

Two-Time Tony® Award Winner

## Judy Kaye

Ms. Kaye most recently starred on Broadway in *Nice Work if You Can Get It* winning her second Tony award. She starred as Mrs. Lovett in the revival of Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* followed by a national tour. Earlier in the same season she received a Tony nomination for her portrayal of the singing socialite Florence Foster Jenkins in *SOUVENIR, A Fantasia On The Life Of Florence Foster Jenkins*; a play she also performed at the York Theatre where she was nominated for Drama Desk and Lucille Lortel awards; and the Berkshire Theatre Festival.



She appeared at New York City Opera in an acclaimed performance as the Old Lady in *CANDIDE*, and also introduced a new cabaret evening, entitled *Sing My Heart*, honoring the centenary of Harold Arlen, at Odette's in New Hope and at the Caramoor Festival in New York.

In 1968, while Judy Kaye was attending UCLA as a theater major, she auditioned for the Los Angeles company of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. She was cast as Lucy, playing the role for the entire two-year run. Over the next few years, she played Hodel in four different companies of *Fiddler on the Roof*, opposite such Tevyes as Theodore Bikel, Jan Peerce, Robert Merrill and Kurt Kaszner. She also played Tzeitel in another company. She played Mary Magdalene in five different companies of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. In 1973, she created the role of Rizzo in the first national company of *Grease* (others in the cast included Barry Bostwick, John Travolta, Marilu Henner and Jerry Zaks). She made her Broadway debut in the same role in 1977. Other roles in the '70s included Leah in *The Dybbuk* (with Joseph Wiseman) and Agnes in *I Do, I Do!* opposite John Davidson in Dallas (she would return to the role opposite Davidson again in 1991 at the St. Louis MUNY). At the Sacramento Music Circus, she played Lili Vanessi in *Kiss Me, Kate* opposite John Reardon and Sheila in *Hair*. She was also in the Los Angeles company of *Godspell*.

Her ace is her voice, a 24-kt gold instrument with coloratura soprano facility on top and a Broadway belt at the bottom. She can do a ballad, then turn around and lay the ditz. ...she does everything well. Kaye is a remarkable talent, a craftsman ... I sat there amazed by the fluency of her talent.

Charles Nelson- <http://www.theatermania.com>

Then in 1978, never having been an understudy, she reluctantly agreed to play the role of Agnes, the maid, and to understudy Madeline Kahn in the lead role of Lily Garland/Mildred Plotka in the Broadway production of *On the Twentieth Century*. During the first two months of the Broadway run, she went on in the leading role a number of times, including a performance memorably reported on in the New Yorker. The article's author was watching the

performance from backstage to see how a musical with such a complex set worked. It was Judy's second performance as understudy, and as Judy's voice came over the sound system backstage, it was reported that a stagehand was heard exclaiming, "Wow! That's a voice!" Not long after, she was asked to take over the role permanently. She played it for the remainder of the Broadway run, joining John Cullum, Imogene Coca and Kevin Kline, and winning the Theatre World Award.

Unfortunately, the Tony Award committee decided not to allow her to be nominated for best actress in a musical. She repeated the role on the national tour, opposite Coca and Rock Hudson, winning the Los Angeles Drama Critics' Circle award for best actress in a musical. She returned to the role several years later, with Coca and Frank Gorshin, in what she has referred to as a "bus-and-truck tour from hell": 63 cities in 18 weeks. It was on this tour that she met David Green, whom she would marry.

During the Broadway run of *On the Twentieth Century*, she made her cabaret debut. She would leave the St. James, after having just performed one of the most demanding roles in the history of the American musical, then go to Reno Sweeney's to perform solo for another hour or so. During the run, she also made her film debut, in Sidney Lumet's *Just Tell Me What You Want*.

After *Twentieth Century*, she returned to Broadway and had the remarkable fortune to appear in the space of six months in two flops, both of which deserved at least somewhat more success: *The Moony Shapiro Songbook*, which had earlier enjoyed a moderately successful six-month run in London under the title *Songbook*, but ran only one night on Broadway; and *Oh, Brother!*, a musical version of *The Comedy of Errors* set in the Middle East, which managed to triple the run of *The Moony Shapiro Songbook*. During this period she appeared in the Whitney Museum American Composers' Showcase presentation of *A Stephen Sondheim Evening*, in which she delivered an exceptionally moving performance of "Being Alive."

