

## OPEN AUDITIONS

**Monday, September 12 at 7 p.m.**

**Tuesday, September 13 at 7 p.m.**

### CALLBACKS

September 14

### REHEARSALS

October 17 – November 30

### PERFORMANCES

December 1-18

### DIRECTOR

Carlos Asse



## Coming Back Like a Song

A play about Irving Berlin, Harold Arlen, and Jimmy Van Heusen  
By Lee Kalcheim

**ABOUT THE SHOW:** It's Christmas Eve 1956 in New York City, and three of America's legendary songwriters – Irving Berlin, Harold Arlen, and Jimmy Van Heusen – are at a crossroads in their lives, seeing that their careers could be over. Rock 'n' roll is the king of the charts, and the King himself, Elvis, has become an overnight sensation. We meet the three old friends as they get together to hash out the end of their musical usefulness at Berlin's elegant Manhattan apartment, where they spend the late afternoon drinking, fighting, and, of course, singing. More than 37 of their timeless tunes – some whole, others a line or two – are played and sung by the actors in this nostalgic musical interlude. The play explores complex relationships and the bond between these fascinating, complicated, and remarkable human beings. Note: Adult language is used throughout the play.

### ROLES AVAILABLE

**Irving Berlin:** Age 68. Baritone (Bb2-F4). Born Israel Beilin on May 11, 1888 in Imperial Russia, he arrived in New York City at the age of five. His first major international hit was "Alexander's Ragtime Band" in 1911. For much of his career he could not read sheet music and was such a limited piano player that he could only play in the key of F-sharp. He had a custom piano armed with a transposing lever if he needed to play in other keys. Berlin was married twice. His first wife, Dorothy Goetz, died very soon after their honeymoon; years later he married Ellin MacKay, a Catholic socialite. Famous before the age of thirty, Berlin wrote more than 1,500 songs. Many of them were major hits, including scores for 20 Broadway shows and 15 Hollywood

films, such as his 1942 Broadway musical and film *This Is the Army*. His songs were nominated eight times for Academy Awards. Many became popular anthems, such as “Easter Parade,” “Puttin’ on the Ritz,” “Cheek to Cheek,” “White Christmas,” “Happy Holidays,” “Anything You Can Do (I Can Do Better),” “There’s No Business Like Show Business,” and “God Bless America.” Berlin wrote his own lyrics. His songs have reached the top of the charts, and they have been re-recorded by a myriad of legitimate singers.

**Harold Arlen:** Age 51. Baritone (A2-Eb4). Born Hyman Arluck in February 1905 in Buffalo, New York, he was the son of a Jewish cantor. Arlen composed more than 500 songs during his career. His first well-known song was “Get Happy,” with lyrics by Ted Koehler, in 1929. Throughout the early and mid-1930s, Arlen and other lyricists wrote shows for the Cotton Club in Harlem, as well as for Broadway musicals and Hollywood films, including the familiar standards “Let’s Fall in Love” and “Stormy Weather.” In 1937, Arlen married model Anya Taranda and began to spend more time in California writing for movie musicals. In 1938, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer hired him to compose songs for *The Wizard of Oz*, the most famous of which is “Over the Rainbow” with E. Y. Harburg, for which they won the Academy Award for Best Original Song. In the 1940s, Arlen teamed up with Johnny Mercer and continued to write hit songs like “Blues in the Night,” “Out of this World,” and “That Old Black Magic.” Arlen composed two of the defining songs in Judy Garland’s career: “Over the Rainbow” and “The Man That Got Away” with Ira Gershwin, the last one written for the 1954 version of the film *A Star Is Born*.

**Jimmy Van Heusen:** Age 43. Baritone (G2-Eb4). Born Edward Chester Babcock in January 1913 in Syracuse, New York, he began writing music while in high school. He renamed himself at age 16 after the shirt brand Phillips Van Heusen, using his new name on the air during local shows. His close friends called him Chet. Van Heusen was raised Methodist and studied at the Cazenovia Seminary and Syracuse University. In the 1930s, he wrote for the Cotton Club revue, including the hit “Harlem Hospitality.” In 1940 he teamed up with the lyricist Johnny Burke. Van Heusen was known to be quite a ladies’ man. He played piano beautifully, wrote gorgeously poignant songs about romance, had a fat wallet, and flew his own plane. They say he never went home alone. In his 20s, Van Heusen began shaving his head when he started losing his hair, a custom ahead of its time. He also was reported to be a hypochondriac. When he was 56, he married Bobbe Brox, an actress and singer with the Brox Sisters act. Van Heusen was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Song 14 times and won four times – for “Swinging On a Star” in 1944 with Johnny Burke, and for “All The Way” in 1957, “High Hopes” in 1959, and “Call Me Irresponsible” in 1963, all with Sammy Cahn.

