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## *From the Director*

**FOLLIES** is about age and memory, allusion and reality, dreams and desires, fantasy and truth, theater and life. It is the foolishness of clinging to the past, recalling only the good, never the real—using *the follies* (musical theater) as its metaphor.

Arriving at the Weismann Follies Reunion, two former stage-door Johnnys and the chorus girls they married use the occasion to contemplate what has happened to their lives over the last 30 years. These four are the main characters. Their younger selves appear as the characters' memories. The rest of the cast appear, with some younger counterparts, as old Follies singers to perform the great musical numbers.

Because reproducing such an elaborate show with all its staging demands proved prohibitive, a concert version was conceived with the original score, same principals but smaller chorus, some book, and new continuity. Whatever version you see, **FOLLIES** remains as it was originally produced as described in reviews: "Brilliant, superb, incredible, stunning." It received the Drama Critics Award of *Best Musical*, and a Tony Award for the *Best Musical Score* in 1971. I think you get the feeling I love this show, and I hope that you will, too!

**— TED RUCINSKI**

✓ **Read the "SLOC's President's Message" on page 26.**

THEATER

**For your safety and enjoyment . . .**

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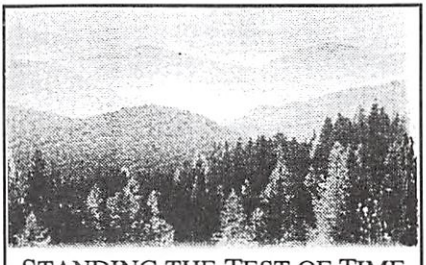

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ROSCOE ..... Joe Malone
SALLY DURANT PLUMMER ..... Benita Zahn
YOUNG SALLY ..... Corie Rowe
BUDDY PLUMMER ..... Mark A. Burgasser
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STELLA DEEMS ..... Pat Brady
CARLOTTA CAMPION ..... Bonnie Williams
EMILY WHITMAN ..... Cindy C. Slutsky
THEODORE WHITMAN ..... John Birchler
SOLANGE LA FITTE ..... Carol Jones
HATTIE WALKER ..... Paula Ginder
HEIDI SCHILLER ..... Jean Coffey Foss
YOUNG HEIDI ..... Kerry Conte

### Ensemble

Jennifer Corona ("Margie"), Sarah Newman ("Sally"),
Joe Pickett, Dèrek Walley

# *Musical Numbers*

**SCENE: A Party on the Stage of the WEISMANN THEATRE**
**TIME: Tonight, 1971**

## ACT ONE

*Beautiful Girls* ..... Roscoe and the Weismann Girls
*Don't Look at Me* ..... Sally and Ben
*Waiting for the Girls Upstairs* ..... Buddy, Ben, Sally, Phyllis, and Young Buddy, Young Ben, Young Sally, Young Phyllis
*Rain on the Roof* ..... Emily and Theodore
*Ah, Paris* ..... Solange
*Broadway Baby* ..... Hattie
*The Road You Didn't Take* ..... Ben
*In Buddy's Eyes* ..... Sally
*Who's That Woman?* ..... Stella, Sally, Phyllis, Carlotta, Hattie, and their younger selves
*I'm Still Here* ..... Carlotta
*Too Many Mornings* ..... Ben and Sally

**There will be one 15-minute intermission.**
Refreshments are available downstairs at the concessions bar.

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## ★ *Musicians* ★

**Ellen Rizzo**, Piano

**Vince Bonafede**, Synthesizer

**Frank Krumal**, Drums

# *Musical Numbers*

## ACT TWO

*The Right Girl* ..... Buddy
*One More Kiss* ..... Heidi and Young Heidi
*Could I Leave You?* ..... Phyllis

### *Loveland*

THE FOLLY OF LOVE
"Loveland" ..... Ensemble

THE FOLLY OF YOUTH
"You're Gonna Love Tomorrow" ..... Young Ben, Young Phyllis, Young Buddy, Young Sally

