". STEPHEN SONDHEIM wrote the lyrics for "West Side Story" and "Gypsy", and the songs and lyrics for "Girls Of Summer" and "Saturday Night". At Williams College he won a Hutchinson Scholarship in composition with Prof. Milton Babbitt. GEORGE ABBOTT has been associated with over 100 Broadway productions as either director, author, producer or actor. Among his recent hits are "Take Her, She's Mine", "Fiorello!", "Tenderloin", "Damn Yankees", "New Girl In Town", "The Pajama Game", all for producer HAROLD PRINCE. Mr. Prince also presented "West Side Story" and has recently distinguished himself in

the field of Direction notably for the staging of his own production of "She Loves Me". JACK COLE staged "Kean" and "Donnybrook!" and choreographed "Jamaica", "Kismet", "Magdalena", and "Alive and Kicking" as well as films. GEORGE MARTIN has assisted him on many of these and re-staged Mr. Cole's "Kismet" choreography in London. TONY WALTON, Designer of "Valmouth", "Most Happy Fella", "One Over The Eight", "Love for Three Oranges" among others, works both in London and in America. This production of "A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum" marks the formation of a new producing venture for which Mr. Prince and Mr. Walton are teaming with RICHARD FILBROW the lighting designer and managing director of Theatre Projects Ltd. ALYN AINSWORTH, founder conductor of BBC Northern Dance Orchestra, was Musical Director for "Bye Bye Birdie" and "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes", and has to his credit numerous broadcasts on BBC and ITV programmes.

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ISLA BLAIR

Isla Blair applied for the rôle of an understudy in "A Funny Thing . . ." a couple of weeks after leaving RADA. When another actress, originally intended for the virgin, Phyllis, had conflicting film commitments, Miss Blair stood in at rehearsals and her work was so outstanding that any search for a replacement was called off and she won the part. Born in India, the daughter of a retired tea planter, Miss Blair was educated in Sussex and now makes her home in London.



JOHN RYE

John Rye, a native of London, trained with distinction at the Central School of Drama and has played many rôles with the Old Vic, both here and on Continental tours. Eventually, he left the classical theatre to broaden his experience with various provincial repertory companies, was also a member of the BBC rep and has appeared on television. He now gets his biggest West End opportunity, in the musical "A Funny Thing . . .", as Hero.



LINDA GRAY

Linda Gray made her first stage appearance with the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company as a leading mezzo-soprano—and toured Britain and North America. Her subsequent appearances have ranged from Glyndebourne to cabaret, with many West End stage successes in between, including playing Mrs. Eynsford-Hill in "My Fair Lady" just prior to her characterisation of Domina in "A Funny Thing . . .".



LEON GREENE

Leon Greene worked with the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company in the early stages of his career, also at Glyndebourne. For the past five years he was leading bass at Sadler's Wells, performing in twenty-three diverse rôles, including Don Basilio in "The Barber Of Seville", in which he won great acclaim. In "A Funny Thing . . ." he takes the part of Miles Gloriosus the warrior.

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LIGHTING CONSULTANT

RUTH MITCHELL
ROBERT ORNBO
of Theatre Projects (Lighting) Ltd



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Programme designed by Don Hart

Box Office (W. Hammond) Open 10 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. ... Temple Bar: 2660 and 4144

OPERA GLASSES. Please do not forget to replace hired opera glasses, or hand them to the attendants.

In the interest of Public Health this theatre is disinfected exclusively with Jeyes Fluid

First-aid facilities in this theatre are provided by St. John Ambulance members, who give their services voluntarily.

Patrons are reminded that the taking of photographs during performances is not permitted.

SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED IN THE AUDITORIUM

In accordance with the requirements of the Lord Chamberlain: 1—The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exit doors and such doors must at that time be open. 2—All gangways, passages and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any other obstructions. 3—Persons shall not in any circumstances be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any of the other gangways. If standing be permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating it shall be strictly limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions. 4—The safety curtain must be lowered and raised in the presence of each audience.

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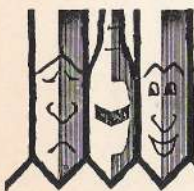
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