**AUDITIONS:** Please prepare a song that is appropriate to the style of the play and best demonstrates your vocal range. Copies of the script are available at the Theatre and may be checked out from the box office for one week with a \$10 refundable deposit. Box office hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Please call (352) 236-2274 before coming to make sure a script is in stock. If you check out a script the week before auditions, you must return it by 5:30 p.m. on Friday, September 9. It is only necessary to attend one night of auditions. No experience is necessary. Newcomers and theatre veterans alike are welcome and encouraged to audition. If you are unable to attend the scheduled auditions, please contact the Theatre at (352) 236-2274 about making a separate appointment. Be prepared at auditions to list any conflicts with the rehearsal schedule.

**REHEARSALS & PERFORMANCES:** Rehearsals will be held October 17 – November 30, Monday through Friday from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at OCT. There will be no rehearsal on Thanksgiving (Thursday, November 24). Tech rehearsals are Wednesday, November 23 and Friday, November 25, with an all-day tech rehearsal on Saturday, November 26. Dress rehearsals are November 28-30. There will be 15 public performances, Thursdays through Sundays, from December 1-18, 2022.

**DIVERSITY IN CASTING:** OCT is committed to casting diverse artists who reflect the demographics of our city and our society. As a community theatre with an open casting policy, we promote equal opportunity and inclusion. We actively invite those performing artists who may have been historically underrepresented. OCT is an inclusive community where artists of all backgrounds can find a safe place to tell stories that encourage our wonderful audiences, volunteers, and actors to walk in each other’s shoes.

**ABOUT THE DIRECTOR:** **Carlos Asse (Director and Scenic Designer)** was born in Jibacoa del Norte, La Habana, Cuba. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Florida, where he also had extensive training in theater. For fifteen years Carlos was an Associate Artistic Director and Designer-in-Residence at the Hippodrome State Theatre in Gainesville, Florida. He now comes from a four-year stint as Producing Artistic Director at the Bay Street Players in Eustis, Florida. Carlos has developed a familial working relationship at OCT since 1995, working in many capacities as Guest Director, Scenic Designer, Production Manager, Technical Director, and Volunteer. In the film industry he was Art Director for Victor Nuñez's *A Flash of Green* with Ed Harris, Blair Brown, and Richard Jordan. He has also worked as Production Designer for the award-winning children's television series *Salsa*, produced at the Georgia Public Broadcasting studios in Atlanta. Carlos was awarded three Southern Regional Emmys for his work on this series in 1998, 1999, and 2000. The Division of Cultural Affairs has three times granted him an Individual Artist Fellowship for his excellence in design, and he has served three years on the theater panel for Cultural Affairs, Department of State in Florida. Carlos has written six plays: *Wedding Times Ten*, *My Son/My Dad*, *My Little Sister*, *The Expectant Virgin*, *A Tale of Two Graves*, and a project very dear to his heart, the adaptation and translation of the finest play in the Golden Age of Spanish theater, Calderón de la Barca's *Life is a Dream*. He has worked extensively around the Southeast in both community and professional theaters. He is thrilled to be back at OCT doing what he likes best – working with actors.

**SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS:** OCT abides by CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting the facility, as well as practices recommended from the Event Safety Alliance regarding public gatherings. A copy of OCT's COVID-19 Safety Guide is available on our website, [www.ocalacivictheatre.com](http://www.ocalacivictheatre.com). **As all OCT actors must work unmasked, proof of vaccination against the COVID-19 virus is required to be cast in a show at OCT. Proof of vaccination must be provided prior to the first rehearsal of the production. Any request for an exception to this protocol, whether for medical or other reasons, must be discussed privately with the Business and Development Director prior to accepting a role in an OCT production.**

## CALLING ALL CREW FOR COMING BACK LIKE A SONG!

We need crew for *Coming Back Like a Song*! This may include assistant stage managers; sound, light board, spotlight, rigging, and fly operators; costume dressers, deck crew, and more. No prior experience is necessary. Crew will begin attending rehearsals on November 22. The show runs for 15 performances, from December 1-18. All crew members must be 16 or older and are required to work all performances. **Interested? Please contact Volunteer Coordinator Craig James at (352) 236-2851, ext. 102, or [volunteercoordinator@ocalacivictheatre.com](mailto:volunteercoordinator@ocalacivictheatre.com).**

## 2022-2023 AUDITION DATES



October 24-25



December 12-13



February 6-7