BUDDY'S FOLLY
"Buddy's Blues" ..... Buddy Plummer and Ensemble Girls

SALLY'S FOLLY
"Losing My Mind" ..... Sally Durant Plummer

PHYLLIS' FOLLY
"Lucy and Jessie" ..... Phyllis Rogers Stone and Ensemble

BEN'S FOLLY
"Live, Laugh, Love" ..... Benjamin Stone and Ensemble

*Finale* ..... Company

**After the performance, we invite you to greet the cast and staff in the Green Room downstairs.**

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## FOLLIES CAST AND STAFF

# *Production Staff*

**FOLLIES**: May 5-7 and 11-14, 2000
Schenectady Light Opera Company

Producer ..... *Jennifer S. Depew*
Director ..... *Ted Rucinski*
Choreographer ..... *Caren Chanley*
Musical Director ..... *Ellen Rizzo*
Assistant Producer ..... *Ron E. Fish*
Set Design and Construction ..... *Doug Peek*
Assisted by Alan Angelo, Mary Kozlowski, Dave Weinstock, Barbara Petersen, John Wood, Ted Rucinski, Francis O'Hara
Lighting Design and Execution ..... *Greg Rucinski*
Assisted by Suzane Rucinski, Richard Gatta, Brett Putnam, Jill Czub
Costume Designer ..... *Peggy Gerardi*
Assisted by Pat Casey, Connie Rowe, Shirley Spring
Stage Manager ..... *Michelle Sausa-Gatta*
Stage Crew ..... Richard Gatta, Jodi Gilman
Props ..... *Jodi Gilman*
Sound ..... *Chuck LaMalfa*
Makeup Designer ..... *Marcia Lenehan*
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■ PRODUCER

**Jennifer S. Depew** has been with our company for 20 years. She has been on the Board of Directors for six years. She has been in a dozen SLOC shows (chorus, and in several fun parts like the General in *Guys and Dolls*). Jennifer assistant directed our *1776* and *Anne of Green Gables*. She has been stage manager, props coordinator, concessions worker, stage crew member, set decorator, and usher, but producing is her favorite role. Jenny has produced *Amahl and the Night Visitors, Little Shop of Horrors, Jerry's Girls* and *Into the Woods* for SLOC. She is happy to be working again with Ted and Caren. Jennifer dedicates this production of *Follies* to her husband, Bill.

■ DIRECTOR

**Ted Rucinski** has been involved in community theater for nearly 50 years. The past 20 years, he has worked for Schenectady Civic Players and Schenectady Light Opera Company as actor, director, makeup artist, and board member. He has acted in over 49 productions, directed 19 and served as makeup chairperson for over 27 shows. This is his fourth directorial assignment for SLOC and his second Sondheim musical. Ted is retired and enjoying theater, reading and cooking even more. He is proud to be working again with his son Greg, this show's lighting designer.

■ CHOREOGRAPHER

**Caren Chanley** has toured the United States, Canada, and South America as a professional dancer. She was lead dancer for Circus World in Orlando and Mark Wilson's *Magic of the Globe* at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg. Caren has choreographed many musicals for Schenectady Light Opera Company, most recently *Mack and Mabel* and *She Loves Me*. She also shares her choreography skills and theatrical talents with area schools and theater groups.

■ MUSICAL DIRECTOR

**Ellen Rizzo** has recently taken on several music directing positions at SLOC, NYSTI, Columbia Civic Players, and with Siena College's Stage Three. During the day, Ellen is a music teacher in the North Colonie School District. She wishes to thank the cast for all their hard work and warm welcome to Schenectady Light Opera Company. Her cat Electra has been very patient and will enjoy having Ellen home.

■ ASSISTANT PRODUCER

**Ron E. Fish** most recently appeared on SLOC's stage as Big Harp in *The Robber Bridegroom*. He wishes to thank his family for allowing him the chance to pursue a dream. Ron is also grateful to Jen Depew for giving him this opportunity to learn to be a producer and for the experiences that have come with it.

**. . .More STAFF BIOS.** on pages 18-19

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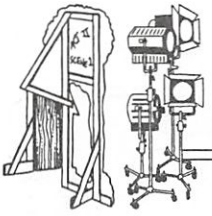

# TECHNICALLY Speaking

■ **Doug Peek** (*Set Designer* and *Lead Carpenter*) first shared his skills with SLOC when he designed our *Godspell.* Since then, he has designed and built numerous stage sets for us, including the ones for *Sweeney Todd* and *Blood Brothers.* Doug has received Theater Association of New York State awards for his set designs for *Sweeney Todd* (SLOC), *Lonely Planet* (Nickel & Dime Players), and *American Dream* (ACT).

■ **Greg Rucinski** (*Lighting Designer*) concludes his 20th anniversary season with *Follies,* his 15th lighting design for SLOC. Other lighting projects include *Blood Brothers, Sweeney Todd,* and *Into the Woods* at SLOC, as well as *84 Charing Cross Road* at Schenectady Civic Players. Greg co-chairs SLOC's High School Musical Awards Program with his wife, Sue. He works at the William Sanford Town Library when not pursuing his theatrical hobby.

