

BUZZ EXTRA

Disney and CAMERON MACKINTOSH present MARY POPPINS

CLEVELAND'S PERFECTLY MAGICAL MUSICAL

July 17- August 9 at PlayhouseSquare
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THE JOURNEY OF MARY POPPINS

CHILDREN ON TOUR

What is life really like for a child actor on tour.

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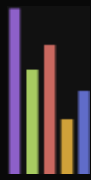


8 novels
1 film
London
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Sweden
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What is your favorite MARY POPPINS song?



- Chim Chim Cheree
- Feed the Birds
- Jolly Holiday
- Let's Go Fly a Kite
- A Spoonful of Sugar

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[Video Preview of Mary Poppins](#)
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SPOTLIGHT

EYE-POPPIN' MARY POPPINS ARRIVES IN CLEVELAND



Photo: Ashley Brown as 'Mary Poppins,' original Broadway Company of MARY POPPINS.
©Disney/CML. Photo by Joan Marcus.

The *New York Daily News* declares, MARY POPPINS is a "roof-raising, toe-tapping, high-flying extravaganza. It's eye-poppin." The KeyBank Broadway series finishes up the season at PlayhouseSquare July 17 - August 9, 2009 with the incredible Disney & Cameron Mackintosh musical MARY POPPINS.

Awards

Nominated for 7 Tony Awards, and winner of the 2007 Tony for Best Scenic Design of a Musical, MARY POPPINS also received two Drama Desk Awards, a Theatre World Award, as well as London's Evening Standard Award, 2 Olivier Awards, Variety Club Award, Whatsonstage.com Award and the Lastminute.com's Big Star Award

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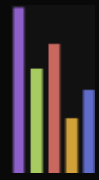


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CHILDREN ON TOUR

Ever wonder how young thespians deal with show times, rehearsals, and school? Who takes care of the young actors during the show? Can Mom and Dad wait in the wings? What about the government? Aren't there laws about child workers?

"Yes, there are," says Maria Somma, spokesperson for **Actors' Equity Association**, the union that represents professional stage actors. "First of all, we honor all applicable child labor laws as outlined by the **U. S. Department of Labor** and each state." Ohio does not require any kind of work permit for children, "but beyond that, we also have our own procedures and precautions to insure the safety and well-being of child performers."

There are two girls and two boys who share the roles of Jane and Michael Banks in MARY POPPINS. These children alternate the roles; each performing four shows every week. Their ages can range from 8 to 13. To get cast in the show they had to audition, then, once cast, they have to travel with the National Tour. So...who takes care of the children at the theater?

The show's producer hires "wranglers," who are responsible for the children from the moment they arrive at the theater until the minute they leave the building. "The wranglers take care of the kids, and accompany them to their entrance points on stage," says Somma. "And they are right there each time they exit, too."

MARY POPPINS has a wrangler from **On Location Education** who also provides tutoring so the children can keep up with their studies while on the road. The children are required to work at least 15 hours a week with the tutor. Since there are only four children in the show, needless to say, they get concentrated time and attention. On Location Education has provided tutors for shows such as: *The Lion King*, *Billy Elliot*, *The Little Mermaid* and *Radio City Christmas Spectacular*.

What about Mom and Dad? Can they wait backstage? Do they get free tickets to every performance?

"We tell the parents or guardians to make sure that the child is there to sign in 30 minutes before each show, which is standard Equity rules," says Somma. "We also tell them to check the callboard (a bulletin board backstage with important information) for any changes. And be there to pick them up after the show, of course."



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Parents and guardians sometimes like to be backstage during rehearsals and/or performances, but Equity rules often limit backstage access to only people working in the show. Sometimes the company manager can provide the parents with 'house seats' (tickets that are held back from public sale a few days before the show), but these tickets are not complimentary and not always available.

What is the Equity salary range? "There are minimum salaries and per diems, too," says Somma. Per Diem is out-of-town expense money. "Currently, the minimum weekly salary is \$1,558.00 and per diem (per day) is \$118.00. (Salary changes will be taking effect on August 1st.) Obviously, some performers earn more than the minimum, but that is negotiated individually for each show and contract."

But what if one of the children need some time off? MARY POPPINS has standby children that are trained and live in the Chicago area. The standby children don't travel with the company, but are on call for vacations and other events such as injury or illness.

