## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Background Information – ‘A Life Lived In Fear Is A Life Half Lived’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>From Stage to Screen to Stage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BEFORE SEEING THE SHOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lesson 1: From Stage to Screen to Stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>On This Day – Strictly Ballroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Strictly Ballroom Returns Home – Producer’s Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Lesson 2: Marketing a Musical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### AFTER SEEING THE SHOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Discussion Topics &amp; Lesson 1A: From Stage to Screen to Stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Fascinating Facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Lesson 3: Strictly Ballroom – Australian Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Lesson 4: Bullying &amp; Acceptance – ‘A Life Lived In Fear’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Lesson 5: Bigger Than Ballroom – Character Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Lesson 6: Musical Mixing – Music of the Ballroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Lesson 7: Dance Hall Staging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Lesson 8: Reviewing the performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>APPENDIX 1: Welcome from the Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>APPENDIX 2: Creative Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>APPENDIX 3: The Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>APPENDIX 4: Set &amp; Costume Designs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>APPENDIX 5: Marketing Collateral &amp; Media Releases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>APPENDIX 6: Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>APPENDIX 7: Additional Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>APPENDIX 8: Activity Sheets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Dear Teacher,

Welcome to the Education Resource Pack for the Global Premiere Australian theatrical production – *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*.

This education program is designed for students aged 15 years and over to coincide with the rating of the film and suggested age group for attendance to the stage musical. This resource includes discussion points, eight lesson plans – two for you to give before seeing the show with the remainder to take place afterwards. These later projects concentrate on social issues and themes within the story as well as elements of the live production, including characterisation, music and staging which lead to students writing their own personal review of the show. In addition, using the themes within the story, students are provided with an opportunity to identify, discuss and then form their own strategy to combat bullying and promote increased acceptance in line with current departmental guidelines.

Each activity is based around the challenges faced taking an existing story from the stage to the screen and back to the stage again while maintaining the existing plot, characters and their unique circumstances. Combined with a visit to the show these lessons will give your students an insight in the production of the musical and journey of Scott and Fran in the dance hall and beyond.

This resource pack has been created for use in the classroom and is designed to facilitate discussion and the gaining of knowledge surrounding the complex elements which when combined result in this production.

We hope your students enjoy their journey with *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*.

*Get ready to cha cha cha!*
BEFORE SEEING THE SHOW

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

‘A Life Lived In Fear is a Life Half Lived’

‘A DAZZLING FEAST FOR THE EYE – ABSOLUTELY SENSATIONAL!’
The Sunday Telegraph

‘UNCUED, EXCEPT BY THEIR FAMILIARITY WITH THE FILM, 2000 PEOPLE PUT THEIR HANDS TOGETHER. THUNDEROUSLY. AUDIENCE AND SHOW HAD BECOME ONE.’
The Australian

Strictly Ballroom The Musical premiered at the Sydney Lyric Theatre in Sydney on 12 April, 2014.

Strictly Ballroom The Musical is the inspiring story of a championship ballroom dancer who defies all the rules to follow his heart.

This uplifting and courageous tale originated as a stage play that Baz Luhrmann devised with a group of other students at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) in 1984, before dancing into the hearts of audiences world wide as the award winning feature film.

In a brand new all-singing, all-dancing theatrical production, Strictly Ballroom The Musical brings this iconic story to life, featuring classic songs from the film including Love is in the Air and Time after Time, as well as some wonderful new songs by artists such as Eddie Perfect and Sia.

Be a part of history and experience the drama, the humour, the romance in the sparkling, sequined spectacular that inspired the world to dance.
The Australian success story *Strictly Ballroom* began life in 1984 as a short play drawing on Baz Luhrmann’s personal experiences of the deeply passionate world of ballroom dancing.

He himself had grown up as a competitive dancer and discovered first hand the energy, determination, eccentricity and sacrifice that existed in a discipline unlike any other. During his teens Luhrmann’s mother had also been a ballroom dance teacher. It’s almost as if the wish-fulfilment tale was pre-destined.

“*Strictly Ballroom* has always been very personal to me, the genesis drawn from my childhood experience,” says Luhrmann. “The world of ballroom dancing has these very strict rules about what is good and bad dance. The metaphor that we began with was about creative oppression and freedom; that artistic endeavour and the rule books don’t really mix.”

In the creative crucible of the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), Luhrmann pinned the words “*Strictly Ballroom*” on a notice board. The intriguing project immediately attracted keen interest from several second-year students.

The resourceful NIDA production was directed by Luhrmann, who also acted in the production. The cast comprised Catherine McClements, Sonia Todd, Nell Schofield, Helen Mutkins, Jaime Robertson, Glenn Keenan (a champion ballroom dancer) and Tony Poli. With the support of their dance instructor Keith Bain, who was then head of movement studies at NIDA, they learnt their own dance moves in eight weeks. The play was a critical and popular success. The late Nick Enright, one of the teachers, said that *Strictly Ballroom* was arguably the most remarkable production he had seen in his time at NIDA. Its budget was about $50. The play laid the foundations for what would become a world-wide cinema sensation and gave rise to an ethos of courage and commitment that remains at the heart of Baz Luhrmann’s life and career.

The ideals of *Strictly Ballroom*, that a life lived in fear is a life half lived, and creativity triumphing over artistic oppression, are the ideals by which I live and create (art) to this day,” he says.

Upon graduation, Luhrmann was invited to restage the play for the Czechoslovakian World Youth Drama Festival in Bratislava (now in Slovakia) in 1986. The trip was sponsored by NIDA. Luhrmann asked his school friend Craig Pearce to help rewrite and enlarge the script. With its themes of artistic repression and the underdog battling authority, *Strictly Ballroom* won Best Production and Best Director awards at the festival. The play hit a nerve. The audience gave it a 30-minute standing ovation with many a frenzied patron rushing the stage at the end. Says Luhrmann: “We weren’t prepared for the fact that the metaphorical implications of the story (the individual leading a popular revolt against a repressive order) would strike such a chord with an audience who obviously had their own all-powerful federation to deal with”.

In 1988, Luhrmann returned to NIDA to look for designers to work in both his experimental opera company The Ra and his experimental theatre company, Six Years Old under the umbrella of the Sydney Theatre Company. It is at this time that he met designer Catherine Martin. The ensemble takes up a residency at The Wharf Theatre throughout Australia’s Bicentennial. The company included actor Catherine McClements, set dresser Bill Marron and costume designer Angus Strathie. Craig Pearce joins the company as an actor. It is during this time that, using all company members in a devised process, *Strictly Ballroom* is expanded and Baz and Craig solidify their writing partnership. The lead role in this version of *Strictly Ballroom* is played by one of the company’s actresses, Tara Morice.

The production is performed in July 1988 at the Brisbane Expo. *Strictly Ballroom* opens at the Wharf Studio on 24 September 1988. It is an immediate hit with critics and audiences alike. The cast featured Glenn Keenan, who played Scott Hastings and choreographed the production, Tara Morice as Fran, Tyler Cappin, Di Emry, Lisa Kelly, Genevieve Mooy, Mark Owen-Taylor and Craig Pearce.

During its popular run at the Wharf, the play was seen by the influential Australian music executive, Ted Albert, a leading record producer and music publisher, perhaps best known in Australia as the original producer of 1960s pop sensation, The Easybeats. By the time he saw *Strictly Ballroom*, Albert was the managing director of his family-owned music publishing company J. Albert & Sons. Its subsidiary, the record label Albert Productions, scored a string of hits in the 1970s and 1980s with a variety of acts, including AC/DC and John Paul Young.

Albert’s wife Antoinette (known as “Popsy”) took him to see the play. They loved the energy, colour and musicality of the work. Ted Albert immediately saw its potential as a film, one that would be able to make use of the songs available to him through Alberts’ publishing and recording enterprises. Soon after, Albert established the film company M&A Productions with ex-Film Australia executive Tristram Miall. They approached Luhrmann with an offer to turn the play into a movie. Luhrmann only agrees on the condition that he gets to direct it.
In its early stages the script began to assume a more serious tone but any move towards naturalism was not what Luhrmann had sought. He brought in his friend and collaborator Craig Pearce to help translate his theatrical vision into a workable screenplay.

Although Strictly Ballroom had already proved a hit with theatre critics and audiences, securing funds for the film was an odyssey fraught with struggle, short-sightedness, unreasonable demands and rash judgements, not least that Luhrmann was too big a risk as a first-time film director. There were also objections about the original budget of more than $5 million. It was reduced to $3.5 million and the Film Finance Corporation (FFC) agreed to provide about 65% on condition that the producers were able to raise the remaining $1 million and secure a local distributor.

In late 1990 Luhrmann directs his first classical opera La Boheme for the then Australian Opera (now Opera Australia). It becomes a celebrated success at the Sydney Opera House. At this time Luhrmann passionately presents his ideas for the film version of Strictly Ballroom to Andrew Pike, the head of the independent distribution company Ronin Films. It is a fortuitous meeting and proves to be a turning point. Pike is won over by the director’s pitch which included sketches, set miniatures and bits of costume. Ronin Films agreed to back a limited local release of Strictly Ballroom.

Although the FFC funding was in place, the production faced its biggest challenge in November 1990 when Ted Albert died suddenly from a heart attack (the film is dedicated to him). This jeopardised the entire project until Albert’s widow Popsy resolved that it should be made in honour of her husband. She took over as executive producer with Miall as producer. Albert Music contributed $1 million to the project, with the remaining $300,000 sourced from private investors.

Once the film was given the green light, further research, auditions, casting, set building and location work began in earnest. Aside from three professional dancers, the cast chosen comprised actors who skilfully created the illusion of dance. The most well known actors at the time were Bill Hunter as Barry Fife, Barry Otto as Doug Hastings and Pat Thomson as Shirley Hastings. After extensive auditions, the lead role of the champion ballroom dancer Scott Hastings was won by Paul Mercurio. Although he had never acted, he had made a name for himself at Graeme Murphy’s beloved Sydney Dance Company as one of its most charismatic talents.

“What was great about Paul was that he was a modern dancer, and contemporary dancing is all about having to find your inner expression,” says Luhrmann. “He was the first guy to audition and we kept coming back to him. We loved Paul. He was instinctive and it’s hard to imagine anyone else in that role.”

Cast opposite him in the Ugly Duckling/Cinderella role of Fran was the relatively unknown Tara Morice, who similarly made the role her own. When the play was first performed at NIDA, the character was originally called Jenny Wallflower. The film’s cast included Gia Carides, Lauren Hewett, Peter Whitford, Antonio Vargas (who contributed to the choreography and background on Spanish dance), John Hannan, Kerry Shrimpton, Kris McQuade, Sonia Kruger, Todd McKenney, Pip Mushin, Leonie Page and Steven Grace.

Even after the film was made there was no guarantee of success. The one cinema for Strictly Ballroom that was being held by a cinema chain was dropped after the executive in charge believes the film to be unworthy of cinematic release. The rejection planted seeds of doubt that Strictly Ballroom would ever find an audience. A phone call out of the blue from the organisers of the Cannes Film Festival would soon change all that.

The story of Strictly Ballroom’s journey from stage to screen – and soon back to the stage, this time as a fully-fledged musical – echoes the film’s David and Goliath theme and its spirit of creative freedom and tireless endeavour. From modest circumstances Strictly Ballroom, with its heart-warmingly uplifting tone, exhilarating energy and bold theatricality, would become the stuff of legend.

The film had its world premiere at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival in May, 1992. Its first public screening came at midnight in the Un Certain Regard program and become an overnight sensation. The audience loved it and gave the cast, led by Paul Mercurio and Tara Morice, and crew a 15-minute standing ovation. The film met the same response the following night and Strictly Ballroom became one of the major hits of the festival, winning the Prix De Jeunesse and igniting a fierce bidding war between potential international distributors. Miramax clinched the deal.

Luhrmann recalls that after all the efforts to secure funding and having some naysayers declare “that will never work”, it came as a shock when Strictly Ballroom was selected for Cannes. “When we went to Cannes no one had really seen the film and within 24 hours of the midnight screening we’d been sold all over the world,” he says. “It was one of the most incredibly explosive moments in the history of Cannes. It’s a very special story – that very first film of ours which we all worked together on, it was such a magical first work.”
A month before the film’s debut in Cannes, personal tragedy struck when the actress Pat Thomson, who played Scott’s mother, was diagnosed with cancer. She died in April 1992.

Institute (AFI) Awards, gaining 13 nominations and winning in 8 major categories. It was also a major success at the 1993 BAFTA awards, where it garnered 8 nominations and won 3 awards for Best Costume Design, Best Original Film Score and Best Production Design. Other accolades included a 1994 Golden Globe nomination for Best Picture, Newcomer of the Year at the 1993 London Critics Circle Film Awards, the People’s Choice at the 1992 Toronto International Film Festival and Most Popular Film at the Vancouver International Film Festival.

Strictly Ballroom went on to become one of the most successful Australian films of all time, earning more than $80 million at the box office. With the success of the film, its closing song, a remake of the John Paul Young song Love is in the Air, re-entered the Australian charts and became a Top 5 hit in October 1992.