■ **Peggy Gerardi** (*Costume Designer*) began as a costume assistant at Schenectady Light Opera Company in 1987. She worked on *Li'l Abner* and *The Gondoliers* before designing her first show, *Baby,* in 1991. Since then, she has costumed our *Anne of Green Gables.* Peggy works as costume manager for the Schenectady Christian School theater department. In 1997 she became costume department coordinator for our company. After her last success with *Mack and Mabel,* she looks forward to seeing *Follies* on stage.

■ **Michelle Sausa-Gatta** (*Stage Manager*) has done numerous shows for SLOC in the past 20 years. Her favorites include *Candide, Shenandoah, The Gondoliers, Pirates of Penzance,* and *The Mikado.* This is her first experience working backstage. Michelle is an elementary vocal music teacher for Niskayuna School District.

■ **Jodi Gilman** (*Props Coordinator*) has been involved with SLOC for many years and is happy to be involved with this wonderful *Follies* production. She has been an enthusiastic audience member, helped with our auditions, ushered, worked concessions, and has cheerfully worked backstage several times. Jodi has also helped with many productions by the Temple Thespians.

■ **Chuck LaMalfa** (*Sound Designer*) has shared his talents and skills at Schenectady Light Opera Company in many, many shows over the past 20 years. He works with Mohonasen, Cohoes, and Schenectady High Schools during their theatrical productions. Chuck is the Director of Video Communications for SUNY at Albany.

**TECH. BIOS.** continued on page 19

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## TECH. Bios. (continued)

■ **Marcia Lenehan** (*Makeup Artist*) is happy to be at SLOC again, working with David Harrison, who taught her about makeup design. This is her third show with our company. She does makeup design for Hilltown Players, Family Players, and the Electric City Chorus as well.

■ **John Fowler** (*Hair Designer*) has completed hair designs for 10 Schenectady Civic Players and five SLOC productions to date, along with seven years of service with Northeast Ballet. He has been a hairdresser in Schenectady for 30 years, loves gardening, kickboxing, and singing in his church's choir.


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# Cast Bios.

## Principals

★ **Allan D. Foster** (*Ben Stone)* has participated on- or offstage in over 80 SLOC shows. He is a former SLOC president and board member. This past October, Allan received an "Outstanding Actor" award from the Theater Association of NY State for his lead role as Charlie Anderson in *Shenandoah* at SLOC. Allan was SLOC's director of *Harry Chapin: Lies and Legends* when it was selected to represent the United States at the 1991 International Theater Festival in Spain. He is a metallurgical engineering consultant, retired from GE.

★ **Benita Zahn** (*Sally Durant Plummer*) is thrilled to be back on SLOC's stage; in 1981 she played Nikki in our *Sweet Charity* with fellow *Follies* members Allan Foster, Pat Hoffman, and Jenny Depew. She has been in the Park Playhouse productions of *Kiss Me Kate* and *Dames at Sea,* and in many shows at Albany Civic Theater. At ACT, she won a "Best Actress" award from the Theater Association of NYS for her role in *All in the Timing.* Benita appeared in *Love Letters* with nationally-known actor William Devane. When not on stage, Benita is the anchor of Newschannel 13's Live at Noon and Live at 5 broadcasts. She is also the Health Reporter at Newschannel 13 and host/producer of Forum 13 which airs Sundays at 7:30 a.m. (yes, that's on tape).

★ **Mark A. Burgasser** (*Buddy Plummer*) returns to SLOC after a 10-year absence. He is a classical-trained opera singer, and a chef and restauranteur in the

## Cast Bios.

### Principals (continued)

★ **Mark A. Burgasser** (...continued) Capital District (Mangia, Bountiful Bread, and The Butcher Block). He is also on the Board of the Albany Symphony Orchestra. Mark is dedicating his performance to the memory of his long-time vocal teacher, Janice Epke Baldwin; in 1973 she first exposed him to the music of Stephen Sondheim.

★ **Pat Hoffman** (*Phyllis Rogers Stone*) returns to the SLOC stage in her third Sondheim musical. She was last seen as Desiree Armfeldt in *A Little Night Music* and appeared in the original productions of *Godspell, Company, Grease,* and *The Robber Bridegroom,* among others. Most recently she played Renee in *After Play* for Theater Voices, Blanche in *Broadway Bound* for Schenectady Civic Players, and as Irene Livingston in *Light Up the Sky* for Circle Theatre Players. A teacher and realtor for Prudential Manor Homes, Pat is also a board member at Schenectady Civic Players.

