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The Legend of Gynt: A New Musical Program [1986]

University of Southern Maine Department of Theatre

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University of Southern Maine's
RUSSELL SQUARE SUMMER THEATRE
presents

**THE LEGEND OF
GYNT**
a new musical

SAM ROSSI
book and lyrics

FLASH ALLEN
music

directed by
WALTER R. STUMP

musical direction
Flash Allen

choreography
Janet Ross

costume design
Su Brown

set design
Lisa Bess

lighting design
Stephen Price

cast

(in alphabetical order)

Tina Allen as Fancy
Brian Bedell as Eli, Courtier Troll, and Ugly Child
David Benoit as Jasper and Troll King
Fred Bernier as Gussie, Troll Cat, and Empress's Cat
Terry Drew as Laura, Trollette Princess, and Empress of Gynt
Stephanie E. Gould as Tessa
Deborah Hall as Sarah
Don Jellerson as Peter
Janet Ross as Carrie and Trollette
Jane B. Sylvester as Spirit
Harold S. Withee as Sam and Troll
with
Kristen Hornlien, Pamela Klappas,
Jeffrey P. Searles, and Larry Lee Van Horne

special thanks to Studio 3 Sound and Canfield Communications

the taking of photographs, smoking, drinking, or eating is expressly prohibited within the theatre

interpreted performances for the deaf on:

June 20, June 25 (matinee only), and June 26.

Act One

Prelude a ritual arena in the middle of the forest, pre-dawn
The Wind, Midsummer's Eve, You Are Not Alone, Morning

Scene One outside the Gynt home, early morning
The Stallion, Spend Your Time/Til I Do Something Great

Scene Two an open field outside the village, later that day
Emperor In The Sky

Scene Three the village, the early evening of that same day
Fly Over My Lies, Til I Do Something Great/It Is I, Dreamer

Scene Four the forest, that same night and into the following month
Now You Belong To Me

Scene Five the forest, in a dream
The Trollette's Song

Scene Six the Troll Castle, immediately following
The Troll Anthem

Scene Seven another part of the forest, more dreams
In Night/Go Round About

Act Two

Prelude the ritual arena, pre-dawn
Morning

Scene One the caves of Eagle Cliff, some months later
Fly Over My Lies, And the Days Go By, My Share, River

Scene Two Carrie's home, the following day
Soria Moria Castle

Scene Three the forest and into the ritual arena, immediately following
Sarah's Eyes, It is I/The Wind, Finale/Morning/River

Program Notes

At 8 p.m. on April 12, 1985, the Russell Square Players of the University of Southern Maine's Theatre Department presented the world premiere of the "rock musical fantasy" *Gynt*. On April 12, 1986, the RSP production of *Gynt*, a musical fantasy, received a standing ovation for its closing performance at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D. C. In only one year the Rossi and Allen musical had gone through 22 cast members; four major rewrites; two set designs; two lighting designs; three choreographers; three poster designs; innumerable costume and make-up changes; song modulations, additions, cuts, and rejuvenations; and 26 performances, including the Maine Festival, the New England Finals of the American College Theatre Festival, and as one of six national winners of the American College Theatre Festival to perform at the Kennedy Center.

The legend of *Gynt* continues as the Russell Square Summer Theatre presents the first professional production of this fantasy musical. Again there are several changes, as *Gynt* relentlessly moves on to an off-Broadway production in the near future. *Gynt* now becomes *The Legend Of Gynt* and is no longer a "rock musical fantasy" but "a new musical." Nine new performers join six of the Washington cast members, two new songs have been added to the score, and several scenes have been transposed and/or edited.

It has long been the goal of Artistic Director Walter R. Stump, to begin producing new works at Russell Square Summer Theatre, especially in the realm of musical theatre. Due to the extremely high costs of producing on Broadway, off-Broadway, or even at the professional regional theatre level, new musicals are becoming increasingly scarce. Their future is very likely dependent upon University-supported theatre programs such as RSST.

Tina Allen (*Fancy*)

A USM graduate with a B.A. in theatre/communications, Tina played leading roles in ten productions including *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Good Woman Of Setzuan*, and *From Morn 'Til Midnight*, and participated in USM's Chorale, Chamber Singers, the Forensics Team, and in Peanut Butter Readers. Tina has done innumerable radio and TV jingles, recorded a song for a major record label, and with husband Flash, performed with various rock, top 40, and jazz bands. Tina is a volunteer for Hospice of Maine and tutors a Cambodian student at King Middle School.