Want your child to have a career in theater? Check out *The Young Performer's Guide: How to Break into Show Business* by Brian Padol and Alan Simon. This book will give you the ins and outs of a child's career in the performing arts.

For more information, go to:

[Actors' Equity Association](#)
[U. S. Department of Labor](#)
or [On Location Education](#)

Photo: (L to R) Abigail Droeger as 'Jane Banks' and Christopher Flaim as 'Michael Banks,' perform "A Spoonful of Sugar." Original National Tour Company of MARY POPPINS. ©Disney/CML. Photo by Joan Marcus.

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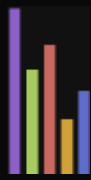


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THE JOURNEY OF MARY POPPINS

Born in Queensland, Australia in 1899, Helen Lyndon Goff grew up a house near a branch of the Australian Joint Stock Bank, where her father, Travers Robert Goff worked as a bank manager before he was demoted to bank clerk. When her father died, her mother neglected the children with grieving, so to comfort her younger sisters, 7 or 8 year old Lyndon Goff told them a story of a magic white horse without wings that could fly. Years later, the author of *Mary Poppins* said this story was the start of her career as an author.



After adopting a new name, 'Pamela Lyndon Travers' moved and had several careers as a secretary, actress, journalist, and poet. In 1933, while recovering from pleurisy, she claimed to have been "visited" by Mary Poppins. The Banks family of the book experiences events similar to those of the author's own childhood.

The novel was a huge, immediate success. One sequel to the book later, Walt Disney approached Travers for the film rights to the book, but was refused.

Then, in 1939, Broadway director Guthrie McClintock planned to produce a stage version with his wife Katherine Cornell as Mary Poppins. World War II arrived and the show never happened.

Two sequels later, Walt Disney again approached Travers for the film rights and this time he succeeded. The planning of the film took two years. With music by Robert B. and Richard M. Sherman, direction by Robert Stevenson and script by Bill Walsh and Don Da Gradi, the 1964 **Hollywood film** starring Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke won five Oscars, a Grammy, a Golden Globe and countless other awards.

Two more sequels to the book and six years later, producer **Cameron Mackintosh** approached Travers in the early 1970s for the stage rights to the book and was refused.

After three more sequels to the book, in 1993, the stage production *Beauty and the Beast* paved the way for Disney's entrance into theater. Michael Eisner, head of the Disney Corporation, considered bringing MARY POPPINS to the stage.

It seemed that Cameron Mackintosh and Disney were on similar paths to produce MARY POPPINS.

When Mackintosh finally convinced Travers to grant him stage rights to MARY POPPINS,

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he also persuaded her that the show could not succeed unless elements from the Disney film were included in the stage version.

Thomas Schumacher, President of the Disney Theatrical division, also had a belief that a stage version was possible and with a "go" from Disney, he gave Mackintosh twenty years of script drafts, outlines, and sequels from the Disney archives to review.

Work began on the new stage version. Then in May 2003, with music from the film by the Sherman brothers, new songs from Anthony "Ants" Drewe and George Stiles, a script by Julian Fellowes, designs from Bob Crowley, choreography by Matthew Bourne, Stephen Mear, and Geoffrey Garratt, this new stage version was presented to Michael Eisner at Cameron Mackintosh's New York apartment.

After a workshop production in London, everyone knew that MARY POPPINS was going to work as a stage performance.

Of course there was still a lot of work to be done: casting, rehearsals, sets and costumes to be built, lights and sound to be designed, a score to be completed, special effects to be created and a book to be finished.

Finally, on December 15, 2004, MARY POPPINS opened in London's West End to be called by *The Sunday Telegraph* "a triumph of spectacle and theatrical flair...utter delight."

Two years later, MARY POPPINS popped in for its Broadway rehearsal with more of everything--dance, set, costumes, sound, lights, special effects, and music.

Then on November 16, 2006, opening on Broadway at the New Amsterdam Theatre, MARY POPPINS was acknowledged by the *Associated Press* to be "a lavish stage version that's a wonder to behold."

Quite a journey: eight novels, [one film](#), [London](#), Broadway, Sweden, [National Tour](#), and now, MARY POPPINS arrives in Cleveland. "Kick your knees up, step in time."