★ **Dave Dixon** (*Young Ben*) has the following SLOC roles to his credit: Frank (*Mack and Mabel*), Arpad (*She Loves Me*), Ego (*They're Playing Our Song*), and Lamar (*Godspell*). He has had ensemble roles in SLOC's *Evita, Blood Brothers,* and *Sweeney Todd* and in other area productions. This season Dave returned to The Egg, appearing in *Eggs for Easter* at the Empire State Plaza. He's employed at the Desmond Hotel. Dave extends his thanks to Thomas for his love and encouragement.

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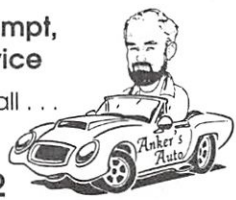

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# Cast Bios.

**Principals** (continued)

★ **Corie Rowe** (*Young Sally*) is making her SLOC debut and is a junior at Scotia-Glenville High School. Theater credits include Megan in *84 Charring Cross Road* (for Schenectady Civic Players), Rizzo in *Grease,* and Anne in *A Little Night Music* (for Colonial Little Theater). At Scotia-Glenville High School, she has participated in over 10 productions, including Smitty in their recent *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying,* and earlier, Yente in *Fiddler on the Roof.*

★ **Alex Pavone** (*Young Buddy),* a Guilderland High School senior, is making his debut with our company. He has performed with many groups but is most proud of his work with the Guilderland Players, where he recently performed as Don Lockwood in *Singin' in the Rain.* Alex would like to thank the Maycocks, Ms. Greco, and his family for their help and support.

★ **Erinn Selkis** (*Young Phyllis*), a senior at Guilderland High School, is happy to be in her fourth SLOC show. A dancer since age three, her favorite roles include Joan in *Dames at Sea,* Kathy Selden in *Singin' in the Rain,* Bet in *Oliver,* and Sister Sophia in *The Sound of Music.* Other credits include roles with Family Players, NYSTI, Park Playhouse, and MacHaydn Theater. Erinn wishes to thank her mom for all of her support.

## Cast Bios.

### Featured Players

■ **John Birchler** (*Theodore Whitman*) last played the banjo in SLOC's *The Robber Bridegroom.* He directs shows at Guilderland High School and at Colonial Little Theater, where he is also treasurer. His favorite acting roles have been Sid in *The Pajama Game,* Charles in *Blithe Spirit,* and Roy in *The Odd Couple.*

■ **Pat Brady** (*Stella Deems*), when off stage, works as a physician's assistant at Riverview Cancer Care Center in Rexford, NY. On the stage for SLOC, she has played a floozy, a murderess, a German flirt, a diva, a dance hall girl, a hoofer, and now, finally, a has-been!

■ **Jean Coffey Foss** (*Heidi Schiller*) is a Julliard graduate and has performed in concert, operatic, musical theater, folk, and sacred music in various parts of our country. During her teens, she made her debut with SLOC as Yum Yum in *The Mikado.* She was heard as Pamina in Mozart's *Magic Flute* with Opera Excelsior (1999), and as soprano soloist in Bach's *St. John Passion* at St. Paul's Church in Troy (April 2000).

■ **Kerry Conte** (*Young Heidi*), a sophomore at Guilderland High School, was in SLOC's *The Mikado* last year. She has also been in NYSTI's *A Wonderful Life* and Albany Civic Theater's *American Dream.* Kerry sends thanks to her family, Sylvia Katuchukain, and Peter Tyger for all their help.


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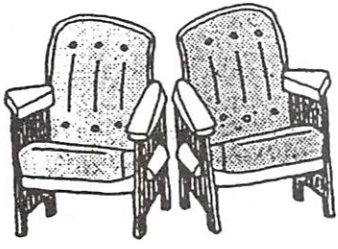

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# Cast Bios.

## Featured Players (continued)

■ **Paula Ginder** (*Hattie Walker*) has had lead roles in SLOC's *Nunsense, 20th Century, How to Succeed..., Me and My Girl, Into the Woods, Secret Garden,* to name some. She has also appeared in productions at SCP, ACT, Park Playhouse and Home Made Theater. She works as an administrative coordinator for the Department of External Relations at Albany Medical Center and is regional chapter president of Project Linus--which makes and distributes blankets to ill or traumatized children. Paula thanks her family for their loving support.

■ **Carol Jones** (*Solange LaFitte*) played Katie in SLOC's December *Meet Me in St. Louis* and a pink-haired elf in the new children's musical just at The Egg, *Eggs for Easter.* She has also been in SLOC's *On the Twentieth Century, Li'l Abner,* and *On A Clear Day,* in Union College's *Cabaret,* and in Lake George Dinner Theater's *Perfect Wedding* and *Broadway Bound.* As a mother of four, Carol is soon expecting her seventh grandchild.

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## Cast Bios.