With its heightened theatricality and innate musicality, the romantic comedy is the first instalment of Luhrmann’s Red Curtain Trilogy, which includes the theatre-motif-related films Romeo + Juliet and Moulin Rouge!. For many years there has been keen interest from potential producers to bring Strictly Ballroom to the stage. The film is credited with having inspired the UK television show Strictly Come Dancing and its American counterpart, Dancing with the Stars.

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‘YOU CAN DANCE ANY STEP YOU LIKE BUT THAT DOESN’T MEAN YOU’LL WIN’
**LESSON 1: FROM STAGE TO SCREEN TO STAGE**

This lesson allows students to explore the challenges and processes of transferring a story from the stage to screen back to the stage. It looks at the original structure and elements portrayed in the initial stage performance, the film and analyses how effectively they are translated in the development of a new musical theatre production.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- To research the history and the place in time behind the making of the Australian film, Strictly Ballroom.
- To determine what challenges would have been faced in translating the story from a film to a musical theatre production.
- To gain greater understanding of the relationship between films and live theatre productions.

**PREPARATION**

Photocopy Activity Sheet 1 for each student.

**LESSON OUTLINE**

Students should be encouraged to note their existing knowledge about the Australian film, Strictly Ballroom. The film was made in 1992, what do they know about what Australian culture was like at this time, in the cities and the suburbs?

Students should then be given the opportunity to view the film, Strictly Ballroom (1992). While watching the film they should begin to identify what challenges would be faced concerning the film’s setting and iconic environments in translating the story to the stage.

In addition, they should be asked to research feature or small budget films which began their lives as a stage production (playscript or musical) and other films which have been made into a play, musical or theatre work in recent years.

**EXTENSION ACTIVITY**

To further their knowledge, students are encouraged to research and answer the following questions surrounding the development of Australian films and musicals:

- What do they believe the major factors of difference are in producing a film versus a musical?
- Do they think it could be more difficult to create new films here in Australia? If so, why?
- Do they think it could be more difficult to create new musicals here in Australia? If so, why?
- What other films have been created in Australia over the last 20 years?
- What other musical theatre works have been created in Australia over the last 20 years?
- What, if anything about these films or musicals is uniquely Australian? Consider subject matter, character and style.
- How successful have these films been here in Australia and overseas?
- How successful have these musicals been here in Australia and overseas?
- What do they think is a good story or subject matter for other Australian films and musicals? (ie historical events, personal stories of celebrities or sporting heros, existing books or novels)

‘IT’S ALL VIDEO, VIDEO, VIDEO’
ON THIS DAY - STRICTLY BALLROOM

25 JULY 1984 Baz Luhrmann brings the notion of a primary myth, set in the world of ballroom dancing, to a group of young students at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). Together they devise and perform the first ever performance of Strictly Ballroom. Baz Luhrmann directs and acts in the short production.

8 AUGUST 1986 Although Luhrmann has left NIDA to form The Bond, his first theatre company, he returns to Strictly Ballroom to be performed in the city of Bratislava (now Slovakia) at the Czechoslovakian World Youth Drama Festival. The trip is sponsored by NIDA. The production’s ideal of overcoming oppression resonates deeply with the still then Communist Satellite country of the Soviet Union, winning Best Production and Best Direction. It receives a 30-minute standing ovation.

20 JANUARY 1988 Luhrmann returns to NIDA to look for designers to work in both his experimental opera company, ‘The Ra’ and his experimental theatre company, Six Years Old (under the umbrella of the Sydney Theatre Company). It is at this time he met designer Catherine Martin. The troupe takes up residency at The Wharf Theatre throughout Australia’s Bicentennial.

12 APRIL 1988 Craig Pearce, Baz Luhrmann’s long time friend, joins the company as an actor. It’s during this time that, using all company members in a devised process, Strictly Ballroom is expanded and Baz and Craig solidify their writing partnership. The lead role in this version of Strictly Ballroom is played by one of the actresses in the company, Tara Morice.

6 JULY 1988 The production is performed as part of a theatre celebration at the Brisbane Expo.

24 SEPTEMBER 1988 Strictly Ballroom opens at the Wharf Studio, Sydney. It is an immediate hit with critics and audiences alike. The play is seen by Ted Albert and his wife, Popsy Albert. Ted Albert, from the legendary Albert Productions music family, whose record company, Albert Productions, has among other acts, produced AC/DC and John Paul Young.

1 NOVEMBER 1988 Ted Albert establishes the film company M&A Productions with ex-Film Australia executive Tristram Miall. They approach Luhrmann with an offer to turn the play into a movie. Luhrmann only agrees on the condition he gets to direct it. Efforts to secure funding for the feature film prove challenging and protracted. The Film Finance Corporation (FFC) agrees to provide 65 per cent of the budget on condition that the producers raise the remaining $1 million and secure a local distributor.

27 OCTOBER 1990 During this time Luhrmann is also directing his first classical opera, La Boheme, which becomes a celebrated success at the Sydney Opera House. After which he presents his ideas for the film version to Andrew Pike, the head of the independent distribution company Ronin Films. He agrees to back the film for a limited Australian release.

11 NOVEMBER 1990 Finally after great struggle in securing the finance to move the film forward, Ted Albert is suddenly struck down with a heart attack. The film going forward is in grave question when Ted’s wife, Popsy Albert, citing that her husband knew what talent was, steps in and backs the project.

1 FEBRUARY 1991 Baz Luhrmann and Craig Pearce complete the shooting draft of the Strictly Ballroom screenplay.

3 MARCH 1991 Set building and location work begin. Auditions are held and the cast are chosen, including the Strictly Ballroom leads, dancer Paul Mercurio (Scott Hastings) and actor Tara Morice (Fran). John “Cha Cha” O’Connell choreographs. Established actors Bill Hunter, Barry Otto and Pat Thomson are offered roles. The cast also includes Gia Carides, Kris McQuade, Sonia Kruger, Todd McKenney, Antonio Vargas and Leonie Page. The one cinema for Strictly Ballroom that was being held by a cinema chain is dropped after the executive in charge believes the film to be unworthy of cinematic release.


10 MAY 1992 Strictly Ballroom has its world premiere at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival. It is screened at midnight in the Un Certain Regard program where it earns a 15-minute standing ovation.

26 MAY 1992 Strictly Ballroom wins the Prix De Jeunesse at Cannes. It prompts a bidding war between international distributors. Miramax clinches the deal.

11 JUNE 1992 Strictly Ballroom receives the People’s Choice award at the Toronto International Film Festival and Most Popular Film at the Vancouver Film Festival.

25 JULY 1992 Strictly Ballroom has its Australian premiere at the Melbourne International Film Festival.
19 AUGUST 1992 *Strictly Ballroom* released nationally in Australia and goes on to play in some cinemas for over a year.

12 OCTOBER 1992 *Strictly Ballroom*’s closing song, a remake of John Paul Young’s *Love is in the Air*, becomes a Top 5 hit on the Australian music charts.

17 OCTOBER 1992 *Strictly Ballroom* sweeps the field at the annual Australian Film Institute (AFI) Awards. It receives 13 nominations and won in 8 major categories.

24 JANUARY 1993 *Strictly Ballroom* nominated for Best Picture (Musical or Comedy) at the Golden Globe Awards in Los Angeles.

2 MARCH 1993 *Strictly Ballroom* wins London Critics Circle Film Award for Newcomer of the Year (Baz Luhrmann).

26 APRIL 1993 *Strictly Ballroom* wins three of its 8 nominations at the annual BAFTA awards at Royal Festival Hall in London. It wins Best Costume Design, Best Original Film Score and Best Production Design.

6 SEPTEMBER 1994 *Strictly Ballroom* nominated for Best Film Award at the Bagota International Film Festival.

23 MAY 2011 Baz Luhrmann announces plans to collaborate with Catherine Martin, Craig Pearce and John O’Connell on the live stage musical of *Strictly Ballroom*. Their multi-media company Bazmark forms an alliance with Global Creatures to bring *Strictly Ballroom The Musical* to the stage.

5 AUGUST 2013 *Strictly Ballroom The Musical* is launched by Global Creatures and the Creative Team at Sydney Town Hall.

12 APRIL 2014 *Strictly Ballroom The Musical* has its Global Premiere at Sydney Lyric Theatre, Sydney, Australia.
Welcome! I am immensely proud to introduce our education resource pack for *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*. The production shows us that ‘there is more than one way to cha cha cha’ and that ‘a life lived in fear is a life half lived’. What positive and inspiring values to instil in young people. My greatest excitement about engaging with schools is the opportunity to introduce these ideas to students and perhaps provide them with a mantra by which to live their lives.

Our education resource pack has been designed to offer insights into our musical *Strictly Ballroom*; - its themes, its portrayal of a particular period in Australian culture and the unique production values that make this show so exceptional.

This brand new musical production has been conceived with community in mind and the decision to premiere in Australia was born out of a desire to bring *Strictly Ballroom* full circle to where it all began. Baz Luhrmann and Catherine Martin are two of Australia’s greatest cultural assets and we are very lucky that they chose to create this show right here in their homeland providing substantial opportunities to the local theatre industry and instilling a great sense of pride amongst us. We are delighted the show has been captivating audiences since its global premiere in April and we hope your visit provides students with a unique introduction to the world of live theatre.

This resource will bridge the journey from the film and adaptation back to the stage, and includes a broad activity based on the current NSW Government’s Anti-Bullying in Schools Guidelines. There are practical ideas and suggestions of how to incorporate the creative processes we applied in producing this work, to classroom teaching, which we hope you will find both useful and inspiring.

I hope you and your class enjoy the lessons and activity ideas and that your visit to *Strictly Ballroom The Musical* is an unforgettable theatrical experience rich in opportunity for learning and exploration!

Carmen Pavlovic
Producer
*Strictly Ballroom The Musical*
LESSON 2: MARKETING A MUSICAL

This lesson allows students to explore the challenges and processes of determining the marketing brief and development of the branding, production logo and marketing collateral for a musical theatre production, based on an existing branding depicted in film collateral of the same name. It looks at the original artwork, messaging and elements of the story portrayed in the film branding and analyses how they may be translated in the development of a new musical theatre production, more than 22 years later.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• To review the branding and marketing collateral for Strictly Ballroom, as well as that for Strictly Ballroom The Musical, identifying the themes, messages and imagery within.
• To determine what challenges would have been faced in the reinvention of the branding from an established film brand to a musical theatre production.
• To develop their own branding and marketing collateral, as well as a marketing strategy for the successful advertising and promotion of the musical theatre production.

PREPARATION

Photocopy From Stage To Screen
Photocopy Activity Sheet 2 for each student.
Photocopy Appendix Five: Marketing Collateral & Media Releases

LESSON OUTLINE

Students should be encouraged to note their existing knowledge about marketing and branding for the film Strictly Ballroom. The film premiered in 1992 and a marketing strategy, including branding and was designed to promote the film using collateral such as posters and soundtrack artwork, based on design trends, available marketing channels at this time in Australian cultural and film history.

Students should then be given the opportunity to view the film branding and collateral for Strictly Ballroom (1992) as well as that for Strictly Ballroom The Musical. They should be encouraged to identify the themes, messages and imagery in both and compare and contrast the look, feel and impact of each, while identifying their effectiveness in marketing and selling the production, based on the initial film concept.

In addition, they should be asked to identify the challenges they believe would have been overcome in the reinvention of the existing brand for another genre of entertainment, to ensure the most effective marketing and promotion of the musical, considering the changes in marketing strategy over the last two decades.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

To further their knowledge and skills, students are encouraged to design and develop new branding and marketing collateral of their own for the live production. In order to do so they should consider the following, remembering their potential audience is relying on this collateral to tell them what the production is about and that they will be less familiar with the details of the film and musical than those working on the branding and marketing.

• Who are the target audience and potential target audience for the production? How do they determine this and what details about them assist in focusing on meeting their needs and wants?
• What messages and imagery does the branding need to contain to appeal to them?
• What do these messages and imagery say about the production and how does this assist them in crafting the marketing strategy in order to appeal to the target and potential target audience?
• Using information derived from these questions, they should design a logo and branding for the production incorporating the message and imagery which they believe best sells what the musical has to offer.
• They should then determine what marketing channels they would use for the marketing of the production, such as, but not limited to advertising (radio, television, print, outdoor and social media) printed collateral, publicity and social media, and create storyboards for the production of this advertising, design printed collateral and determine appropriate opportunities to promote the musical for presentation, where they should be asked to explain the choices they have made.
AFTER SEEING THE SHOW

DISCUSSION TOPICS

You may want to give your students an opportunity to discuss their experience of the performance. For example;

• Did you enjoy the production? What did you like the most?
• Was there any part of the production you didn’t like? Why was this?
• How effective was the transfer of the story from the film to the musical?
• Who was your favorite character/s and why? In what way were they important to the story?
• Could you identify characters with people you see in Australia today? Who are they and where would you find them?
• Did you have a favorite production number and why was it important to the story?
• Did the musical choices propel or hold back the narrative of the piece?
• How did the choreography support the story? Why is it so critical to this particular story?
• What themes do you see woven throughout the piece?
• What was the most effective element of the set? Why do you think so?
• Was there a particular costume or set of costumes which stood out to you? Why was this?
• How do you think scenery movements on stage were operated?
• How effective was the lighting in creating interiors and exterior scenes, day and night, the unique light in city verses the suburbs? What Australian cities and suburbs featured in the production?
• Were there elements of the production that you believe did not work to propel the story forward? Why do you believe this and how would you have done this differently?
• Did the opening scene of the production achieve its aims and solicit audience participation? Were there other occasions when the audience was encouraged to participate in the action and what impact did this have on their, and other audience members, experience of the show?
• What dance would you like to learn in order to compete in a ballroom dancing competition?
• What Australian icons appeared in the production? What iconic images were recreated for the stage from the original film?
• What other elements of Australian culture could you identify in the script?
• What do you think Scott and Fran learned about each other learning to be dance partners and compete in a hostile and unsupportive environment? What did the other characters learn from them throughout their journey? What did you learn from them?
• Were there controversial issues raised in the piece? Are these issues still relevant today? How have the social and cultural issues changed in Australia between 1992 and the present day?
• Where there scenes in the production which reminded you of other musicals?
• Would you like to see the show again? Would you recommend attending the show to your family and friends? What element/s would they most enjoy and why?

