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AMERICAN ICON
SEP 26 - OCT 27, 2019

CHASING RAINBOWS The Road to Oz

HOLLYWOODLAND



PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

CHASING RAINBOWS, THE ROAD TO OZ

Book by MARC ACITO

Music Adapted & Additional Music by DAVID LIBBY

Conceived & Additional Lyrics by TINA MARIE CASAMENTO

Directed & Choreographed by DENIS JONES

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State Council on the Arts, a partner agency
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Paper Mill Playhouse is a not-for-profit arts organization.

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CREATIVE TEAM



MARC ACITO (*Book*) wrote the book of the Broadway musical *Allegiance*, which *New York Newsday* recognized for its "well-structured book" and "fully developed characters." His comedy *Birds of a Feather* won the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play. His novel *How I Paid for College* won the Ken Kesey Award for Fiction. Other musicals include *A Room with a View* (5th Avenue, Old Globe) and *Bastard Jones* (the cell), which he will direct as a feature film. A former commentator on NPR's *All Things Considered*, Acito has written for *The New York Times*, *Playbill*, and *American Theatre*. NewEdens.nyc



DAVID LIBBY (*Musical Adaptation, Additional Music, Music Supervision, Arrangements, Orchestrations*) is a composer, arranger, and music director. Theater credits include music director for the Off-Broadway production of *Play It Cool* (Outer Critics Circle Award nomination, Outstanding New Musical) and keyboards on the national tours of *Beauty and the Beast* and *Kiss Me, Kate* (2001 revival). David composes music for film and digital media, his credits including *Mister Green* (Best Short Film, Sci-Fi-London Film Festival), *Super Power Blues* (PBS affiliate WNET People's Choice Award), and online episodes of Marvel Entertainment's *The Incredible Hulk* and *Spider-Man*. BA, Bowdoin College. MM, Jazz Studies, Rutgers University.



TINA MARIE CASAMENTO (*Conceiver, Additional Lyrics*) is a teacher, director, producer, and actress with over 30 years' experience in the industry. She is passionate about creating inspired and emotionally compelling theater. After pitching her concept for *Chasing Rainbows* and securing the rights, she has spearheaded this musical through numerous workshops, readings, and two developmental productions. Tina Marie attended Carnegie Mellon University (acting) and University of Maryland (full scholarship in Creative and Performing Arts). Committed to nurturing young talent, she is on staff at Rider University and teaches master classes and workshops throughout the country. She served as chair and national adjudicator in theater for YoungArts and is a recipient of the Teacher Recognition Award from the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

"I'm always chasing rainbows, watching clouds drifting by. My schemes are just like all my dreams,
Ending in the sky. Some fellows look and find the sunshine, I always look and find the rain.
Some fellows make a winning sometime, I never even make a gain.
I'm always chasing rainbows, waiting to find a little blue bird in vain.
Why must I want, and hope, and dream in vain?"

~ Lyrics from "Chasing Rainbows" a song in CHASING RAINBOWS ~

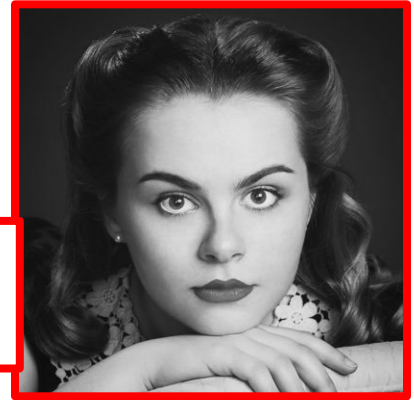
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DENIS JONES (Director & Choreographer). Paper Mill Playhouse: *Holiday Inn*, *Mary Poppins*, *Honeymoon in Vegas*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Damn Yankees*, *The Full Monty*, *High School Musical*, *Meet Me in St Louis*. Broadway: *Tootsie* and *Holiday Inn* (Tony Award nominations for best choreography), *Honeymoon in Vegas*. Other recent credits include *Call Me Madam*; *Hey, Look Me Over!*; and *Paint Your Wagon* (NY City Center Encores!); *The Music Man* (Goodman Theater); *The Flamingo Kid* (Hartford Stage); *How to Succeed...* (Kennedy Center); *Crazy for You* (Signature—Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Choreography); *The Wiz*, *A Chorus Line*, and *42nd Street* (The Muny—St. Louis Theater Circle Award for Outstanding Choreographer); *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Goodspeed Opera House); *Moonshine: That Hee-Haw Musical* (Dallas Theater Center); *The Tempest* (NY Shakespeare Festival); *Piece of My Heart: The Bert Berns Story* (Lortel nomination, Calloway finalist); and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (Two River/Williamstown Theatre Festival).



Frances Gumm aka Judy Garland at age 16 after filming *THE WIZARD OF OZ*.