**Judy Kaye has a voice that could drive a person crazy - with envy.** Patricia O'Hare - Daily

Off-Broadway she starred with Nathan Lane and Stephen Vinovich in *Love*, the musical version of Murray Schisgal's *Luv*. She later recreated her role in a revival at Manhattan's York Theatre Company, with David Green and Austin Pendleton. In New York, she has also starred in a number of concert performances of classic musicals and operettas: at Town Hall, in Victor Herbert's *Sweethearts* and *Eileen*, and Jerome Kern's *Leave It to Jane* and *Sweet Adeline*; at Weill Recital Hall, in Kern's *Oh Lady! Lady!!* and *The Cat and the Fiddle*, Porter's *The Gay Divorce*, and Youmans's *No, No, Nannette*; at Avery Fisher Hall in Rodgers and Hart's *Babes in Arms*; and at Alice Tully Hall, in Villa-Lobos's *Magdalena*, and, with the Concordia Symphony, in Bernstein's musical *On the Town* (as Hildy) and his opera, *Trouble in Tahiti*, the latter of which she also performed in concert at Carnegie Hall with the American Symphony. She has performed in Avery Fisher Hall in tributes to Cy Coleman and Alan Jay Lerner; at Carnegie Hall in a tribute to Leonard Bernstein; at Merkin Concert Hall in the New York premiere of Bernstein's final work, *Arias and Barcarolles*; and in tributes to Hal Prince in various venues.

Other major New York appearances include Babe Williams in *The Pajama Game* and Meg in *Brigadoon* at New York City Opera, and Abbie in the New York premiere of *Desire Under the Elms*, an opera by Edward Thomas and Joe Masteroff, based on O'Neill's play, at City Center. She has appeared in solo cabaret performances at various venues, including Arci's Place, Freddy's, the 92nd Street Y, Steve McGraw's and the American Stage Festival in Teaneck, N.J., as well as in *Can't Help Singing*, a revue of Jerome Kern's music, at the King Cole Room at the St. Regis. She won the Tony Award as best featured

actress in a musical for her performance as Carlotta in the Broadway production of *The Phantom of the Opera*. She created the role of Emma Goldman in the Broadway production of *Ragtime*, after having played it in the Los Angeles production, where she won the Ovation Award for best featured actress in a musical.

She has appeared frequently around the country in musicals, operas and plays. Among her roles have been Rose in *Gypsy* (Fifth Avenue Theatre, Seattle); Maria in *The Sound of Music* opposite George Peppard (Cincinnati Opera); Pistache in *Can-Can* (St. Louis MUNY); Lalume in *Kismet* (Canadian Opera), opposite John Reardon; Aldonza in *Man of La Mancha* (Chautauqa Opera [New York] and Kenley Players [Ohio]); Julie in *Carousel*, opposite Ron Holgate (Carousel Dinner Theater, Nanuet, N.Y.); Nellie in *South Pacific* (Ordway Theatre, St. Paul); Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd* (Michigan Opera Theater and Papermill Playhouse); Annie in *Annie Get Your Gun* (Papermill Playhouse and Greater Miami Opera); Maggie in *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (Kenley Players), with Tony Randall and Valerie Perrine; Penny in *You Can't Take It With You* (Connecticut Rep); Kitty Dean in *The Royal Family* (McCarter, Princeton, N.J.), with Sada Thompson, John Vickery and Paul Hecht; Euridyce in *Orpheus in*