FROM SCREEN TO STAGE (SEE ACTIVITY SHEET 1A)

Having now seen Strictly Ballroom The Musical, students should be encouraged to answer the following questions:

• What do they think the biggest differences are between the film and the musical?
• What challenges do they think were faced when adapting the story of Strictly Ballroom from a film to a stage musical?
• How successfully do they believe the story of the film was translated to the live musical theatre production?
• Do they think any element of the story was lost during the transfer from film to the stage? If so, can you suggest how it could have been better incorporated?
• Do they believe transferring another film to the stage possess the same or different challenges?
• In films, close-ups are used to create intimacy and wide-shots, landscape and space – how do they think music and lighting may be used to take the place of these elements onstage?
FASCINATING FACTS

SCENERY, PROPS, LIGHTING AND SOUND

- The Newspaper Headlines on the Newspapers outside Toledo Milk bar are changed during each performance to show time has passed
- The Clock in Kendall’s Dance Studio is at 4 o’clock during Act 1 and 7 o’clock during Act 2
- The Rubbish Boxes are connected to the bin by Hot Glue. One stick of glue is used per show
- The Sangria on stage is made up of Cranberry Juice which the company all love to drink to keep up their energy for the Toledo Scene.
- There are approximately 4000 festoon globes used in the auditorium
- There is over two kilometres of festoon used in the auditorium
- There are nine smoke machines of various uses in the show
- The FOH follow spots weigh over 80kg each, and including their stands and ballasts, weigh over 150kg each
- There is a separate lighting cue for every single “AH” in the LOVE IS IN THE AIR Finale (that’s 56 cues)
- There are 2 x sound consoles, 184 x speakers, 77 x microphones and over 142 x channels of audio used in the show
- There are 6 x cameras and 15 x television monitors are used during the show, plus 72 x radio frequencies and 40 x sound effects
- Over 5.5 km of cable is used and more than 11,200 fader mixing moves a show.

COSTUMES, WIGS & MAKE-UP

- 745 metres of coloured ostrich feather are used in the show
- 208,800 diamantes on stage
- There are 84 wigs in the show
- Each wig is redressed each day and washed weekly
- A handmade wig takes 5 days of continuous knotting to make, each wig is valued at $4000
- 5 litres of spray tan is used a week

OTHER

- There are over 1000 lighting cues
- There is over 2km of festooning containing over 4000 individual globes
- The Company consume 600 litres of water a week
LESSON 3: AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY

Critical to the successful translation of the story of *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*, for the stage is the use of elements to ensure an authentic recreation of environments found in Australian culture, personalities and the landscape of the early 1990’s. This includes the use of Australian iconography, references to actual places, products, organisations and individuals and most importantly language and colloquialisms reflecting our unique cultural attributes at the time. All these factors help translate a version of our Australian Identity on stage, our cultural environment, how we see ourselves and how we believe we are viewed by others, our sense of purpose and how we choose to overcome obstacles which prevent us from being ourselves both individually and collectively.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To identify, explore and discuss the use of Australian icons, brands or products in the production.
- To discuss the use of Australian imagery in the production and its place in depicting the Australian environment and cultural landscape in the 1990’s.
- To identify, explore and discuss the use and meanings of Australian language and colloquialisms within the production and their impact in shaping and defining the world of ballroom dancing depicted in the show.

PREPARATION

Photocopy Activity Sheet 3 for each student.

LESSON OUTLINE

Students should be asked to identify and explore the use of Australian icons, imagery, language and colloquialisms in the production to determine why they may have been used and how important they were to the fabric of the production, themes, characters and the story. The following questions should be addressed to encourage this identification and class discussion:

What Australian icons, brands and products can they identify in the show? Remind them that they could be large set items or smaller costume detailing. How effective do they believe the use of these icons was in setting the environment in which the musical takes place?

What Australian imagery could they see in the show and how important was this in the creation of the landscape for Scott’s journey and Fran’s transformation throughout the piece?

What is a colloquialism? Provided are a list of Australian colloquialisms which feature in the production. They should be asked to determine what each of these mean and discuss why they have been used in the script and what effect they have on the flavour of the language and overall tone of the production.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

What other Australian icons can they think of that could have been integrated into the production to reflect Australian culture in the 1990’s and where would they have used them?

Name the Australian cities and suburbs which are referred to in the show and what characteristics are inferred in their portrayal in the musical? How does this reinforce or conflict with their views of these places.

What elements of popular culture and Australian society (personalities, social groups, companies, products) can they identify as being referenced in the show? What impact do they believe they have on the production overall and how effectively would their story be portrayed if they were excluded?

‘LISTEN TO THE RHYTHM’
LESSON 4: BULLYING & ACCEPTANCE

The plot of *Strictly Ballroom* may be considered to be a David and Goliath battle; a story when the individual challenges the collective and questions the status quo in an attempt to change the rules and raise the stakes of what is possible. In addition, Fran’s journey is one of transformation, from a lack of acceptance of a first generation Australian from an immigrant family, to taking a risk and pushing outside her individual comfort zone. While there are complex themes and characters throughout, each with their own stories, motivations and justifications for their behavior, the themes of bullying and acceptance are both paramount and universal.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- To explore and discuss as a group what constitutes bullying and anti-social behavior and explore what leads to this type of behavior and the impact it can have on an individual and group.
- To develop individual and a shared understanding of bullying and anti-social behavior, including cyberbullying and what effect share responsibility and early intervention can have to prevent this behavior developing.
- To devise a strategy which will create a safe and accepting environment, which seeks to exclude bullying, discrimination and anti-social behavior.

**PREPARATION**

Photocopy Activity Sheet 4 for each student.

**LESSON OUTLINE**

Students should begin by discussing what ‘A Life Lived In Fear... Is A Life Half Lived’ means in the context of *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*. Students should then be encouraged to identify and discuss as a group what they believe constitutes bullying and anti-social behavior, what leads to this type of behavior and how they are able to recognise it? They should be encouraged to cite examples and explain why they believe it is unacceptable and identify what impact it may have on individuals and groups.

In addition, students should work together through detailed discussion in large or small groups, to further develop an individual and shared understanding of these behaviors, including cyberbullying, and what effect share responsibility and early intervention can have to prevent this behavior developing.

**EXTENSION ACTIVITY**

Using the courage and strength shown by Scott and Fran in overcoming the obstacles which they find in their path as a platform, in addition to the student’s understanding of what bullying, harassment and anti-social behavior looks, sounds and feels like, they should design their own strategy for creating an inclusive and supportive environment in the classroom, school, other social environment such as a sporting group, drama group and/ or online environments.

The strategy should address how they would facilitate a safe and accepting environment, promoting and celebrating differences in all individuals and challenging attitudes which seek to exclude and discriminate. They should begin with an overriding purpose, followed by aims and objectives which should be reflected in written material as well as a description of acceptance verbal and non-verbal language and other social behavior.

‘A LIFE LIVED IN FEAR IS A LIFE HALF LIVED’
LESSON 5: BIGGER THAN BALLROOM

A good musical begins with strong characters and a good storyline. This lesson allows students to explore the diverse and larger than life characters in *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*, their relationships with each other, how these are portrayed and how they develop during the course of the show.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explore, discuss and understand characterisation as portrayed on stage.
- To investigate the themes and concepts as reflected in the musical.
- To write concise and detailed character profiles of the characters.
- To understand how characterisation is important to the development of the story in a stage production.

PREPARATION

Photocopy Activity Sheet 5 for each student.

LESSON OUTLINE

Instrumental to an effective musical theatre plot are strong, complex characters assisting in both the telling of the story and communication of its themes and concepts. Students should be asked to look at the diversity found in the characters and list the themes and concepts they can identify in the story and select two characters, including but not limited to Scott, Fran, Les, Doug, Shirley, Barry Fife, Rico or Abuela and provide a character analysis or breakdown for each.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Using their two existing character profiles from *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*, students should compare and contrast them to determine how important their characterisation and relationship is in the development of the plot, exploration of the themes and what impact their relationship has on other characters.

‘THERE’S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO CHA CHA CHA’
LESSON 6: MUSICAL MIXING

Central to Strictly Ballroom The Musical is an eclectic blend of popular and familiar songs mixed with new music and lyrics written for the production which not only carry the plot forward, but also provide insights into the characters, entertains the audience and provide endless opportunities for both staging and choreography. Students will explore the impact such choice of music has on this non-traditional structure of the musical, what challenges are to be overcome and the strengths these choices present for the production.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand the importance of musical choices on the structure of a musical.
- To investigate the impact music has on the plot, characters and as a tool for integration of other elements such as staging and choreography in a musical.
- To determine what challenges the musical choices needed to solve to enhance the overall structure of the production and what strengths the choice of music and lyrics may have on the characters, their individual stories and overall plot of the musical.

PREPARATION

Photocopy Activity Sheet 6 for each student.
Photocopy Appendix Three – The Music

LESSON OUTLINE

Strictly Ballroom The Musical falls outside the structure of classic musicals, such as a book musical or jukebox musical, and instead fuses existing and familiar music from diverse musical eras with new work written for the production with a particular purpose in mind. This musical philosophy serves this particular production well, given the world of ballroom dancing also fuses diverse dance and therefore musical styles, genres and eras providing infinite opportunities for characterisation and as an underscore to the movements of the staging components. Students should assess the following:

How important do they think the music was to the structure of Strictly Ballroom The Musical?

Discuss how different musical numbers within a musical can range in type, change a mood and alter the speed of the plot.

Identify what other functions the music can play when translating a story from a screenplay/film to a stage musical? Could the music been seen to take the place of the camera through its ability to create intimacy and expanse from scene to scene?

Looking at The Music of Strictly Ballroom The Musical, select five songs and discuss the following for each of them:

- In this context what is the intended meaning for the song?
- Why do they think particular song was selected or written for the production?
- Which character/s, if any, do they learn more about through the use of this song?
- How valuable was the song to the overall context, themes and plot of the show?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

To further student’s ability to laterally re-imagine existing songs into a theatrical context, students are encouraged to undertake the following exercise:

- With their knowledge of popular and familiar music, have them suggest other songs from a range of musical eras which could have been incorporated into the musical too?
- What are they are who was their composer and original artist?
- Explain where in the story they would be incorporated and how they could add to the story, its theme and continue to drive the plot forward?

‘LOVE IS IN THE AIR’
LESSON 7: DANCE HALL STAGING

This lesson allows students to explore the physical production elements central to the staging of *Strictly Ballroom The Musical* which are responsible for creating diverse outdoor and indoor spaces and enhance the production through the creation of environments such as the Pan Pacific Championships and the iconic backdrop of the city of Sydney. The musical, like the film before it, sees the costumes as an integral part of the creation of the onstage environments reflective of the world of ballroom dancing, social and cultural environments of the early 1990’s and the characters which make up the world in which Scott and Fran live.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand how staging, costumes, lighting, sound and special effects can create the illusion of different times and places, using the one space.
- To understand the process of design which is undertaken for each element of the production.
- To demonstrate an understanding of how one production element was vital to this musical staging and enhanced the story.
- To research the impact of technology on staging techniques and past practices leading to the development of staging, lighting, sound and costuming.

PREPARATION

Photocopy Activity Sheet 7 for each student.
Photocopy Appendix Four – Set and costume designs

LESSON OUTLINE

Students should be asked to identify two pieces of staging used to create a dance hall, dance championship or iconic outdoor scene in the musical of the city or the suburbs. One of the scenes should be of an interior, the other an exterior.

Once the staging has been selected the student should suggest how think it was achieved including all the elements which contribute to the creation of the effect.

In addition to noting the set pieces and scenery, attention should be paid to the way in which lighting works to enhance these moments as well as how a sound scape or sound effects contribute to the overall atmosphere.

Students should be asked to reflect upon the contribution made to the imagery by the costumes, wigs, shoes, hair pieces and properties in their analysis.

Finally, students should be asked to design their own set design or costume design for an existing scene in the production ensuring they provide an environment in which the plot can unfold which also incorporates the distinct qualities of the characters.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

As a research task students are to compile a report focusing on the art of stage and special effects. They should focus on how these effects have developed over the last 20 years with the incorporation of technology such as automation (the system which controls the set movements), moving lights, computer operated sound desks and costuming including the design and production of wigs, shoes and properties.