Ruby Rakos plays Frances Gumm/Judy Garland at age 16 in *CHASING RAINBOWS*.

FRANCES GUMM AKA JUDY GARLAND

Judy Garland, whose full name was Frances Ethel Gumm, was born on June 10, 1922 in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Her parents, Frank and Ethel, were vaudeville performers who introduced her and her two sisters very early on to the entertainment business. They eventually moved to 80 miles outside of Los Angeles when her parents leased a movie theater. Frances and her sisters were enrolled in acting, singing, and dance classes and eventually they built an act that would let them tour the country. It was then that Frances decided to change her name to Judy, after a popular Hoagy Carmichael (see picture below) song at the time.



"She can make all my troubles float on by,
like clouds in the sky.
For there's only one in the light of the sun.
That's Judy. Sure as you're born."

~ Lyrics from "Judy" a song by Hoagy Carmichael ~

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In the summer of 1935, Al Rosen saw the sister's act in Tahoe and immediately saw Judy as a star talent. He worked to get her roles in movies but was turned away as most producers believed she was too young for the roles they had available. After multiple auditions, she caught the eye of



Louis B. Mayer (see picture on left) and soon after was signed to be a contract player for MGM. It was around this time that her father developed spinal meningitis and passed away. Although she was devastated, she dove herself into work, featuring in minor roles in various projects. She received her big break in 1939, when the movie musicals *Babes in Arms* and *The Wizard of Oz* premiered back to back. The story of *Chasing Rainbows* stops here, as it focuses on her entire life up until *The Wizard of Oz*.

Following the success of that movie, Judy became one of MGM's most bankable stars.

Some of her more popular films came costarring one of her best friends, Mickey Rooney, who would go onto do ten films together. (see picture on right) While success came fast, it took a toll on Judy as with the demands of stardom, she became addicted to amphetamines that would give her



energy. This would become a constant struggle of her remaining years.

During and after World War II, Judy featured in many hit films, including *Strike Up the Band*, *Babes on Broadway*, *Ziegfeld Girl*, *Little Nellie Kelly*, and *Me and My Gal*. In 1944, she filmed one of her most successful films, *Meet Me in St. Louis* (see picture on left), which was directed by Vincente Minnelli. Although his directorial style was initially difficult for Judy, she ended up being enamored by him and by June 1945 they were married.

During the war, even with production slowing down, she still released more films like *Easter Parade*, *"Till the Clouds Roll By*, *The Pirate* and *Summer Stock* (see picture on right), which would be her last film for MGM.



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Shortly following her contract running out, she and Minnelli divorced, but not before giving birth to their daughter Liza (see picture on left), who would go on to be a star in her own right. Judy decided to move to London and play an engagement at London's Palladium. It was here where she rediscovered her passion for performing to live audiences and led her back to New York City to perform her act at the Palace Theater on Broadway. This began her comeback and brought her to meet her third husband, Sid Luft. Soon after she filmed the movie *A Star Is Born* (see picture on right), which would lead her to be nominated for Best Actress at the Academy Awards and was widely considered her best acting performance. The day before the ceremony, she gave birth to her son Joseph Luft and could not attend the ceremony. Even with her being the favorite and camera crews covering her live in the hospital, she unfortunately lost the award to Grace Kelly.



In the following decade, Judy made a few films, including *Judgement at Nuremberg*, for which she received another Oscar nomination. If possible, the Garland stage career garnered even greater accolades than her screen work. There were legendary performances at the London Palladium, three engagements at The Palace Theatre in New York (the first of which won Judy a special Tony Award), and concert triumphs in Paris, Amsterdam, Sydney, Mexico City, Stockholm, Copenhagen, and throughout North America – everywhere from the Hollywood Bowl to the Newport Jazz Festival and the Boston Common.



Judy, her top-rated television specials, and a 1963-64 series (see picture on left) won ten Emmy Award nominations. Her recording career spanned 1936-1969, including tenures with Decca, MGM, Columbia, and Capitol. For the latter label, her two-disc "live" recording, *Judy at Carnegie Hall*, topped the charts for more than ninety weeks (thirteen of them at number one), and won five Grammy Awards, including Album of the Year and Best Female Vocal Performance. Garland also performed on nearly three hundred network radio programs between 1935 and the early 1950s.

All of these accomplishments came despite a complicated personal life. Burdened by many periods of overwork and prescription medication dependency, Judy married five times, yet none of her husbands could provide the sustained love or security she warranted. Two of them, however, gave her the three children she prized above all else: Liza Minnelli (born 1946), Lorna Luft (1952), and Joseph Luft (1955). When she died in London on June 22, 1969, Judy Garland was internationally mourned. Her reputation as a timeless, incomparable, and never-surpassed entertainer has only increased in the intervening decades.