*the Underworld*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, and Lucy Lockit in *The Beggar's Opera* (Santa Fe Opera); Hanna Glawari in *The Merry Widow* (Portland Opera and Papermill Playhouse); Sally in *Follies* (Theater Under the Stars, Houston, and Fifth Avenue Theatre, Seattle); Dinah in *Trouble in Tahiti* (Anchorage Opera); Anna in *The Anastasia Game* (Merrimack Playhouse, Lowell, Mass.), with Len Cariou, Steve Barton and Carmen Mathews; Molly Molloy in *Windy City* (Papermill Playhouse), with Ron Holgate and Gary Sandy; and a return to Lili Vanessi in *Kiss Me, Kate* (Starlight Musicals, Indianapolis). She also appeared in *Side by Side by Sondheim* (at Papermill, with Helen Gallagher, Larry Kert and George Rose, and at the Kentucky Opera in Louisville, with David Green and Brent Barrett); at the Coconut Grove Playhouse in *Berlin to Broadway* With Kurt Weill; and in the title role of *Shirley Valentine* (Pennsylvania Stage Company). One of her more recent roles was Nettie in *Carousel* in a fully-staged concert version at the Hollywood Bowl.



She has appeared on television many times, including several appearances on PBS (*In Performance at the White House*; in a concert with the Boston Pops, conducted by John McGlinn; and

the aforementioned Avery Fisher Hall *tribute to Alan Jay Lerner*). Her performance as Dinah in *Trouble in Tahiti* with the Concordia Symphony under Marin Alsop was shown on BRAVO. She also appeared as a regular on the series *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, in guest-starring roles in *Law and Order*, *Kojak* and *The Doctors*, on a recurring basis on *All My Children*, and three times in Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

In addition to the concert appearances already mentioned, she has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the London Symphony, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Eugene Symphony, the Long Island Symphony, the St. Paul Chamber Symphony, the Indianapolis Symphony, the Colorado Symphony and the National Arts Centre orchestra in Ottawa, and at the Library of Congress. She has appeared at Symphony Space in New York in the Wall-to-Wall concerts devoted to Irving Berlin and Kurt Weill, singing *The Seven Deadly Sins*, with the New York Chamber Symphony conducted by John Mauceri, in the latter. In February 2000, she returned to the role of Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd*, opposite Len Cariou as Sweeney, in concert at Royal Festival Hall

in London. For Random House's Recorded Books series, she is the voice of private eye Kinsey Millhone in Sue Grafton's popular alphabetical series.

Kaye has an excellent voice, almost of operatic quality, an acute sense of timing that extracts the maximum from a comic situation, and accomplished dramatic skills. *Variety*

#### CAST RECORDINGS AND STUDIO ALBUMS

*On the Twentieth Century* Original Broadway Cast, Sony records (1978); *Lovesong* Original Cast, Original Cast records (1980, 1994); *Oh, Brother!* Original Broadway cast, Original Cast records (1981, 1991); *The Secret Garden* IBR records (1987) Varese Sarabande (1997); *Magdalena* Teresa, CBS records (1989); *Anything Goes* 1st girl, EMI records (1989); *Lola*, Harbinger records (1989, 1999); *Babes in Arms* Baby Rose, New World records (1990); *Kismet* Lalume, TER records (1990); *What About Luv?* Ellen Manville, TER records (1990); *Anastasia the Musical*, Anna Nielsen, Original Cast records (1992, 1998); *Brigadoon*, Meg Brockie, Broadway Angel (1992); *Colette Collage*, older Colette, Fynsworth Alley (1994); *On the Town*, Claire, JAY records (1996); *Annie Get Your Gun, Annie Oakley*, JAY records (1996); *The Pajama Game*, Babe Williams, JAY records (1997); *Drat! the Cat!*, Kate Purefoy, Fynsworth Alley (1997); *Ragtime*, Emma Goldman, RCA Victor (1998)

#### MISCELLANEOUS ALBUMS

*A Stephen Sondheim Evening* RCA Victor (1983); *Early Kern* Rialto Recordings (1989); *The Stars of Christmas* Paper Mill Playhouse (1989); *Broadway Showstoppers* Broadway Angel (1992); *Unsung Sondheim* Fynsworth Alley (1993); *Lost in Boston* Fynsworth Alley (1994); *Lost in Boston II* Fynsworth Alley (1994); *A Bag of Popcorn and a Dream* Original Cast records (1999)