**Featured Players** (continued)

■ **Joe Malone** (*Roscoe*) played a card player in an all-male group in SLOC's *Fiorello.* Then, in *Man of La Mancha,* he was Anselmo, again in an all-male group of muleteers. In *Guys and Dolls,* he was Harry the Horse, one of the guys. But in *Follies* (at last) he gets to "bring on the beautiful girls!"

■ **Ron Rivers** (*Dimitri Weismann*) previously appeared at SLOC in *Mack and Mabel* and *Me and My Girl.* He has also been in productions by Family Players of NENY, Bethlehem Village Stage, Theatre Voices of Albany and Altamont Village Players. Ron works for the NYSDOT and lives in Voorheesville with his wife of 30 years, Pat.

■ **Cindy C. Slutsky** (*Emily Whitman*) is delighted to have her third opportunity to perform with SLOC. She was last in *Meet Me in St. Louis* and *The Mikado.* She has studied acting with NYSTI and Actors' Collaborative and performed with other local theater groups. Cindy will appear in an independent film, *The Only One.* She thanks her voice teacher, Gary Aldrich, and dance teacher, Debra Draper, for all their excellent coaching.

■ **Bonnie Williams** (*Carlotta Campion*) performed as Mrs. Smith in SLOC's recent *Meet Me in St. Louis.* Other credits include *Cinderella, HMS Pinafore, Nunsense,* and the 70th Anniversary Concert at SLOC, and lead roles with Family Players. She is a supervisor at Charter One Bank, where she has worked for 29 years. "She's still here!"

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# Cast Bios.

## Ensemble

■ **Jennifer Corona** (also *"Margie"*) is making her first appearance on SLOC's stage. With a B.A. in music and a minor in theater, she has been in shows such as *West Side Story, Mame, Little Shop of Horrors,* and *A Little Night Music.* Jennifer works as a makeup artist/sales representative for Chanel cosmetics at Filene's. She also enjoys her work in modeling, and singing with a local band.

■ **Sarah M. Newman** (also *"Sally"*) is excited to be returning to SLOC after appearing in our *Shenandoah* last fall. A high school sophomore, she has performed in shows such as *Anything Goes, Nellie Bly, The Magic Flute, Annie,* and *Finian's Rainbow.* Sarah wishes to thank the Daria Group for their continual love and support, and her father and Papa for their chauffeur services.

■ **Joe Pickett** has done props at SLOC for *Blood Brothers, Mack and Mabel,* and *Sweeney Todd.* He is currently serving as secretary on SLOC's Board of Directors. His stage debut with our company happened during the 1986 production of *They're Playing Our Song* (Alter Ego). He works as a senior business analyst at KeyCorp and enjoys writing songs as a hobby. Joe extends special thanks to Todd for the support and laughter.

■ Dèrek R. Walley has performed in many local productions, including *A Christmas Carol* at Capital Repertory, *Nellie Bly* at Albany Civic Theater, and *Dames at Sea* with Park Playhouse. Dèrek has also worked with Fox 23 television. He sends love to family, friends, Matt, and Bebe.

### SLOC President's Message

Spring has finally arrived! I know I'm busy getting the summer chairs, bikes, and other warm weather stuff out of the basement in preparation for another outdoor season. Here at the Opera House we are doing most of the same preparation for our next season. As we announced at our previous show, we have a terrific line up of productions slated for our 2000-2001 season (see back cover). As we wind down the very successful 1999-2000 season, both artistically and financially, I urge you to think about preparing to "be a part" of our next season.

**Our Season Subscriptions still offer a great bargain**—four shows for the price of three (just $48 per adult)! In this playbill (or on your seat) is a Ticket Order/Contribution form you can use to become a Season Subscriber. As a Subscriber, you are given the best available seats in the house for the entire season. Along with being a Subscriber, why not join the growing number of Benefactors? All money from ticket sales and patron donations goes to improving the quality of the productions presented. Gifts are tax deductible, and we participate in the *GE More Gifts...More Givers* program. And to top it off, we have made the whole process easier for you by now accepting MasterCard and VISA. Thanks for your support. — **TOM HECKERT, SLOC President** (1999-2000 Season)

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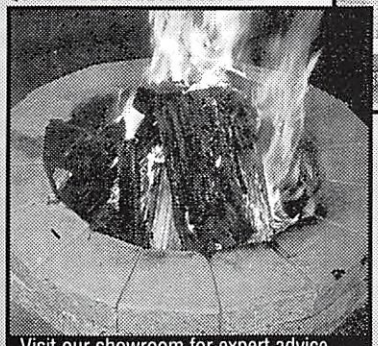

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