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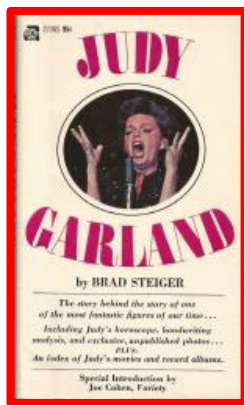
James Mason, who starred opposite Judy in *A Star is Born*, eulogized her thusly, "Judy's great gift was that she could wring tears out of hearts of rock. She gave so richly and so generously that there was no currency in which to repay her." Over 20,000 people attended her funeral. (see picture on right)

Over the years, her memory lives on through a legacy of iconic performances and her story as a Hollywood legend.



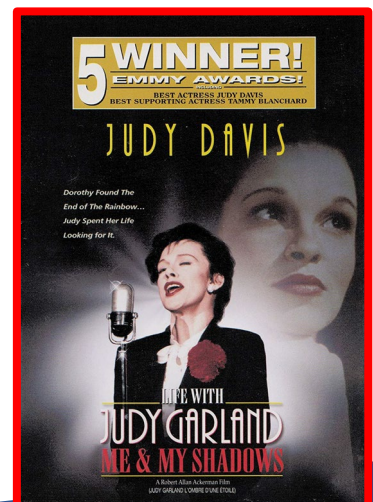
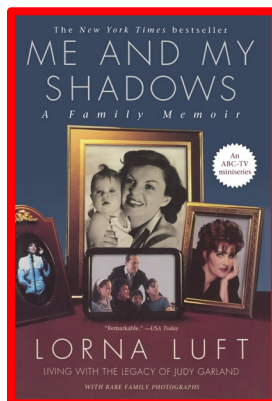
CHASING RAINBOWS - JUDY'S STORY IN ENTERTAINMENT

Judy Garland's rags to riches Hollywood story has become fodder for various pieces of entertainment in the half a century since her death.

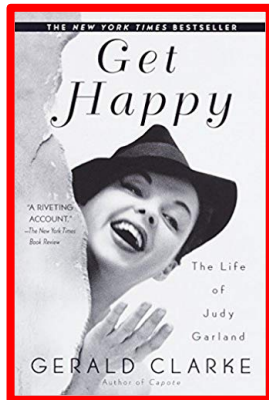


Immediately following her passing, the public's appetite to learn more about her life story yielded multiple biographical books. Author Brad Steiger published the first one (see picture on left) in the same year of her death, trying to capitalize off the initial interest in her death. This was followed by 17 more books about Judy over the next 20 years.

Less than 10 years following her death, there was a made for TV musical film called *Rainbow*, which starred Andrea McArdle. (see picture on right) Like *Chasing Rainbows*, this film focused on Garland's early years and was based on the book *Rainbow: The Stormy Life of Judy Garland* by Christopher Finch. This was the first example of casting being a very polarizing subject, as there have been few performers deemed worthy to portray such an iconic character. The most anticipated potential books about Judy were always the rumored books written by her daughters. While Liza has never written about her mother, in 1998, Lorna Luft wrote about her life with Garland in her autobiography, *Me and My Shadows: A Family Memoir* (see picture on left). It became the basis for the 2001 television mini-series *Life with Judy Garland: Me and My Shadows* (see picture on right). It featured actresses Tammy Blanchard and Judy Davis as Judy at different moments of her career. They both eventually went on to bring home Emmy Awards for their work in the mini-series.

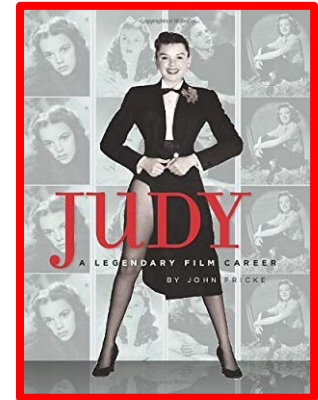


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Following on the success of *Me and My Shadows*, Gerald Clarke's bio *Get Happy: The Life of Judy Garland* (see picture on left) was the next book to receive many lauds. Clarke performed hundreds of interviews as well as consulted Garland's unpublished autobiography to put together this version of her story. Many believe this book was one of the first to reveal some of the truly darker moments in her life, including her struggles with drugs, sexual harassment, marriage and provided a much deeper background about her family. The book was optioned to be a film and a stage show, but unfortunately never got beyond the development stage.

Author John Fricke spent most of his career writing about Judy's life and career. Some of these books include *Judy Garland: World's Greatest Entertainer* (1992), *Judy Garland: A Portrait in Art and Anecdote* (2003), *Judy: A Legendary Film Career* (2011), as well as *The Wonderful World of Oz* (2017), which provides a history of the famous film and Garland's involvement. Fricke has been an integral collaborator with the creative team behind *Chasing Rainbows*, being credited as Creative Consultant/Historian for this musical.