As part of this research, students should also explain how at least two technical effects which are featured in the production were achieved prior to the use of the technology which is used in the musical.

‘YOU’RE BEAUTIFUL WHEN YOU DANCE’
LESSON 8: REVIEWING THE PERFORMANCE

This lesson encourages students to discuss the performance they have experienced and to critically analyse this experience, while assessing each of the production elements which contributed to the show. In addition, they are invited to critique a published review allowing for the broadening and refining of their analytical skills with regard to other points of view when looking at the same production.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To share thoughts and opinions on the shared experience of attending the production.
- To critically analyse their experience of Strictly Ballroom The Musical.
- To clarify one's own view and be able to express persuasively and succinctly.
- Assess the production’s elements and value of the production as entertainment.
- To critique and respond to the views of another in a written assessment.

PREPARATION

Photocopy Activity Sheet 8 for each student.

LESSON OUTLINE

Student should be asked to prepare their own review of the production incorporating all the creative elements such as structure, libretto, musical choices, production design, costuming, lighting and sound. They should be encouraged to assess the effectiveness of, but not limited to the following:

Characters: How did they develop throughout the performance? Did they push the narrative forward?
Setting: How effective was the setting in depicting parts of Australia’s cities and suburbs in the 1990’s.
Staging: Did the staging appear to achieve its aims for so many diverse interior and external environments?
Costume: How well did the costumes depict the different scenes and each character? Did they succeed in gaining the attention they required in particular scenes?
Music: How did the music enhance the narrative and atmosphere of the production and what was most interesting about the musical choices made?
Choreography: What styles and techniques were used, how did it assist in the creation of the world of competitive ballroom dancing and how well did it support the musical choices, characters and story?
Themes: How effectively did all the elements of the production support and portray the story and characters.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Reviewing the Review

Following their personal review of the production, students should be encouraged to review an existing published review as follows:

- Critically analyse a published review of the production.
- Identify those comments they agree with, as well as those they disagree with regarding the structure of the production, the plot, music choices, set and costumes design, choreography, lighting, sound, performances and the adaption of the story from film to stage.
- Explain why they agree or disagree with the reviewer of his assessment of the actor’s performances and their characterisation.
Welcome to *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*. Of all the things that I’ve been involved with on a creative level, nothing can really compare to *Strictly Ballroom*. Its roots began in my own journey back in Herons Creek where as a child my father would drive my brothers and I many hours a night, twice a week to learn competitive ballroom dancing.

Jump forward into the future where in my second year of study at the National Institute of Dramatic Art, I had a great interest in the idea of the universal myth. So, when the opportunity to tell our own stories on stage presented itself, I, along with a talented bunch of students explored the underlying stories of triumph over oppression; the hero’s journey and the fairytale of the ugly duckling. The world of ballroom dancing – in which at the time, my mother was teaching and my sister competing – was our canvas and out of this was born the short 40-minute play of *Strictly Ballroom*. Glen Keenan, another member of our group, was a champion ballroom dancer and in addition, we were fortunate enough that NIDA’s beloved and revered dance teacher, Keith Bain, was himself not only a ballroom dancer, but experienced the trauma that young Scott Hastings did and that is, as he discovered his own creativity he was dismissed by the judges in the competitive ballroom dancing field. His story became an inspiration for the story we were to tell.

As an aside, Keith came from the very country town I learnt to ballroom dance, a place called Wauchope. From this theatrical production to the film that, but for the commitment and belief of Ted and Antoinette Albert, Tristan Miall and the entire Albert family, would never have gotten made, *Strictly Ballroom* emerged triumphant and went around the world uplifting all kinds of people from many diverse backgrounds. We hope this new musical version of *Strictly Ballroom* has you dancing in the aisles and continues to bring joy to many more people.

*Baz Luhrmann*
**APPENDIX 2**

**CREATIVE TEAM**

**BAZ LUHRMANN – DIRECTOR & CO-WRITER**

Born in Sydney, Australia, Baz Luhrmann has captured popular and critical imagination internationally with a diverse range of award-winning projects in film, opera, theatre, and music. Luhrmann is one of Australia’s most recognizable creative forces. His most recent film is the extraordinary 3-D adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Carey Mulligan, Tobey Maguire and Joel Edgerton. The director’s earlier films include the ambitious epic *Australia* (2008), starring Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman, the Oscar winning *Moulin Rouge* (2001) featuring Kidman and Ewan McGregor, his boldly luminous version of William Shakespeare’s *Romeo + Juliet* (1996), starring DiCaprio and Claire Danes, and the celebrated *Strictly Ballroom* (1992), starring Paul Mercurio and Tara Morice. The soundtrack albums for *Romeo + Juliet* and *Moulin Rouge*, executive produced by Luhrmann, have sold more than 13 million copies worldwide. *Moulin Rouge* won three Golden Globes and received eight Academy Award nominations, with Catherine Martin winning two for Art Direction and Costume Design. *Australia* won four AFI Awards. It is the second highest-grossing Australian film of all time. The phenomenally successful *Strictly Ballroom* was originally conceived by Luhrmann as a short play in 1984 when he was a student at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). He produced an extended version of the play when he formed the experimental ensemble Six Years Old under the auspices of the Sydney Theatre Company in 1988. Catherine Martin was one of the company’s designers. *Strictly Ballroom* drew on Luhrmann’s personal experiences of the world of competitive ballroom dancing and was acclaimed by critics and public alike. He later directed and co-wrote the screenplay (with collaborator Craig Pearce) for the film version of *Strictly Ballroom*. It premiered in the 1992 Cannes Film Festival where it became an overnight success. The film, which also starred Barry Otto and Bill Hunter, won the Prix de la Jeunesse award and went on to win eight AFI Awards. In 1997, Luhrmann married Catherine Martin, his longtime creative collaborator. They have two children, Lillian and William. The same year they founded Bazmark, an innovative multimedia company with the motto “A life lived in fear is a life half lived”. Baz Luhrmann is one of Australia’s most imaginative and strikingly original opera directors. His signature production of Puccini’s *La Boheme* for Opera Australia won considerable acclaim in 1990 when it starred Cheryl Barker and David Hobson. His later production of *La Boheme* on Broadway in 2002 was lauded by critics for its sensuality and glorious production design. It was nominated for seven Tony Awards, including Best Revival and Best Director for Luhrmann. It won the Tony Award for Best Scenic Design. Previous opera productions include *Lake Lost*, which won a Victorian Green Room Award for Best Director in 1988, and Benjamin Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. It received a Victorian Green Room Award for Best Director, a Sydney Theatre Critics’ Circle award for Best Director and the Critic’s Prize at the Edinburgh Festival in 2003. Luhrmann comes full circle to direct the stage musical adaptation of *Strictly Ballroom* at the Sydney Lyric in April 2014.

**CATHERINE MARTIN – SET & COSTUME DESIGN**

Catherine has collaborated with the director and visualist Baz Luhrmann on the distinctive look of all his films and theatre productions for more than 20 years. Along with Luhrmann, Martin is a partner in Bazmark, one of the most innovative producers of film, theatre and entertainment. A graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), Martin began collaborating with Luhrmann during her final year at NIDA when she joined his experimental theatre company Six Years Old in 1988 to design his production of *Lake Lost* for the then Australian Opera. This earned Martin and colleague Angus Strathie a Victorian Green Room Award for Best Design. Martin has since designed all of Luhrmann’s subsequent productions including Benjamin Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* for which she won the Sydney Theatre Critics’ Award for Best Opera Design, and a striking version of Puccini’s *La Boheme* set in 1957. The latter went on to open on Broadway in 2002 to critical acclaim and won Martin the coveted Tony Award for Scenic Design. Martin made her film debut with Luhrmann on the hugely successful *Strictly Ballroom*. Her design on the film earned her Best Production Design and Best Costume Design at both the BAFTA and AFI awards. The achievement was followed in 1996 with William Shakespeare’s *Romeo + Juliet*, also directed by Luhrmann, for which she was awarded another BAFTA for Best Production Design and an Academy Award Nomination for Best Art Direction. In 2001, Martin won two Academy Awards for Costume Design and Art Direction for her work on *Moulin Rouge!* as well as AFI awards for Best Production Design and Best Costume Design, and a Los Angeles Film Critics Award for Best Production Design among numerous others. Martin was Production & Costume Designer and Co-Producer of Luhrmann’s epic film *Australia*, starring Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman, in 2008. It earned Martin an Academy Award Nomination for Costume Design. Other projects with Luhrmann include guest editing the first signature edition of Vogue Australia (January, 1994) and designing the look of 2004’s lavish Chanel No. 5: The Film, a global campaign starring Nicole Kidman for which Martin designed sets and featuring costumes by the legendary designer Karl Lagerfeld. Her most recent work as Production & Costume Designer and Co-Producer, is the visually stunning 3-D adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Carey Mulligan, Tobey Maguire and Joel Edgerton, which garnered her two further Oscars. Martin has also been developing her own homewares brand, Catherine Martin Home, collaborating with Designer Rugs and Mokum (fabrics and wallpaper). With Luhrmann, she has also recently collaborated with Tiffany & Co, Prada, Brooks Brothers, Fogal and The Plaza. She divides her time between Sydney, New York and Paris. Baz and Catherine have two children, Lillian and William.
CRAIG PEARCE - WRITER

Born on Sydney’s Northern Beaches, Craig Pearce studied acting at Australia’s premier theatre school the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). Craig worked as an actor for a number of years and was part of Baz Luhrmann’s theatre ensemble Six Years Old, established under the auspices of the Sydney Theatre Company. Here, he collaborated with Luhrmann and other company members to develop an extended version of *Strictly Ballroom*. The production was acclaimed by critics and audiences and became the catalyst for the 1992 film version, which Craig co-wrote with Baz. The film of *Strictly Ballroom* won eight Australian Film Institute awards (including Best Screenplay) for the screen, the Prix de la Jeunesse at the Cannes Film Festival and the NSW Premier’s Literary Award for Best Screenplay. Craig and Baz then adapted William Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* for the screen. The film starring Leonardo DiCaprio broke box office records for Shakespeare worldwide. Among its many nominations and awards, it won the Alfred Bauer Award, the Silver Bear at the Berlin Film Festival and four BAFTAs (including Best Screenplay). Craig also co-wrote with Baz the screenplay for *Moulin Rouge*. The film was in competition at - and opened - the Cannes Film Festival. The film’s many accolades include winning two National Board of Review awards (including best film) nine Golden Satellite awards (nominated best screenplay), three Golden Globes - including best film musical or comedy - a Grammy Award, the Los Angeles Film Festival movie of the year, five Australian AFI awards, two US AFI awards and numerous other awards throughout the world. It was also nominated for eleven BAFTAs, (including Best Screenplay), nominated for the 54th Annual WGA Awards for Best Screenplay Written Directly for the Screen and nominated for eight Academy Awards, including Best Picture. Craig’s latest collaboration with Baz, *The Great Gatsby*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Tobey Maguire, Carey Mulligan and Joel Edgerton was a world wide box office and critical success and had the honour of opening the 2013 Cannes film festival. Craig is currently developing a number of projects including Will, a television series he has created about young William Shakespeare for US network Pivot, as well as an epic television series about Joan of Arc. *Strictly Ballroom* is Craig’s first main stage, music theatre production and he’s hoping that audiences will enjoy the experience of seeing it, as much as he did working on it.

JOHN O’CONNELL - CHOREOGRAPHER

John O’Connell is an internationally acclaimed choreographer best known for his work on a string of cinema box office hits: *Moulin Rouge!; Strictly Ballroom; Shall We Dance;* and *Enchanted*. Other film credits include Australia; *Razzle Dazzle; Romeo + Juliet; Muriel’s Wedding; Peter Pan; Passion; The Quiet American; The Matrix Revolutions; Scooby Doo; Children of the Revolution; Me, Myself & I; and The Crossing*. Most recently John choreographed *The Great Gatsby*. Known as ‘choreographer to the stars’, John has worked with some of the biggest names in Hollywood: Leonardo DiCaprio, Nicole Kidman, Richard Gere, Jennifer Lopez, Michael Caine, Susan Sarandon, Amy Adams and John Travolta. In 2008, John choreographed the 80th Academy Awards (the Oscars) and is the recipient of the highest American Choreography Award for *Moulin Rouge*. Amongst John’s theatre credits are: *Tales from the Vienna Woods* (Sydney Theatre Company); Threepenny Opera and Keating! (Helpmann Best Musical) (Belvoir Street Theatre); *The Magdricals* (Sydney Opera House); *Baz Luhrmann’s Dance Hall and A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Australian Opera, winner of most popular production at the 1996 Edinburgh Festival); *Bananas in Pajamas, Emerald Room* (STCSA), Burger Brain (ATYP); Venetian Twins (Royal Queensland Theatre Company) Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks (Ensemble Theatre), Barry Humphries’ Remember You’re Out; South Pacific (GFO); *Sweet Charity, The Pajama Game, Assassins, Kiss Me Kate and Once on this Island* (NIDA); *Rudolf* (Vienna State Theatre and Tokyo Imperial Theatre). John also conceived and directed Colette Dinnigan’s Salon of Images in Sydney, as well as several of her fashion events in the Louvre in Paris. He was the Staging Director for the international tour of Il Divo in 2007 and in New York has choreographed Spiegel world’s *Desire and Empire* – mixing circus and burlesque. John also devised his own how to dance comedy show *Mr Cha Cha Says Dance!* which featured at the Perth International Arts Festival 2005, during which he taught 3,000 people to Mambo. This is his second project with Global Creatures, having choreographed the world premiere of *King Kong* last year.

