

# Telly Leung

## Biography

Telly Leung was born and raised in New York City. He grew up in a traditional Chinese home in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. He is a proud alumni of New York's prestigious math & science specialized high school, Stuyvesant High School. After Stuyvesant, Telly was admitted to Carnegie Mellon University's School of Drama (CMU), where he received most of his formal training in acting, singing, and dance.



It was also at CMU that Telly met fellow CMU-alum and **Kinky Boots** Tony-Award Winner, Billy Porter, who returned to his alma mater to direct the main stage production of Sondheim's **Company**. After casting Telly as Bobby in **Company**, Porter made a phone call to his colleagues who were involved in the upcoming Broadway revival of **Flower Drum Song** and landed Telly an audition. In the fall of 2000s, Telly made his Broadway debut in the revival of **Flower Drum Song**, starring Lea Salonga, as a member of the ensemble and an understudy for Wang Ta.

After playing Bobby in Sondheim's **Company** in College, Telly would later get the opportunity to work with the legendary Stephen Sondheim in Roundabout's Broadway revival of **Pacific Overtures** in 2005. After **Pacific Overtures**, Telly originated the role of Boq in the Chicago company of **Wicked**, collaborating with fellow CMU-alum, Stephen Schwartz. Other Broadway credits include the final company of **Rent** – where he also got to make his film debut in Radical Media / Sony's **Rent**: filmed live on Broadway, which is available on DVD and Blue Ray. After **Rent** ended its Broadway run, Telly went on an international tour with original **Rent** stars Adam Pascal and Anthony Rapp in **Rent: The Broadway Tour**. He would later reprise the role of Angel in **Rent** at the Hollywood Bowl, directed by Neil Patrick Harris and starring Vanessa Hudgens, Aaran Tveit, Skylar Astin & Wayne Brady. In 2011, Telly would get another opportunity to collaborate with composer Stephen Schwartz in the Broadway revival of **Godspell** at the Circle in the Square Theater.

Telly was involved in the development of Broadway's **Allegiance**, creating the role of "Sammy" alongside Lea Salonga (Miss Saigon) and George Takei (Star Trek). **Allegiance** is the story of one Japanese-American family's struggles and triumphs during the Japanese

internment of World War II. The musical made its sold-out world premiere at the Old Globe Theater in San Diego in 2012 and premiered on Broadway in the Fall of 2015. He received critical acclaim for his 'star turn' (NBC-NY) as Sammy, performed with "breakout power" (Newsday), with Rex Reed of the NY Observer praising his portrayal of Sammy as "beautifully played and powerfully sung by handsome and awesomely talented Telly Leung."

In 2016, Telly starred opposite Justin Guarini (American Idol) in **IN TRANSIT**, Broadway's first a cappella musical with music by Oscar-winner Kristen Anderson-Lopez, Russell Kaplan, Sara Wordsworth and James-Allen Ford, with direction and choreography by Tony-Award Winner Kathleen Marshall.

In June 2017, Telly Leung began his star turn as the title character in Disney's **ALADDIN** on Broadway. He would continue to play the role for two years, and his caricature would eventually earn a coveted spot on the wall's of New York's historic Sardi's restaurant.

Telly has performed live all over the world. Notable venues include Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Hollywood Bowl, the Baltimore Symphony, The St. Louis MUNY, The Shakespeare Theater (DC), Pittsburgh CLO, Paper Mill Playhouse Dalls Theater Center, Philadelphia Theater Company, Sacramento Music Circus, the Old Globe, Fords Theater, North Carolina Theater, Four Seasons Theater, North Shore Music Theater, The Coterie in Los Angeles, The Magic Castle, NYC's Feinstein's/54 Below, Birdland Jazz Club, and Lodon's Hippodrome.

Telly has appeared on television in **Glee** (as Wes of the Dalton Academy Warblers), **Odd Mom Out** (Bravo) **Deadbeat** (on Hulu), **Law and Order: Criminal Intent** and played Kevin in the pilot of ABC's performing arts drama, **Limelight**. He was also heavily featured in the PBS documentary **Broadway or Bust** as a teacher and performance coach for the Jimmy Awards.

Telly is featured on the recordings of **Godspell**, **Pacific Overtures**, **Flower Drum Song**, **Dear Edwina**, **Bernstein Mass**, **Sweet Bye and Bye** and the mini-album entitled {I'll cover you} on the Yellow Sound Label in 2012, and his follow-up album, "**Songs for You**" was released in 2016. All recordings are available on iTunes, Amazon and Spotify.

In 2013, Telly started Telly Leung Productions and began his career as a producer. He took an active role in producing his own debut album, **[I'll cover you]**, as well as his London debut concert in collaboration with Speculation Entertainment and Marathon Productions. His producing credits include **Grind** (a musical short film, starring Anthony Rapp) and Broaddway@Learning (a concert starring Broadway stars Adam Pascal, Eden Espinosa, and Marcus Paul James).

Telly passionately believes in "paying it forward" and giving back to the next generation of theater artists and performers. Besides being heavily featured as a performance coach for the Jimmy Awards on PBS **Broadway or Bust**, he can also be frequently seen teaching as a guest instructor in master classes all over the country. In 2013, he was selected as the Tam & Young Arts Chair at Iolani High School in Honolulu and spent a week teaching and performing alongside the students and faculty. He continues to teach young performers as

part of a team of coaches at MTCA (Music Theater College Auditions) that helps high school students gain admission into the competitive university training programs. He also gives online coaching to aspiring performers via Stagelighter.com. In 2013, Telly joined the faculty at NYD's New Studio of Broadway as an adjunct professor.