Outside of *Me and My Shadows*, there have been many documentaries on Judy's life, but it's taken until 2019 for us to get the next feature film. The newest film is called *Judy*, which is directed by Rupert Goold, written by Tom Edge and Peter Quilter (based off the Broadway play *End of the Rainbow*), and stars Renée Zellweger in the title role (see picture on left). This movie focuses on her last years where she returns to London to play her final concerts prior to her death.



Today, you can visit the Judy Garland Museum in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. The museum features the most extensive collection of Garland and *Wizard of Oz* items in the world.

VAUDEVILLE - THE WORLD OF JUDY GARLAND'S EARLY LIFE

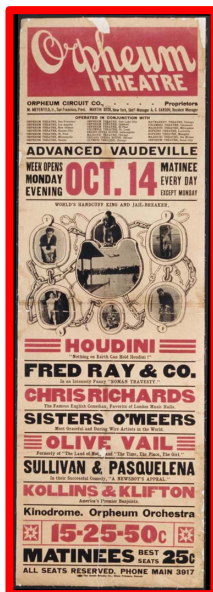
The story of *Chasing Rainbows* follows Garland's family from its earliest origins in vaudeville. Her parents toured the country in various vaudeville circuit shows and Judy and her sisters eventually performed in similar shows in the 1930s.

The term vaudeville comes from the late 18th century in France where at the Theatre du Vaudeville, they performed topical and satirical variety pieces. As the form moved to America, vaudeville became an umbrella term for a clean variety show.

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Basically, anything could be considered a vaudeville act, including any songs, dance, comedy, acrobatics and even celebrity appearances like Helen Keller and Babe Ruth. Most of these shows were geared towards family audiences, so they were censored to ensure the content was appropriate.

The goal of any performer was to be booked on a vaudeville circuit. These were a set of venues that were owned by an operator that acts would move between all over the country. This provided the performers with steady work while giving audiences multiple reasons to return to their theater. Some of the biggest circuits included the Keith, Albee and Orpheum (see picture on right) circuits. Most of the transportation between cities included very long train or bus rides. Given the mobile lifestyle of the circuit, performers lived a life between boarding houses, with very few being able to afford hotels. Most ate Chinese food multiple times a week because it was the cheapest they could find.



A Vaudeville bill changed every performance, but typically had a similar structure:

- 1- "Dumb Act"- act that latecomers could miss. Animals or acrobatic acts.
- 2- "Deuce Spot"- acts who weren't stars yet. The Gumm Sisters performed as the Deuce Spot.
- 3- "Flash Act"- bigger act that starts to use the stage a lot more.
- 4- Corker- first big punch of the show. Novelty, dance and singer.
- 5- A Headliner – the second biggest star of the evening.
- 6- Settle Down- after intermission. The audience would need to settle down, yet still be intrigued.
- 7- Full Stage- larger act than the #3 spot that would also fill the stage.
- 8- Next to Closing- Most important. The biggest named headliner would go here.
- 9- "Chaser"- act that would get people out of the theater but is still enjoyable to those who stay.

Judy and her sisters Mary Jane (Suzy) and Dorothy, toured as a trio in the early 1930's as the Gumm Sisters (see picture on right). Although they were a talented act, their name would receive jeers from the crowds, with some referring to them as the Glum Sisters. This was a primary reason they eventually changed their last name to Garland and became The Garland Sisters. They would go onto perform with each other for a few years until Suzy ran away to marry a musician.



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In the late 1920s/early 1930s, the introduction of other entertainment started the long fall of vaudeville. Soon mediums like the phonograph, radio, movies, talkies and other live performance forms like burlesque replaced the quickly deemed old fashioned vaudeville. The lasting impact of the form continues to be felt over a century later, with many of the comedy styles developed during this period still being used in television, film and stand-up comedy today.

CHASING RAINBOWS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After you see the show and read this study guide, use these prompts to start a discussion with your students and peers.

- 1) *Chasing Rainbows* tells the story of Judy Garland's road to stardom. Did you know about Judy Garland before seeing this show? If so, what did you know and how does what you've learned from the show influence your opinion of her?
- 2) Frances Gumm / Judy Garland grew up in a family of performers. What other performing families have you heard of? How does the Gumm's story compare or contrast to them?
- 3) *Chasing Rainbows* can be considered a jukebox musical because the songs in it were written for other shows or movies. Did you recognize any of the songs? What other jukebox musicals do you know?
- 4) Judy Garland was frequently judged by her looks rather than talent. Have you ever felt judged based on your own appearance, or judged someone else based on their appearance? Did your opinions change as you got to know each other more?

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