ELLIOTT WHEELER – ORIGINAL SCORE & ARRANGEMENTS

Elliott Wheeler is a Sydney based composer and producer, and is the director of Turning Studios. Classically trained, he studied composition and brass studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and Philosophy at Sydney University. Since then, he has worked continuously as a composer, providing hundreds of scores for film, documentary, drama, theatre, and commercials. He recently finished working on the soundtrack for Baz Luhrmann’s *The Great Gatsby*, collaborating on material from all of the film’s artists, from Jay Z, Florence + the Machine, Lana Del Ray, Jack White, will.i.am, Bryan Ferry and his Jazz Orchestra, Emile Sande and Kid Koola, Fergie, Q Tip and Goon Rock, as well as providing original and additional music for the film. Wheeler has also recently finished working on the opening titles for Robert Conolly’s adaption of Tim Winton’s *The Turning* – a collection of eighteen short films directed by a diverse range of artists and directors including Cate Blanchett, David Wenham and Mia Wasikowska, among others. Additionally, Elliott has scored many successful
short films including Yardbird which won Best score at the 2013 St Kilda Film Festival and scored the Sand Animation The Hunter which won Best Animation at the 2013 AACTA Awards. Alongside his film and music work, Elliott produced the Ship Song Project for the Sydney Opera House, a reworking of Nick Cave’s iconic song, featuring some of Australia’s and New Zealand’s most loved artists and ensembles, from the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Bangarra Dance Theatre, Opera Australia and Australian Chamber Orchestra, to Paul Kelly, Daniel Johns, Temper Trap and Neil Finn, Katie Noonan, Angus and Julia Stone and Kev Carmody. In 2013, Elliott released his debut solo album, The Long Time which features Elliott along with a succession of veiled muses – hand-picked from his extensive work with the best Australian singers in jazz, neo folk and indie rock – adding to the mystique and sense of theatre.

HUGH VANSTONE – LIGHTING DESIGN

Hugh’s West End and Broadway career spans more than 20 years and 160 productions worldwide. His many awards for lighting include the 2013 Tony for Matilda in New York and three Olivier Awards in London. Previous work in Australia includes: Scrooge (Princess Theatre, Melbourne); Art (Theatre Royal); The Graduate (Theatre Royal & subsequent revivals, starring Jerry Hall) and Spamalot (Her Majesty’s, Melbourne). Recent productions include the musicals: Matilda (London & New York); Ghost (London, New York, Korea, USA & UK tours); Shrek (New York, London USA & UK tours); The Wizard Of Oz (West End, Toronto and USA tour) and the long running European hit musical Tanz Der Vampire directed by Roman Polanski. Recent theatre credits include: I’ll Eat You Last: A Chat With Sue Mengers (starring Bette Midler on Broadway); La Bête (with Mark Rylance, David Hyde Pierce and Joanna Lumley – West End and Broadway) and A Steady Rain (with Hugh Jackman and Daniel Craig on Broadway) and a new version of the ballet Don Quixote choreographed by Carlos Acosta for the Royal Ballet in London.

PETER GRUBB – SOUND DESIGN (SYSTEM SOUND)

In 1981 Peter joined System Sound operating shows such as They’re Playing Our Song, Barnum, Oklahoma!, The Sound Of Music, Guys & Dolls, The Pirates of Penzance, La Cage Aux Folles, HMS Pinafore, Nine and Cats. As Sound Supervisor for System Sound Peter’s credits include We Will Rock You, The Phantom of the Opera, Starlight Express, Aspects Of Love, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Five Guys Named Moe, Cats, Les Misérables, Miss Saigon, Sunset Boulevard and Rent! Peter was Associate Designer for the productions of Les Misérables in Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Mexico City; Spamalot and Mamma Mia in Australia. Peter designed the sound for Cats in South Africa, Beirut, Seoul, Shanghai and Taipei. Cats Tent Tour Australia and Korea, The Witches of Eastwick, Oliver! Australia and US Tour, Avenue Q Australia and New Zealand, Miss Saigon Manila, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, Brazil and Australia, Mary Poppins Australia for which he won the 2011 Helpmann and Green Room awards and Cat Stevens’ Moonshadow. Other sound design credits include Into The Woods (Melbourne), A Little Night Music, (Melbourne/Sydney), Sweet Charity (Sydney), Little Shop of Horrors (Brisbane) and The Production Company’s She Loves Me, Call Me Madam, They’re Playing Our Song, Sunset Boulevard, Follies, Pirates of Penzance and Chess (Melbourne).

MAX LAMBERT – MUSICAL SUPERVISOR

Max studied at the Conservatorium of Music in Sydney. He has worked extensively in theatre and has written music for almost every major theatre and dance company in Australia. Max has recorded albums with Kate Ceberano, Wendy Matthews, Vince Jones, Paul Kelly, Iva Davies, Judi Connelli and Geraldine Turner. He was the musical director and pianist for Playschool from 1991 to 2000. In 2000 Max was the musical director of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Sydney Olympics. He went on to do the Opening Ceremonies of the Commonwealth Games, the Asian Games and the opening of Expo in Shanghai. He co-wrote Tivoli for The Australian Ballet as well as writing songs for Old Masters by Beatrix Christian and Bombshells with Sharon Millerchip. Max has worked on many new Australian musicals as a writer or composer including Hot Shoe Shuffle, The Boy From
Oz, Eureka, King Kong and his own Darlinghurst Nights and Miracle City, both of which are being presented later this year. In 2005 Max worked as a musical consultant on George Miller’s highly anticipated feature film, Happy Feet. Max has previously arranged orchestrations for Jane Campion’s film Sweetie and coached Miranda Otto in Gillian Armstrong’s film The Last Days of Chez Nous. Max was Dame Nellie Melba’s accompanist in Melba and has played for silent films at The Sydney Film Festival. He is currently writing a new musical with Anthony Harkin about Rose Hancock and Gina Rinehart.

ANTON MONSTED – MUSICAL CO-PRODUCER

Anton Monsted has worked on four feature films with Baz Luhrmann and was executive producer of Luhrmann’s 2004 global campaign for Chanel No.5 starring Nicole Kidman and a producer of the Come Walkabout campaign for Tourism Australia in 2008. Monsted’s collaboration with Luhrmann on his soundtrack albums between 1996 and 2013 has contributed to album sales approaching 20 million units worldwide. After graduating from Newcastle University in 1995, Anton began work as an office assistant with Baz Luhrmann’s production company, Bazmark. This evolved into a director’s assistant role on the film William Shakespeare’s Romeo + Juliet (1996). Following the film’s success, Anton worked with Luhrmann on establishing Bazmark Music, a music publishing company and record label. The label’s first release was the compilation album Something for Everybody (1997), which contained the international radio phenomenon Everybody’s Free (to wear sunscreen) Anton subsequently served as music supervisor and executive music producer on Luhrmann’s film Moulin Rouge! (2001). Anton served as executive music supervisor for the film and soundtrack for Australia (2008), which earned him a Satellite Award nomination for Best Original Song for By the Boab Tree. From 2009 until 2013, Anton was General Manager of Baz Luhrmann’s production company Bazmark, working between their offices in Sydney and New York. He was also co-producer and executive music supervisor for Luhrmann’s film adaptation of The Great Gatsby (2013), earning him his second Grammy nomination for best soundtrack album.

WENDY DE WAAL – HAIR & MAKE UP DESIGNER

Wendy de Waal is a hair and make-up professional with over twenty-five years experience in media and the arts. In another life, Wendy’s love of the theatre led to co-creating a performance group known as The Globos, resulting in a hit show and two singles including Tinterella di Luna. In her early career, Wendy combined her formal hairdressing qualifications with a love of the creative, holding key hair and make-up roles in film productions like Travelling North and Young Einstein as well as major national advertising campaigns and theatre projects. Wendy’s career has led her to working on a diverse range of film productions. Her makeup and hair credits include: Moulin Rouge!, Matrix Reloaded & Revolutions, Star Wars, Suburban Mayhem, Superman Returns, Goddess, The Sapphires and Wolverine. In addition, Wendy’s design credits include: Suburban Mayhem, Accidents Happen, The Tree, Burning Man, Goddess, The Railway Man and Son of a Gun. During her career Wendy has worked with Geena Davis, Dennis Hopper, Monica Belluci, Colin Firth, Olga Kurylenko, Rose Byrne, Joel Edgerton, Ewan McGregor and Charlotte Gainsbourg, to name a few.

GERRY RYAN – PRODUCER

Gerry is a Melbourne-based entrepreneur and Managing Director with diverse business interests in Australia and overseas. These interests span the manufacturing, property, entertainment, leisure and tourism industries. Gerry is Chairman of Global Creatures and the world-class animatronics workshop Creature Technology Company, the creative force behind Walking with Dinosaurs The Arena Spectacular. It was Gerry’s strong belief in that show’s potential and his steadfast financial support that allowed a dedicated and hugely talented creative team of artists, designers, engineers, puppeteers and technicians to develop the production in Melbourne over several years. Gerry feels privileged to have worked with this team to bring a new form of world-class entertainment to the global stage, and he takes great pride in the fact that the show continues to amaze and delight audiences wherever it is staged. How to Train Your Dragon Live Spectacular followed and then WarHorse and the award-winning smash hit King Kong, which had its world premiere season in Melbourne. In recognition of his contribution to the nation’s manufacturing, leisure, sports and tourism industries, Gerry was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 1999. Through his vision, drive and business leadership, Gerry continues to make a much valued contribution to the wider community.
CARMEN PAVLOVIC – PRODUCER

Carmen was educated in Melbourne and holds a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Russian and an MA in Business Administration. Throughout the 1990's, Carmen’s career spanned various theatre companies including The Really Useful Company where she was the Executive Producer. In 2001 Carmen relocated to London and took up the role of Executive Producer at Clear Channel Entertainment. Later she became the Director of the International Production Department for Stage Entertainment, responsible for establishing new territories (including Russia, Italy and France), licensing and programming of 25 theatres across Europe; and overseeing all productions in the UK, Germany, Holland, France, Italy, Spain and Russia. For Stage Entertainment Carmen was also the International Executive Producer of the European premiere of Dirty Dancing in Germany and subsequently Holland, the Russian speaking productions of Cats and Mamma Mia! (the first open ended musicals in Moscow), the German-speaking production of Wicked; the Spanish-speaking production of The Producers; the French-speaking productions of Sam Mendes’ Cabaret at the prestigious Folies Bergere and The Lion King at the Mogodor Theatre in Paris. In 2008 Carmen returned to Australia to take up the roles of CEO and board member of Global Creatures and since that time has rapidly expanded the organisation and production slate. For Global Creatures, Carmen is the Producer of Walking With Dinosaurs The Arena Spectacular, How To Train Your Dragon Live Spectacular, King Kong and Strictly Ballroom The Musical.

PATRICK MURPHY – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Patrick graduated from Bretton Hall College (Leeds University) with a degree in Dramatic Arts, though he determined during his course that he would never walk the boards professionally. After a brief career in politics he moved into venue management running theatres in both Liverpool and London’s West End. Patrick’s production career has spanned 20 years (with a year’s sabbatical in events) and he has produced and general managed shows for Andrew Lloyd Webber’s The Really Useful Group across the world. His credits include 16 shows in the West End, including 6 new productions of Lloyd Webber titles, 4 Broadway shows, numerous tours throughout Europe and the Americas and sit down productions in Canada, the USA, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Portugal, Austria, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, Japan and Russia. He has worked on 11 productions of The Phantom of the Opera but never one performed in English. Through these theatrical productions Patrick has worked on TV shows, arena productions, a Vegas spectacular, major events and within record, film and DVD production.

CHRIS YATES – TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

The ideas for the sumptuous, swirling score of Strictly Ballroom The Musical are very much inspired by the film Strictly Ballroom, but they took their shape in director Baz Luhrmann’s own childhood. The son of a ballroom dancing mother, who learned to dance competitively himself, the young Luhrmann absorbed the sophisticated rhythms of the rumba, tango, waltz and foxtrot and developed the passion for music evident in all his film soundtracks. Strictly Ballroom, Romeo + Juliet, Moulin Rouge! and The Great Gatsby all feature eclectic mixes of pop, jazz, hip-hop, and classical music.

“Mixing the familiar with the new is a timeless approach and I have always been very drawn to the idea,” Luhrmann explains. “When we were preparing for Moulin Rouge!, we learned that in most of the classic Hollywood musicals, only some of the music was brand new. It was important for the audience to hear songs they knew and loved. This idea of the familiar mixed with the brand new is one we have continued with Strictly Ballroom.” This musical philosophy particularly serves the story of Strictly Ballroom because the world of ballroom dancing, in which many styles of dance are attributed to many different kinds of music, is fundamentally eclectic itself, Luhrmann says. “For example, a strict dance such as the Paso Doble is always danced to The Spanish Gypsy Dance (Esperanza Cani). Whereas, when I was growing up, the Jive was the exciting one because it would be danced to the most exciting new pop track at the time. I would always ask for ABBA’s Waterloo when I went onto the competition dance floor because that was the song of the moment.”