Brian Bedell (*Eli*)

This is Brian's first season with the Russell Square Summer Theatre, although he is no stranger to Maine, having attended the University of Southern Maine and worked for many local theatre groups. He returns to Portland after living in Miami for three years, where he performed in four major television commercials. Brian is working his way into the commercial and film industry.

David Benoit (*Jasper*)

David is a junior at Boston Conservatory and a B.F.A. candidate. This summer marks his debut with RSST. David has professional credits including *Grease* with two companies, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and *A Chorus Line*. Regionally he has appeared in *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Chicago*, *Street Scene*, *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown*, *Oklahoma*, *Godspell*, *Amahl And The Night Visitors*, and *The Music Man*, to name a few. His career goals include steady work in the theatre, (Broadway, that is) and to someday win the Tony Award.

Fred Bernier (*Gussie*)

A 1986 USM graduate of theatre, Fred studies at the Portland School of Ballet and has been accepted into the Boston Ballet Summer Program. Fred appeared in *The Nutcracker* with the York Ballet and in *Copellia* with The Portland Ballet Rep. Co. This is Fred's second season with the Russell Square Summer Theatre, having performed in last year's *Cabaret* and *Man Of La Mancha*. At last, Fred's schedule allows him to portray the role that was originally created for him to perform.

Terry Drew (*Laura*)

A 1984 USM graduate in theatre with a minor in music, Terry won the Region I Irene Ryan Competition and went on to the national competition at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Some of her lead roles include The Mute in *The Fantasticks*, Lu Lu in *The Birthday Party*, Kim in *Personals*, lead alto in *Side By Side By Sondheim*, Anne Deevers in *All My Sons*, Miss Julie in *Miss Julie*, Sarah in *Letters To Em*, Venticello in *Amadeus* and most recently Terry in *Extremities*.

Stephanie E. Gould (*Tessa*)

A 1979 graduate of USM with a B.A. in theatre, Stephanie performed a number of roles including Agnes in *The Shadow Box*, Potemkin in *Celebration!*, and the First Daughter in *From Morn 'Til Midnight*. After returning from San Francisco and a brilliant career selling ball and roller bearings, she performed the roles of Hattie in *The 1959 Pink Thunderbird*, Mrs. Mills in *Naturally* and now repeats her role of Tessa in *The Legend of Gynt*. Her fondest hope is to help her father celebrate his 101st birthday.

Deborah Hall (*Sarah*)

Deborah returns for her sixth season at RSST. She has delighted audiences in the past with roles which include Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*, Aldonza in *Man Of La Mancha*, Ginny in *Relatively Speaking*, Rosabella in *The Most Happy Fella*, Eliza in *My Fair Lady*, Marian in *The Music Man*, and Evie in *Stop The World I Want To Get Off*, as well as performing in the ensemble productions of *Jacques Brel* and *Side By Side By Sondheim*. Deborah is an alumna of USM and a Maine native.

Don Jellerson (*Peter*)

Don is a 21-year-old student at the University of Southern Maine, studying English and theatre. His acting career started as a high school student and has continued with college and summer stock productions. Don is a published playwright whose most tangible goal is to become an effective writer for the stage. On stage, he is most proud of his creation of the role of Peter in the original musical *Gynt*, which he has fostered for over a year.

Janet Ross (*Carrie/Choreographer*)

A graduate of dance at Boston Conservatory of Music and theatre at USM, Janet began performing at a very young age. She spent three seasons with Brunswick Music Theater, seven years with the Portland Children's Theatre, and performed leading roles at Cape Playhouse by the Sea, Theatre East, Portland Players, and Treehouse Players. Some of her choreography/acting roles include Peter in *Peter Pan*, Lucy in *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown*, and Charity in *Sweet Charity*. Janet is currently head of the English department at Lincoln Middle School.

Jane B. Sylvester (*Spirit*)

A recent graduate of USM's Theatre Department, Jane was actively involved in *Talking With...*, *Volpone*, and *Gynt*. At the Mary Moody Northern Theatre in Austin, Texas, she performed roles in *Caligula* with Leonard Nimoy; *Taming of the Shrew* with Tim Matheson; *Roar of the Greasepoint*, *Smell of the Crowd* with Noel Harrison, and many more. As a member of USM's Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Jane believes that life is our best teacher: "through theatre you learn about yourself and then you discover the whole world with a smile."