Photo of Gavin Lee as 'Bert' and the original Broadway Company of MARY POPPINS. ©Disney/CML. Photo by Joan Marcus.

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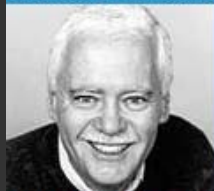


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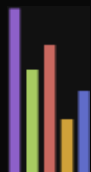


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USA Today declares, "MARY POPPINS is irresistible! This fresh fountain of youth will make any grown-up feel like a kid again."

Associated Press proclaims "it's a lavish stage version that's a wonder to behold, yet at its heart, MARY POPPINS is a family drama. That this human and humane story shines through with the dazzling special effects demonstrates the potency of its emotional impact."

Syndicated columnist Liz Smith states, "I can't say enough good things about this musical. You'll have the time of your life."

Synopsis

1910 London - meet the harried and disorganized Banks Family where the children are out of control and the parents are overwhelmed. To the rescue comes MARY POPPINS, a magical, eccentric, but ultimately loveable, nanny who will teach the family that:

"Anything can happen if you let it.
Sometimes things are difficult,
But you can bet
It doesn't have to be."

Did You Know...

That the original story MARY POPPINS was inspired by author Pamela Lyndon Travers'

Mary Poppins Opening Night Celebration

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childhood memories in Australia?

P. L. Travers followed up the successful book with seven sequels:

Mary Poppins Comes Back, *Mary Poppins Opens the Door*, *Mary Poppins In the Park*, *Mary Poppins from A to Z*, *Mary Poppins In Cherry Tree Lane*, *Mary Poppins and the House Next Door* and *Mary Poppins In the Kitchen: A Cookery Book with a Story*.

MARY POPPINS has sold millions of copies, been translated into more than 20 languages, made into a blockbuster movie and Broadway musical!

MARY POPPINS, the musical, has played in London, Wales, Edinburgh, Manchester, New York, Chicago, and Sweden. The National Tour plans stops in Dallas, St. Louis, Minneapolis, Ft. Lauderdale, Cincinnati, Atlanta, Washington D.C., Tampa, Charlotte, Tempe, and Los Angeles. International plans are underway for the show to travel to the Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Hungary, and P. L. Travers' childhood home Australia.

The New York Post was right when it declared, "there's no stoppin' this POPPINS"...and thank goodness for that. MARY POPPINS belongs to the world.

For more information on the Broadway Show go to: [MARY POPPINS](#)

Photo: Ashley Brown as 'Mary Poppins' in "Step In Time." Original National Tour Company of MARY POPPINS. ©Disney/CML. Photo by Joan Marcus.

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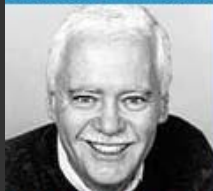
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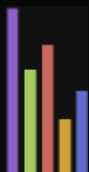
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THE "LYRICAL" WISDOM IN MARY POPPINS



The Banks family is in turmoil.

The children misbehave to get attention from their parents,
"Our children must be monsters."

The mother gave up her career to focus on her husband and children, but finds it hard to do either.

"Being Mrs. Banks
Should be an easy role
And yet it's one, which I don't seem
Too good at on the whole
Being Mrs. Banks
What does that entail?
Facing tests of character
I always seem to fail."

The father works hard to be a good provider, but often forgets to be a good husband and parent.

"Precision and order
That's all I ask
The running of a household
A straightforward task
The children, the servants
Are all your domain
Whilst I remain the sovereign of Cherry Tree Lane."

The series of nannies they hire and their meaningful servants are not helpful.
"Who gets stuck with the children when there's no nanny in the house? Me! That's who!"

"A father, a mother, a daughter, a son,
The threads of their lives are all raveling undone

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Something is needed to twist them as tight
As the string you might use when you're flying a kite."

Enter Mary Poppins who asks...

"When will you learn to look past what you see?"

She teaches the family what is important and gives them the following guidelines in how to live a good life.

A person must be:

"Prim and proper and never too stern,
Willing to learn,
Clean and honest,
Wear shoes of the sensible kind,
Not Temperamental,
Not Grouchy or Gruff."