Modern musicals often rely on the voice of just one composer, Luhrmann says. Strictly Ballroom The Musical uses the voices of many composers to reflect the world in which it is set. Luhrmann and his team began with the songs and rhythms of the film, music they knew audiences already loved: Cyndi Lauper’s aching Time After Time; George Young and Harry Vanda’s smash hit Love is in the Air; the flirty Perhaps, Perhaps, Perhaps made famous by Doris Day. Then they added classic ballroom dance standards such as La Cumparsita, Espeanza Cani and Johann Strauss II’s The Blue Danube. Each has been given a little twist along the way, says co-music producer on Strictly Ballroom The Musical, Anton Monsted, the music supervisor for the Moulin Rouge! and Gatsby film soundtracks.

“For years we’ve been used to hearing something familiar and texturally different at the same time, says Monsted. “When we were preparing for Strictly Ballroom, we learned that in most of the classic Hollywood musicals, only some of the music was brand new. It was important for the audience to hear songs they knew and loved. This idea of the familiar mixed with the brand new is one we have continued with Strictly Ballroom.” This musical philosophy particularly serves the story of Strictly Ballroom because the world of ballroom dancing, in which many styles of dance are attributed to many different kinds of music, is fundamentally eclectic itself, Luhrmann says. “For example, a strict dance such as the Paso Doble is always danced to The Spanish Gypsy Dance (Esperanza Cani). Whereas, when I was growing up, the Jive was the exciting one because it would be danced to the most exciting new pop track at the time. I would always ask for ABBA’s Waterloo when I went onto the competition dance floor because that was the song of the moment.”

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“Baz has an encyclopaedic knowledge of music and uncanny talent for making really eclectic music fit together harmoniously,” Monsted says. “He has deep knowledge across all the forms. I’ve worked with various recording artists for 20 years on his projects and every single time, they tell me Baz is the most musical director they’ve ever worked with.”

A great deal of effort has gone into making the songs from the film sound fresh, vital and current, adds Monsted. “But at the same time, we knew we also wanted to work with the best songwriters on new music specific to this show.” Luhrmann and his team went straight to the A-list.

Adelaide-born Sia Furler is a songwriter and recording artist who has written and produced songs for Beyoncé, Rihanna and Kylie Minogue. She first worked with Luhrmann on The Great Gatsby. “I sent Baz a bunch of songs for Strictly Ballroom. I thought they had a good vibe for music theatre, mostly lighter pop stuff,” Sia says. “Then Baz and his team adapted a fair portion of the lyrics. I can’t take credit for their magic. I learned music theatre has more flexibility with camp words. I can use words that I can’t necessarily get away with in a pop song. For example, Baz threw ‘heavenly pineapple’ in there. I mean that is a spectacular display of camp only musical theatre allows for.” Monsted says Sia is an unusual talent in the pop world. “One of her special talents is writing story-telling pop songs that already sound like classics,” he says. “They will stand the test of time.” Many of songwriter Diane Warren’s songs already have. Artists including Elton John, Cher, Tina Turner, Bryan Adams, Barbra Streisand and Michael Bolton have recorded her songs. Because You Loved Me (Celine Dion), Un-break My Heart (Toni Braxton) and I Don’t Want to Miss a Thing (Aerosmith) are among many that have topped music charts worldwide.

For Strictly Ballroom The Musical, Warren has written what may well be another, Shooting Star, a song Warren describes as “the dreamers’ national anthem”. “Whenever I write a song I try to write the best song I can possibly write,” Warren says. “It’s the same thing when writing for a movie, or in this case my first musical. The difference is that you also have to capture the emotions of the characters and what they are going through in the story.”

Also on the team is the Grammy Award-winning Canadian songwriter and producer David Foster, who first worked with Luhrmann on Moulin Rouge! Michael Jackson, Madonna, Andrea Bocelli, Michael Bublé, Josh Groban, Natalie Cole and Stevie Wonder are among the artists to have recorded his songs and it was Foster who turned Dolly Parton’s I Will Always Love You into a hit for Whitney Houston and one of the biggest selling singles of all time. Collaborating with MoZella, Bernie Herms and Linda Thompson, Foster has co-written the pivotal ballad Beautiful Surprise for Strictly Ballroom The Musical. Foster regards Luhrmann as one of a handful of directors with an intuitive understanding of the ways in which music enhances the visual. “In my career, I’ve had the pleasure of working with a number of film directors who are brilliant storytellers,” Foster says. “But when it comes to music, they’re not sure how to articulate what they want. Then there’s Baz. He’s one of those rare filmmakers who understands that songs not only enhance the visual, but also in some cases, can drive the narrative. His movie Moulin Rouge! is an example of his musical insight. The way in which he was able to blend and ‘mash’ multiple genres into a cohesive whole was nothing less than stunning.” Foster recalls meeting with Luhrmann to talk about the story of Strictly Ballroom. “We sat down for what was a planned 15-20 minute meeting. He wanted to make sure I understood every aspect of the story. Two hours later, I not only knew the story, I understood each character’s motivations, dreams, insecurities and ambitions. In fact he was so detailed, that when we got together with our collaborators to write the song, the words and music flowed easily, almost like the characters were revealing their innermost thoughts to us.” “Baz is a visionary, an artist in the truest sense of the word, and a gentleman. I’m gratified he called me to work with him again ... in fact, you might say it was a beautiful surprise!”

APPENDIX 3

THE MUSIC
For songs with a comic edge, Luhrmann approached the versatile actor, comedian and songwriter Eddie Perfect. “He asked me to write a song for Dance Federation president Barry Fife and I thought that was the most exciting thing ever,” Perfect says. “After workshopping ideas with Baz, we decided on Dance to Win. There’s a lot of humour in it because Barry’s saying some pretty awful things and the further you go with that, the funnier it is. Somehow it became this big, dark, Russian-sounding number.” Perfect is also responsible for the JJ Silvers feature song Beautiful When You Dance. It is inspired by the hours 1980s ballroom dancing competition videos Luhrmann insisted he watch. “Some of the dancers were electricians or accountants, or they groomed pets for a living but then they were transformed into these glamorous ballroom dancers,” says Perfect. “The song just came out fully formed. It’s about being nobody during the day and then being beautiful when you dance. It’s cheesy. But it’s the right side of cheesy. Baz was in love with it straight away.”

Luhrmann and his co-writer Craig Pearce have written lyrics to many of the songs with the help of composer - and Ballroom’s musical arranger - Elliott Wheeler. “We’ve thrown in a lot of wonderful surprises for the audience,” Wheeler says. “We want them to feel like they’re taking a journey. There is a live band on stage and the cast is singing and dancing simultaneously. Watching them do that is, for a composer like me, the biggest buzz.”

Monsted says the storytelling is at the heart of all the music. “The reason Strictly Ballroom has stood the test of time is because it works on two levels. The surface level is very colourful. Moment by moment, the storytelling is heightened, silly, comedic and plain melodramatic,” he says. “But underpinning that is a story of the hero and his journey. We root for Scott as a hero and we love it when Fran transforms from an ugly duckling into a beautiful dancer. We want the audience to head out of the theatre feeling inspired and uplifted. We want them to feel joy.”

The score of Strictly Ballroom The Musical is ultimately an expression of the emotional heart of its characters, Luhrmann says. “From the fun Sambas to the profoundly traditional and stirring Flamenco rhythms embedded in the Habanera, everything represents the primary emotions - not just of the story but of the human condition.”

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**THE MUSIC**

**ACT 1**

**When You’re Strictly Ballroom**

Music by Elliott Wheeler & Baz Luhrmann (via Johann Strauss)
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce and Elliott Wheeler

**Tequila**

Music by Chuck Rio
Used with kind permission of Universal Music Careers, administered by Universal Music Publishing MGB Australia Pty Ltd and © 1958 EMI Longitude Music Co. Licensed by EMI Music Publishing Australia Pty Ltd

**The Samba**

Music by Elliott Wheeler
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce and Elliott Wheeler

**Barry Fife!**

Music by Elliott Wheeler & Baz Luhrmann
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce and Elliott Wheeler

**Happy Feet**

Music and Lyrics by Jack Yellen and Milton Ager
© 1930 WB Music Corp.
Used with kind permission of Warner/Chappell Music Australia Pty Ltd

**La Cumparsita**

Music by Contursi/Moroni/Matros-Rodriguez/Raven
Used with kind permission of J Albert & Son Pty Ltd
On behalf of Edward B Marks Music Company
Shooting Star
Music & Lyrics by Diane Warren
Used with kind permission of © 2014 Realsongs (ASCAP)

Scott’s Solo
Music by Elliott Wheeler & Baz Luhrmann

Time After Time
Music and Lyrics by Robert Hyman and Cyndi Lauper
©1983 Dub Notes and Rella Music Corp.
Used with kind permission of Warner/Chappell Music Australia Pty Ltd
and Sony/ATV Music Publishing
The Looks, The Charm
Music by Elliott Wheeler & Baz Luhrmann

Dance to Win
Music & Lyrics by Eddie Perfect
Used with kind permission of Control

The State Championships – Heavenly Pineapple
Music by Sia Furler, John Hill
Homer Steinweiss, Thomas Brenneck, Nicholas Movshon and
Victor Axelrod
Lyrics by Sia Furler, Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce and Elliott Wheeler
Used with kind permission of Sony/ATV Music Publishing; Rodeoman
Music (ASCAP)/EMI/April Music; Extraordinaire Music (BMI) / Defend Music;
Kobalt (BMI) and Polydemic Productions / Lever and Beam Publishing (ASCAP)
administered by Downtown Music Publishing

Perhaps, Perhaps, Perhaps
Music and Lyrics by Osvaldo Farres and Joe Davis
© 1947 Peer International Corporation (BMI)
Used with kind permission of Peermusic Pty Ltd

The Stage Championships – Part 2
Tina Is Coming
Music by Elliott Wheeler
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce and Elliott Wheeler

Witches’ Song
Music by Elliott Wheeler
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce and Elliott Wheeler

Reprise of Dance to Win
Music by Eddie Perfect
Lyrics by Eddie Perfect, Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce & Elliott Wheeler
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Scott’s Paso Doble
SCOTT’S PASO DOBLE
Music by Elliott Wheeler

Rico’s Paso Doble
RICO’S PASO DOBLE
Music by Elliott Wheeler

A Life Lived in Fear
Music by Elliott Wheeler (via Bizet) & Baz Luhrmann
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann and Craig Pearce
ACT 2

Beautiful When You Dance
Music & Lyrics by Eddie Perfect
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New Steps Nightmare
Music by Elliott Wheeler & Baz Luhrmann
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce and Elliott Wheeler

Without a Fight
Music by Sia Furler and Sam Dixon
Lyrics by Sia Furler and Baz Luhrmann
Used with kind permission of Sony/ATV Music Publishing and BMG Chrysalis/Mushroom Music

Love is a Leap of Faith
Music by Sia Furler, Neff-U and Isaac Hasson
Lyrics by Sia Furler and Baz Luhrmann
Used with kind permission of Sony/ATV Music Publishing;
Universal Music - Z Tunes LLC/Feemstro obo
Universal Music Publishing MGB Australia Pty Ltd, IRH Publishing c/o The Bicycle Music Company / Hebbes Music Group Pty. Ltd
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The Looks, The Charm
Music by Elliott Wheeler & Baz Luhrmann
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce and Elliott Wheeler

Yesterday’s Hero
Music and Lyrics by Vanda and Young
Used with kind permission of J Albert & Son Pty Ltd

Crazy Doug
Music by Elliott Wheeler
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann and Craig Pearce

Beautiful Surprise
Music and Lyrics by MoZella, Linda Thompson, Bernie Herms, David Foster and Baz Luhrmann
Used with kind permission of Sony/ATV Music Publishing; © Brandon Brody Music Administered by Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp; Warner/Chappell Music Australia Pty Ltd; Universal/MCA Music Pty Ltd obo Songs Of Universal, Inc./G650 Music (BMI) and © Fozbeats Music, administered by Peermusic III, Ltd.

The Chase, The Paso Doble
Music by Elliott Wheeler (via Pascual Marquina Narro/Tallada) & Baz Luhrmann

The Pan Pacifics Finale
Music by Elliott Wheeler & Baz Luhrmann
Lyrics by Baz Luhrmann, Craig Pearce and Elliott Wheeler

Love In In The Air
Music and Lyrics by Vanda and Young
Used with kind permission of J Albert & Son Pty Ltd
J J Silvers
APPENDIX 4
SET AND COSTUME DESIGNS

SET DESIGNS
The Kendalls truck is made up of 3 pieces, all must have casters to move in any direction and the 3 units must also lock in rotation. Roof pieces can also be removed and curtains added to all sides of the central truck to build judges truck. Curtain tracks to run all sides of trucks. Red velvet - Red (reference #2) 100% Fullness. Gerriets Effektgewebe PAILLETTE - Red box pleats. 