Harold Withee (*Sam*)

A senior at USM majoring in theatre and business administration, Harold has toured for the past two years with Children's Theatre of Maine and in the fall will become their box office and tour manager. On the Russell Hall stage Harold has been seen as Jonathan in *Arsenic And Old Lace*, Corbaccio in *Volpone*, for which he was nominated for an Irene Ryan Acting Award, and McComber in *Ah, Wilderness!*, which toured southern England. He has performed locally in *West Side Story* and *The Wiz* and is an original member of the *Gynt* cast.

Walter R. Stump (*Director/Artistic Director*)

Having received his Ph.D. in 1974, Walter has published several articles and is currently completing his third book. He joined the faculty at USM in 1968 and has directed numerous productions, including the premiere of *Gynt* in 1985. In collaboration with USM Music Professor Robert Russell, he produced the University's first grand opera, *Così Fan Tutte*. In his six years as artistic director for RSST, he has directed such shows as *Stop The World...*, *The Music Man*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Most Happy Fella*, *Cabaret*, and *Man Of La Mancha*.

Sam Rossi (Book/Lyrics)

In addition to the five USM productions of *Gynt* (affectionately known as *Gynt I*, *Gynt II*, etc.), Sam co-authored with USM Theatre Professor Minor Rootes *Two Fifes And A Drum* and wrote and directed the musical review *On Broadway* for Artist's Showcase of Trenton, N.J. Currently working on several projects with partner Flash Allen, including a 60s musical entitled *Another Star*, Sam puts away his writing utensils for a third time and allows RSST to consume his time and energy as managing director.

Larry (Flash) Allen (Music/Music Director)

A USM graduate with a B.A. in music, Flash has done graduate work at U.N.H. Beginning piano studies at the age of eight, he has also studied pipe organ and jazz theory. Playing professionally since the age of fourteen, Flash began adapting rock music into traditional theatre in 1969 in USM's production of *The Good Woman Of Setzuan*. Flash has three sons, and with his wife Tina and drummer Gary Samson, their band "Shadowplay" performs pop and rock music locally. Flash plays happy hour piano at the Merry Manor.

Lisa Bess (Scenic Designer)

Lisa is a USM sophomore from Skowhegan, Maine, studying scenic design and is the recent winner of the American College Theatre Festival's 1986 Design Competition. She presented her design for *Gynt* to the national judges at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C. She was the scenic artist for UMPI's Pioneer Playhouse in 1984 and last summer was resident designer/painter for York County Playhouse. Most recently she designed the Coppelias set for the Portland Ballet Rep. Co. Lisa will be on exchange at California's Humboldt University next year.

Susan (Su) Elizabeth Brown (Costume Designer)

As resident costume designer for the Russell Square Players, Su designed *Volpone*, *Gynt*, *The Importance Of Being Earnest*, and *Six Characters In Search Of An Author*. She received her B.F.A. from the University of Arizona, where she designed over a dozen plays, both in educational and professional theatre and was the recipient of the Faculty of Fine Arts Creative Achievement Award. A freelance costume designer in the Portland area, Su now has her own business, Callilily's, where she designs and manufactures clothing for both men and women.

Stephen Price (Lighting Designer)

This is Stephen's third season with RSST. He has worked in a wide variety of technical jobs during the past two seasons including master carpenter for *The Most Happy Fella*, technical director for *Cabaret* and *Man Of La Mancha*, and scenic and lighting designer for *Relatively Speaking*. As technical director for USM's Russell Square Players, he has been involved with *Gynt* since its premiere in 1985. Stephen took on the job of lighting designer in January and continues in that role for this production.

Staff and Band

Artistic Director Walter R. Stump
Managing Director Sam Rossi

Administration

Assistant Managing Director Brenda F. Rowe
Box Office Manager Sandy Lashin
Box Office Assistant Sue Beaulieu
House Manager/Admin. Assist Mary Ellen O'Hara
Publicity Assistant Carol Manchester

Production

Stage Manager Mark Tocher
Technical Director Stephen Price
Master Carpenter Rick Solomon
Theatre Technician Renée Lourey
Theatre Technician Rebecca Szatkowski
Crew Chief Noel T. MacDuffie
Wardrobe Person Mark A. Dube
Sound Engineer Robert Blackwell

Band

Keyboards Flash Allen
Keyboards/Asst. Musical Dir. Vicky Stubbs
Guitar Robert Thompson
Drums Mark Spearin



We would like to thank the University of Southern Maine's Theatre Department, the Russell Square Summer Theatre, President Woodbury, and the entire University community for their continued support of musical theatre and *The Legend of Gynt*.

Sam Rossi *Flash Allen*