A person needs to:

"Show them you care,
Stretch your mind,
Broaden Your Horizon,
Never think of pressing your advantage,
Open different doors,
Have your own set of wings, with your feet on the ground,
Raise the curtain on things you thought impossible,
Chase your dreams you won't regret it."

A person should know that:

"Changes can be made,
In ev'ry job that must be done...find the fun,
Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down."
and finally that
"Life is out there waiting, so go and get it grab it by the collar."

According to Thomas Shumacher, producer of MARY POPPINS, (Sibley & Lassell, 2007) "who of us doesn't want a Mary Poppins in our life? Someone to love us unconditionally, to be magical but not too sappy, to enchant us and to make everything right, and then to leave us to do it on our own."

Once Mary teaches the family how to live...she's off to help another family.

"With every job when it's complete
There is a sense of bitter-sweet
That moment when you know the task is done
Though in your heart you'd like to stay
To help things on their way
You've always known they must do it alone."

All quotes are lyrics from MARY POPPINS.

For more lyrics from the show go to: <http://www.allmusicals.com/lyrics/m/marypoppins>

Photo: The Original National Tour Company of MARY POPPINS perform "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious." ©Disney/CML. Photo by Joan Marcus.

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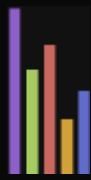
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TALKING WITH KATHY PURVIS

Buzz Extra spoke with Kathy Purvis, the Production Stage Manager of the National Tour of MARY POPPINS. Ms. Purvis has stage managed *The Lion King*, *Wicked*, *Show Boat*, *The Pirate Queen*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, *Ragtime*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *CATS* and Barbra Streisand's *Timeless Concert* just to name a few.

EXTRA: Are you in Chicago now?

PURVIS: Yes, we rehearsed, produced the show and did our first run in Chicago. Cleveland is our first move.

EXTRA: What are the responsibilities of a production stage manager?

PURVIS: I am the liaison for every department to every other department. In conjunction with all the crew heads, I am responsible for maintaining the artistic and technical elements of the show. It's a big, catchall job.

EXTRA: What is the size of the total company of the National Tour, cast and crew?

PURVIS: I believe there are about 38 in the cast and another 35 or so on the crew, including the musical director and two associates who accompany the tour. We don't carry a full orchestra. We pick up local musicians in each city.

EXTRA: How many trucks do you need to haul everything?

PURVIS: Approximately 13 trucks from show to show and another two trucks arriving in advance. We have two sets of everything, one is at the theater where you are playing and another is being set up at the next theater.

EXTRA: Do you send people ahead of time, too?

PURVIS: We'll send a couple of advance people, maybe a week before we arrive. But they don't do everything. The bulk of it happens when we all get there. Most of the crew will be local from Cleveland. We couldn't do this without local people.

EXTRA: So if you leave Chicago on a Sunday and arrive on a Monday, when do you usually open?

PURVIS: Friday night. We'll have rehearsals, for the local crew that we've hired as well as for our regular traveling crew. We have to work out all the logistics.



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EXTRA: Are you responsible for figuring out all those changes and communicating them to everybody?

PURVIS: Pretty much. But I have a team of stage managers, four including myself. So I have lots of help.

EXTRA: Are you going to tell us any secrets on how the magical things happen?

PURVIS: Mary Poppins flies out over the audience, and Bert dances upside down! It's magic and fabulous to look at!

EXTRA: How many set changes are there?

PURVIS: About 35.

EXTRA: How many props and costumes and wigs and so on?

PURVIS: Tons. About 500 props, lots of costume changes, about 80 wigs.

EXTRA: What about laundry?

PURVIS: Tons of laundry, and we have one person who does nothing but laundry all day long. Washing, folding, and then distributing it.

EXTRA: Is this one of the largest shows you've worked on?

PURVIS: Yes, although I did work on *Showboat* for about three years, which is also huge. Biggest show I ever did, for sure.

EXTRA: After Cleveland, where do you go?

PURVIS: I won't be with the show after Cleveland. I'll be working on *Spider-Man: The Musical* in New York. But I can't wait to come back to Cleveland. I've been there 16 of the last 22 years. Great theater and great town! Tell everyone to come because this show is a lot of fun!