WORKSHOP REVISIONS

Door heights revised. Int curtain fabric changed, now must fully close. Support arch to continue behind scallop detail. Light to wash down scallop detail. New Kendalls ext sign. Nib box to house window dressing for ladder truck. Note from prototype, int roof line does not step in.
SET DESIGNS
MILK BAR TRUCK

The milkbar truck is made up of 3 pieces, all must have casters to move in any direction and the 3 units must also lock onto the turntable to enable turntable rotation.

Roof pieces can also be removed and curtains added to all sides of the central truck to build the Judges platforms.

ASplit middle truck into thirds

WORKSHOP REVISIONS

Window moved to centre truck

Additional door /wall moved in truck A

Frosted /f_luted non prac door for front door

Festoons to hang inside

Re/f_ined alley door area

6 x 1.3m vertical runs of warm (2600K) LED tape arranged in three pairs

50/75W wide MR16 lamps set flush into deck, but angled up at 45 °, with polycarbonate covers. Total 8 footlights arranged in TWO circuits of 4 lamps.

6 x 50/75W wide MR16 lamps set flush into deck, pointing straight up, with polycarbonate covers. Total 6 footlights arranged in ONE circuits of 6 lamps.

R 2,996

R 2,982

2,295

2,000

5,975

2,000

30°
Stephanie Shanks
Tina Sparkle + Nathan Starkey
A few days before Catherine Martin won two Academy Awards for The Great Gatsby, the designer is up to her neck in gold thread, ostrich feathers, sequins and flamboyantly-coiffed wigs.

As cast members of Strictly Ballroom arrive for their costume fittings in a makeshift dressing room, Australia’s most famous designer is scrutinising hemlines and ruffling feathers. The room is tiny yet at any one time there are 10 assistants clutching pin cushions, hair-pieces and sundry bits of fabric, crammed into the space where Martin takes unobtrusive charge and puts each performer at ease. It could just as easily be the Sydney Mardi Gras as it is the making of a large scale musical version of Strictly Ballroom, the hit 1992 film that transported audiences to the competitive hothouse of ballroom dancing.

“I’m really having fun but there are moments of high anxiety,” says Martin, a stickler for detail, whose dazzling designs for joyous liberation of Strictly Ballroom.

Strictly Ballroom.

“Baz is a visualist; he provides boundless references, photos, tearsheets and sketches that kickstart the design process; he takes a holistic approach to the creation of the show,” she says. “I get to take his visual brief and try to make them practically appear.”

As with all Luhrmann and Martin collaborations, the starting point comes from Baz’s passionate and seemingly boundless imagination. When Martin accepted her Oscars for Best Costume Design and Best Production Design (which her colleague Beverley Dunn also won for set decoration on The Great Gatsby), she acknowledged Luhrmann’s visionary talent. “He makes it all possible. He dreams the dream.” The secret to their success owes a lot to their mutual respect and, moreover, the extent to which their individual talents go hand in glove.

“I have an enormous respect for tradition. The wardrobe world is solitary and tough. I’ve been very fortunate to have been working [in design] for 25 years and I have worked consistently with the same team more or less – my golden girls - since Moulin Rouge. We are lucky to have extraordinary, talented artisans here in Australia that work both in the production of sets and costumes.”

Martin says she responds personally to the resilient spirit, discovery and radiance of Strictly Ballroom. “People identify with the characters and the demons they are battling. They’re all archetypes. The journey from fearfulness to empowerment, especially for Fran, connects with audiences. It’s the story of the ugly duckling becoming a swan.”

Another performer enters the dressing room, stands in front of a mirror, and shrieks in glee at the sight of her own candy-coloured thread, ostrich feathers, sequins and flamboyantly-coiffed wigs.

“Wow! I can’t believe my eyes.” Says Martin: “The philosophy about individual freedom and overcoming repression is important and timely. The story pleads for acceptance and that includes self-acceptance. The film’s David and Goliath theme is spirited and uplifting because people love nothing more than cheering for the underdog. In creating a big musical, Baz didn’t want to lose the naïve elements of the movie or the jaw-dropping preposterousness of the costumes that existed in the ballroom dancing world of that time.

“The main thing is that we don’t get so precious as to let taste get in the way. We laugh at the situations the characters find themselves in while loving them regardless. Whether one is dancing to the Village People on a Saturday night in a suburban disco or dancing a Federation Viennese Waltz, dance is about intimacy and expression. It is about humanity.”

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MEDIA RELEASE

THE STORY THAT INSPIRED THE WORLD TO DANCE

Global Creatures presents Baz Luhrmann’s

Strictly Ballroom The Musical

Directed by Baz Luhrmann

Based on the much loved Australian film

Melbourne season confirmed at Her Majesty’s Theatre from January 2015

Global Creatures confirmed today that Baz Luhrmann’s much-loved hit show Strictly Ballroom The Musical will open in Melbourne at Her Majesty’s Theatre in January 2015.


Strictly Ballroom The Musical had its Global Premiere on Saturday 12 April at the Sydney Lyric Theatre. This new production is staged by the original creative team behind the classic 1992 film, including Director and Co-Writer Baz Luhrmann, Set and Costume Designer Catherine Martin, Choreographer John “Cha Cha” O’Connell and Co-Writer Craig Pearce.

Playing the pivotal roles of ‘Scott Hastings’ and ‘Fran’ are Thomas Lacey and Phoebe Panaretos who lead an outstanding Australian cast of 43 including Bob Baines as Les Kendall, Drew Forsythe as Doug Hastings, Natalie Gamsu as Abuela, Robert Grubb as Barry Fife, Fernando Mira as Rico, Heather Mitchell as Shirley Hastings and Mark Owen-Taylor as JJ Silvers.

Strictly Ballroom The Musical is the inspiring story of a championship ballroom dancer who defies all the rules to follow his heart. This uplifting and courageous tale originated as a stage play that Baz Luhrmann devised with a group of students at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) back in 1984.

“From a small student play to my first motion picture and now a full-blown theatrical stage musical, Strictly Ballroom has been an almost thirty year journey for me. I have often marvelled at how this story, born so long ago, has been in my life for so many years and has managed to touch, move, entertain and uplift so many different people from so many different backgrounds. I think the simple truth is that, despite all the sequins, outrageous hairdos and classic Hollywood musical plotting, the simple message that there isn’t only one way to cha cha cha, and that within us all we have the true potential to dance through life with our own steps is something that appeals to all of us. The message that life doesn’t have to be strictly ballroom is something I hope to have our audiences carry with them as they dance down the aisles.” – Baz Luhrmann, Director
Carmen Pavlovic, CEO, Global Creatures said “It’s a proud and thrilling collaboration for Global Creatures to be in partnership with Baz Luhrmann and Catherine Martin. This musical production has been conceived with the community in mind and the decision to premiere the show in Australia was born out of a desire to bring Strictly Ballroom full circle to where it all began. The post production for the film of Strictly Ballroom took place in Melbourne making the city a special part of this iconic title’s journey. We are delighted to be bringing the show to Melbourne and we can’t wait for Melbournians to experience this brand new Australian production and to reconnect with the story of Strictly Ballroom live on stage.”

Following the first performances, Baz Luhrmann was invited to re-stage the play for the Czechoslovakian World Youth Drama Festival in Bratislava in 1986 where it won best production and Luhrmann best director. Then, after a preview season at the Brisbane Expo in 1988, the play opened at the Wharf Studios in Sydney.

Strictly Ballroom went on to become one of the most successful Australian films of all time, earning more than $80 million at the box office. Discovered at the Cannes Film Festival, it was winner of the Prix de Jeunnesse and runner up for the Palme D’Or. When released in Australia, Strictly Ballroom swept the field at the 1992 Australian Film Institute (AFI) Awards®, gaining 13 nominations and winning in eight major categories. It was also a major success at the 1993 BAFTA® awards, where it garnered eight nominations and won three awards for Best Costume Design, Best Original Film Score and Best Production Design. Other accolades included a 1994 Golden Globe® nomination for Best Picture, Newcomer of the Year at the 1993 London Critics Circle Film Awards, the People’s Choice at the 1993 Toronto International Film Festival and Most Popular Film at the Vancouver International Film Festival. With the success of the film, its closing song, a remake of the John Paul Young song Love is in the Air, re-entered the Australian charts and became a Top 5 hit in October 1992.

STRICTLY BALLROOM THE MUSICAL features break-into-song numbers created from original classics from the film, Love is in the Air, Perhaps Perhaps Perhaps, and Time After Time as well as some wonderful new songs by artists such as Eddie Perfect and Sia.

STRICTLY BALLROOM THE MUSICAL is produced in Australia by Global Creatures and Bazmark.

STRICTLY BALLROOM THE MUSICAL acknowledges the support of our key partners including Official Airline partner Virgin Australia and Major Partner Bonds.

Advance tickets will be available to all Visa Credit, Debit and Prepaid cardholders from 9am (local time) Friday 11 July until 11.59pm (local time) Sunday 20 July 2014 or until presale tickets sell out at www.visaentertainment.com.au.
# CAST LIST

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<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Hastings</td>
<td>Thomas Lacey</td>
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<td>Fran</td>
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<td>Shirley Hastings</td>
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<td>Ken Railings</td>
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<td>Jarrryd Byrne</td>
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<td>Wayne Burns</td>
<td>Andrew Cook</td>
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<td>Tina Sparkle</td>
<td>Nadia Coote</td>
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<td>Terry Best</td>
<td>Tyler Coppin</td>
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<td>Liz Holt</td>
<td>Sophia Katos</td>
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<td>Angela Kennedy</td>
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<td>Emily Waters</td>
<td>Cristina D’Agostino</td>
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<td>Tommy Arbunt</td>
<td>Mike Snell</td>
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<td>Stephanie Shanks</td>
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<td>Liam Lamb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leigh Archer</td>
<td>Steven Grace (Dance Captain)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jillian Green</td>
<td>(Assistant Dance Captain)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthew Jenson</td>
<td>Holly Sheils</td>
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<td>Brenton Wilson</td>
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<td>Kylie Hastings</td>
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<td>Luke</td>
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CREATIVE TEAM

Baz Luhrmann Director & Co-Writer
Catherine Martin Set & Costume Designer
Craig Pearce Co-Writer
John O’Connell Choreographer
Elliott Wheeler Original Score and Arrangements
Hugh Vanstone Lighting Designer
Peter Grubb Sound Designer (System Sound)
Max Lambert Musical Supervisor
Anton Monsted Music Designer
Wendy de Waal Hair and Make-Up Designer

WWW.STRICTLYBALLROOMTHEMUSICAL.COM   WWW.TICKETEK.COM.AU
Facebook.com/strictlyballroomthemusical   twitter@strictlystage

VENUE
Her Majesty’s Theatre

DATES
From mid-January 2015

PERFORMANCE TIMES
Tuesday at 7pm
Wednesday at 1pm & 8pm
Thursday at 8pm
Friday at 8pm
Saturday at 2pm & 8pm
Sunday at 3pm

PRICES
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday Evenings
Wednesday Matinee
Friday, Saturday & Sunday

BOOKINGS
Tickets on sale Monday 21st July
Ticketek.com.au or 132 849
Groups 20+ and School Groups 20+ call 1300 364 001

Media Please Note

Additional Media Kit material, images and footage are available for download from a secure media page on the website www.strictlyballroomthemusical.com/media
Password: love

For media enquiries for the Melbourne season of STRICTLY BALLROOM THE MUSICAL please contact:
Kerry O’Brien Publicity
publicity2@kob.com.au or (03) 9523 6600
FILM COLLATERAL
MUSICAL LOGO AND COLLATERAL

**How to Book**
VISIT Ticketmaster.com.au
CALL 1300 715 267

**In Person**
Sydney Lyric Theatre
or any Ticketmaster outlet

**Schools/Groups 20+**
Call (02) 8749 7740
groups@ticketmaster.com.au

**Performance Times**

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**Strictly Ballroom The Musical**
**Directed by Baz Luhrmann**

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A DAZZLING FEAST FOR THE EYE”

GLOBAL CREATURES PRESENTS

STRICKLY
the
MUSICAL
BALLROOM

DIRECTED BY BAZ LUHRMANN

SYDNEY LYRIC THEATRE

STRICKLY LIMITED SEASON | BOOK AT TICKETMASTER
APPENDIX 6
REVIEW

DAILY TELEGRAPH – 19 April 2014

Baz Luhrmann’s Strictly Ballroom stage show captures the heart

CHRIS HOOK

THE play’s the thing in the end. Or the story at least. And there’s something about Strictly Ballroom that captures the heart, even when you know exactly how this tale is going to play out. And with all the magic that live musical theatre can create, Baz Luhrmann’s new stage version of his 1992 film Strictly Ballroom packs way more sensory punch than the film ever could.

The new musical incarnation of a story that had its beginnings while Luhrmann was still at NIDA in the early 1980s was announced back in 2011 while the director was still grappling Hollywood hit The Great Gatsby. That done, Luhrmann turned his sights back to the stage and the work opened at the Lyric this weekend.

The story, of course, concerns an up and coming dancer called Scott who wants to dance his own moves that aren’t “strictly ballroom”. His mum Shirley worries he’ll jeopardise his chances of becoming a star, but then he meets Fran, and he becomes ever more determined, despite the doubts of all those around him.

It’s an ugly duckling story about being true to yourself and your expression and the need for art to be free. So Strictly Ballroom is a big, bright, gloriously colourful and joyous affair, two sparklingly fresh stars in Thomas Lacey as Scott and Phoebe Panaretos at the centre of it all and an exceptional ensemble grooving around them, all brilliantly carried along by a handful of fired up veterans.

A long shorts and socks clad Drew Forsythe’s pathos-ridden solo numbers as Doug Hastings dancing in the dark and dreaming of what should have been is one of the funniest sights to grace a Sydney stage. Heather Mitchell is superb as pushy stage mum Shirley Hastings, and Robert Grubb brings Barry Fife alive with deliciously pompous loathsomeness. Events are carried along hilariously by Mark Owen-Taylor’s endearingly slick dag MC JJ Silvers.

Luhrmann created the work with his lifelong cinematic creative partners choreographer John O’Connell, writer Craig Pearce and multi-Oscar award-winning set and costume designer Catherine Martin. It all looks and sounds sensational, the costumes shining, the sets cleverly created to shift and recalibrate smoothly with never a second lost from the narrative momentum, as Hills Hoists go up in back yards and suburban dance schools become leagues clubs become milk bars. Watch for the small details, they’re gorgeous — the headlines on the newspaper posters, the signage at the club and, indeed, the dozens of huge poster ads for small suburban businesses circa 1990 dotted across the Lyric Theatre.

There’s a lot of crowd involvement and the score is a mix of old and new, known hits such as Time After Time and Love Is In The Air used perfectly combined with new works penned by Pearce and Luhrmann as well as a huge cast of other collaborators including comedy cabaret king Eddie Perfect.

It’s a wonderfully antipodean outing and will flourish in the wild once inevitably released onto the world’s stages but in the meantime catch a great Aussie story right here where it began some 30 years ago.

APPENDIX 7
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Strictly Ballroom The Musical
www.strictlyballrooomthemusical.com

Strictly Ballroom
M&A Productions, Miramax, and Touchstone Pictures, 1992

Bullying No Way!
www.bullyingnoway.com.au

Mindmatters
http://mindmatters.edu.au/default

Kiddsmatter
http://www.kiddsmatter.edu.au

National Coalition Against Bullying
www.ncab.org.au
What do you know about the Australian film, *Strictly Ballroom*?

The film was made in 1992, what do you know about what Australian culture was like at this time, in the cities and the suburbs?

**AFTER SEEING THE FILM**

What challenges do you think would be faced and how could these be solved surrounding the film’s setting and iconic environments when translating the story to the stage?

Research how many feature or small budget films began their lives as a stage production (playscript or musical) and how many other films have been made into a play, musical or theatre work in recent years?
What do you believe are the major factors of difference in producing a film verses a musical?

Do you think is could be potentially difficult to create new films here in Australia? If so, why?

Do you think is could be potentially difficult to create new musicals here in Australia? If so, why?

What other films have been created in Australia over the last 20 years?

What other musical theatre works have been created in Australia over the last 20 years?

What, if anything about these films or musicals is uniquely Australian? Consider subject matter, character and style.

How successful have these films been here in Australia and overseas?

How successful have these musicals been here in Australia and overseas?

What do you think is a good story or subject matter for other Australian films or musicals? (ie historical events, personal stories of celebrities or sporting heros, existing books or novels)
What do you think the biggest differences are between the film and the musical?

What challenges do they you think would have been faced when adapting the story of *Strictly Ballroom* from a film to a stage musical?

How successfully do you believe the story of the film was translated to the live musical theatre production?

Do you think any element of the story was lost during the transfer from film to the stage? If so, can you suggest how it could have been better incorporated?

Do you believe transferring another film to the stage possess the same or different challenges?

In films, close-ups are used to create intimacy and wide-shots, landscape and space – how do you think music and lighting may be used to take the place of these elements onstage?
ACTIVITY SHEET 2: MARKETING A MUSICAL

Looking at the collateral and artwork, discuss what you notice about the marketing and branding for the 1992 film *Strictly Ballroom*? What design trends and available marketing channels were available at this time in Australia which may have influenced the final imagery?

Review the film branding and collateral for *Strictly Ballroom*, as well as that for *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*. Identify the themes, messages and imagery in both and compare and contrast the look, feel and impact of each. In addition, identify their effectiveness of the marketing in selling the production, based on the initial film concept.

Identify the challenges you believe would have been overcome in the reinvention of the existing brand for another genre of entertainment, to ensure the most effective marketing and promotion of the musical. Ensure you consider the changes in marketing strategy here in Australia and globally over the last two decades.
Research who the target audience and potential target audience for the production? How do you determine this and what details about them will assist you focusing on meeting their needs and wants?

What messages and imagery does the branding need to contain to appeal to them?

What do these messages and imagery say about the production and how does this assist in you in crafting the marketing strategy in order to appeal to the target and potential target audience?

Using the information you have derived from these questions, design a logo and branding for the production, which incorporating the messages and imagery which you believe best sells what the musical has to offer.

Determine what marketing channels you would use for the marketing of the production, such as advertising (radio, television, print, outdoor and social media) printed collateral, publicity and social media, and create storyboards for these advertising campaigns, design printed collateral and determine appropriate opportunities to promote the musical. Present your branding and marketing campaign to the class and explain the choices you have made.
What Australian icons, brands and products can you identify in the show? Remember they could be large set items or smaller costume detailing. How effective do you believe the use of these icons was in setting the environment in which the musical takes place?

What Australian imagery could you see in the show and how important was this in the creation of the landscape for Scott’s journey and Fran’s transformation throughout the piece?

What is a colloquialism?

Below is a list of Australian colloquialisms which are featured in the production. Determine what each of these mean, discuss why they have been used in the script and what effect they have on the phrasing of the language and overall tone of the production?

- ‘yeah, g’day’
- ‘little tacker’
- ‘Everyone’s going berko because of the steps’
- ‘Scott Hastings is a dead set wanker’
- ‘I just don’t give a shit’
- ‘he’s a dab hand with an electric eel’
- ‘the judges are gonna love that!’
- ‘Piss Off’
- ‘Dead-set you’re so up yourself’
- ‘Son, can I bend your ear for a tick…?’
- ‘what the hell’s going on with you and Liz?’
- ‘Jesus, Wayne!’
- ‘Don’t you get above yourself lad.’
- ‘He’s so so sick-orama…’
- ‘Remember, it takes two to tango’
- ‘You’re a gutless wonder’
- ‘A dead set cert your gonna like her’
- ‘Let’s take it from the top’
- ‘Onya son’
- ‘Terry’s hit the nail on the head, Merv’
- ‘Let’s not start chucking the babies out with the bathtub’
- ‘Let’s make this a bloody good festival’
- ‘She’s a nice little chickie’
- ‘Let’s take it from the top’
- ‘Bloody fantastic mate’
- ‘Tina’s top-banana is going to be one lucky dancer’
ACTIVITY SHEET 3: STRICTLY BALLROOM AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY
EXTENSION ACTIVITY

What other Australian icons can you think of that could have been integrated into the production to reflect Australia culture in the 1990’s and where would you have used them?

Name the Australian cities and suburbs which are referred to in the show and what characteristics are inferred in their portrayal in the musical? How does this reinforce or conflict with you views of these places.

What elements of popular culture and Australian society (personalities, social groups, companies, products) can you identify as being referenced in the show? What impact do you believe they have on the production overall and how effectively would the story be portrayed if they were excluded.
ACTIVITY SHEET 4: BULLYING & IDENTITY – A LIFE LIVED IN FEAR

What does ‘A Life Lived In Fear… Is A Life Half Lived’ means in the context of Strictly Ballroom The Musical?

Identify and discuss as a group what you believe constitutes bullying and anti-social behaviour?

What leads to this type of behaviour and how are you able to recognize it?

What examples of this behaviour can you recall from your own life?

Explain why you believe it is unacceptable and identify what impact it may have on individuals and groups?

With your classmates, undertake a detailed discussion in large or small groups, to further develop an individual and shared understanding of these behaviours, including cyberbullying, and discuss what effect share responsibility and early intervention can have to prevent this behaviour developing.
ACTIVITY SHEET 4: BULLYING & IDENTITY – A LIFE LIVED IN FEAR
EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Using the courage and strength shown by Scott and Fran in overcoming the obstacles which they find in their path as a platform, in addition to your understanding of what bullying, harassment and anti-social behaviour looks, sounds and feels like, design your own strategy for creating an inclusive and supportive environment in the classroom, school, other social environment such as a sporting group, drama group and/or online environments.

Your strategy should address how you would facilitate a safe and accepting environment, promoting and celebrating differences in all individuals and challenging attitudes which seek to exclude and discriminate. You should begin with an overriding purpose, followed by aims and objectives which should be reflected in written material, as well as a description of acceptable verbal and non-verbal language and other social behaviour.
Instrumental to an effective musical theatre plot are strong, complex characters assisting in both the telling of the story and communication of its themes and concepts. You should be list the themes and concepts you can identify in the story and select two characters, including but not limited to Scott, Fran, Les, Doug, Shirley, Les, Barry Fife, Rico or Abuela, and provide a character analysis or breakdown for each.

Themes and Concepts

1. CHARACTER NAME
   Analysis:

2. CHARACTER NAME
   Analysis:
ACTIVITY SHEET 5: BIGGER THAN BALLROOM: CHARACTER ANALYSIS
EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Using your two existing character profiles from *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*, compare and contrast them to determine how important their characterisation and relationship is in the development of the plot and what impact their relationship has on other characters.

CHARACTER NAMES: ______________________________________________

______________________________________________

Compare and contrast

Their relationship in the development of the plot

Impact their relationship has on the other characters
How important do you think the music was to the structure of *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*?

Discuss how different songs within a musical can range in type, change a mood and alter the speed of the plot.

Identify what other functions the music can play when translating a story from a screenplay/film to a stage musical? Could the music been seen to take the place of the camera through its ability for intimacy and expanse from scene to scene?

Looking at The Music of *Strictly Ballroom The Musical*, select five songs and discuss the following for each of them:

- In this context what is the intended meaning for the song?
- Why do you think this particular song was selected or written for the production?
- Which character/s, if any, do you learn more about through the use of this song?
- How valuable was the song to the overall context, themes and plot of the show?
With your knowledge of popular and familiar music, suggest other songs from a range of musical eras which could have been incorporated into the musical too?

What are they are who was their composer and original artist?

Explain where in the story they would be incorporated and how they could add to the story, its theme and continue to drive the plot forward?
ACTIVITY SHEET 7: DANCE HALL STAGING

Identify two pieces of staging used to create a dance hall, dance championship or iconic outdoor scene in the musical of the city or suburbs. One of the scenes should be of an interior, the other an exterior.

Stage Setting (Interior)

SCENE SELECTED: ________________________________________________________

Suggest how you think the staging was achieved including all the elements which contribute to the creation of the overall effect. Attention should be paid to the way in which lighting works to enhance these moments as well as how a soundscape or sound effects contribute to the overall atmosphere. Additions such as costumes, wigs, shoes, hats and props should also be included in each analysis.

Stage Setting (Exterior)

SCENE SELECTED: ________________________________________________________

Suggest how you think the staging was achieved including all the elements which contribute to the creation of the overall effect. Attention should be paid to the way in which lighting works to enhance these moments as well as how a soundscape or sound effects contribute to the overall atmosphere. Additions such as costumes, wigs, shoes, hats and props should also be included in each analysis.

Design your own set design or costume design for an existing scene in the production, ensuring you provide an environment in which the plot can unfold which also incorporates the distinct qualities of the characters.
Compile a report focusing on the art of stage and special effects. Focus on how these effects have developed over the last 20 years with the incorporation of technology such as automation (the system which controls the sets and scenery), moving lights and computer operated sound desks and costuming including the design and production of wigs, shoes and properties.

As part of this research, you should also explain how at least two technical effects which are featured in the production were achieved prior to the use of the technology which is used in the musical.
ACTIVITY SHEET 8: REVIEWING THE PERFORMANCE

Prepare your own review of the production incorporating all the creative elements such as structure, libretto, musical choices, production design, costuming, lighting and sound. You should be encouraged to assess the effectiveness of, but not limited to the following:

Characters: How did they develop throughout the performance? Did they push the narrative forward?

Setting: How effective was the setting in depicting parts of Australian cities and suburbs in the 1990’s.

Staging: Did the staging appear to achieve its aims in creating so many diverse interior or exterior environments?

Costume: How well did the costumes depict the different scenes and each character? Did they succeed in gaining the attention they required in particular scenes?

Music: How did the music enhance the narrative and atmosphere of the production and what was most interesting about the musical choices made?

Choreography: What styles and techniques were used how did it assist in the creation of the world of competitive ballroom dancing and how well did it support the musical choices, characters and story?

Themes: How effectively did all the elements of the production support and portray the story and its characters.
Following your personal review of the production, you are encouraged to review an existing published review as follows:


Critically analyse this review of the production

Identify those comments with which you agree, as well as those with which you disagree regarding the structure of the production, the plot, music choices, set and costumes design, choreography, lighting, sound, performances and the adaption of the story from film to stage.

Explain why you agree or disagree with the reviewer of his assessment of the actor’s performances and their characterisation.