

# THE

2025 MAJOR PRODUCTION

# COME FROM AWAY

PRODUCTION & AUDITION  
INFORMATION PACK



# EMPIRE

# COME FROM AWAY

## PRODUCTION & AUDITION INFORMATION PACK

Please read the following information and complete the online registration form by

9am Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Register for your audition via our website

<http://www.empiretheatre.com.au/audition>

Auditions will be held at the Empire Theatre Precinct,  
54 - 56 Neil Street Toowoomba.

Please follow signage upon arrival.

### AUDITIONS FROM 22<sup>ND</sup> TO 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024

#### AUDITIONS WILL BE HELD

Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November	5:30pm – 9:30pm
Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November	9am – 5pm
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> November	9am – 6pm
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> November	5:30pm – 9:30pm

#### CALL BACKS & OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Role call backs will be held as necessary over the audition period.

All auditionees must be available for call backs on **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

If needed, Call backs may continue on **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

Cast will be announced publicly on **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

Applicants will be emailed with their confirmed time to attend their audition.

The audition process may take up to 10 minutes for sing/act and 45 minutes for dance.

Roles are open to people aged from 16 years and up.

Auditionees must have turned 16 by 1st January 2025.

There are no children/youth roles in this production.

## THE TEAM

Director & Choreographer	David Wynen
Musical Director	Owen Clarke

## WHAT TO PREPARE FOR YOUR AUDITION

### FOR AN ONSTAGE ROLE

Each person auditioning for a principal role or ensemble (including dancers) will be asked to sing two own choice songs, read a section of a supplied script and take some stage direction from the panel, and take part in a movement/dance audition. Most roles in **Come From Away** require on stage cast to sing, act and dance. Select roles require less dancing but may still require movement.

### SINGING

Please prepare two songs in the style of the show. Both songs should be from a musical or one song can be 'pop' in the style of the show. It is suggested that auditionees choose songs that will best show their singing abilities. **Do not** choose a song from **Come From Away**.

You should prepare approximately 32 bars of each song (approximately 1 minute per song is a good guide). The Panel may not hear both songs at the audition. Be prepared to be stopped and started throughout your song, and to take both musical and acting direction from The Panel.

If you are only interested in auditioning for the backstage singing chorus you will not be required to do the acting and dancing sections of the audition.

### BACKSTAGE SINGERS

We will be conducting a group audition on **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November at 4pm** for backstage singers. The Musical Director will check harmonies, mix and range in potential backstage singers at this audition. There will be no need to prepare a song especially as music will be given out on the day.

If you would like to be considered for both on-stage and backstage singers then you will have to still do an individual audition as well as the group audition.

To register your interest, please fill out a cast application form (photo not necessary) and just tick the "Backstage Singing Only" box.

### ACCOMPANIMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL AUDITIONS

The Creative team encourages the use of a live accompanist however playback facilities will be available.

- You may bring your own piano accompanist, or
- Use the supplied facilities to play your CD or digital backing track (via 3.5mm jack). Ensure there are no vocals on the track.

Please contact us if you require the details of an experienced accompanist. There is usually a small charge for this service negotiable with the individual accompanist. A rehearsal is highly recommended before your audition day.

## **ACTING SCRIPT**

After you have sung, the panel may provide you with a short acting excerpt(s). You will be asked to leave the room for a short time to read over and prepare the script(s) before returning to the audition room to present.

Please peruse the character breakdown below and learn the pieces relevant to roles for which you wish to audition. Due to time constraints, you will only be able to audition for a maximum of two roles in the audition process.

If you do not wish to audition for a particular role, you may still be required to prepare one excerpt.

## **DANCE**

A movement/dance group audition will be held separately to your singing/acting audition in small groups. Please ensure you wear appropriate clothing and footwear i.e. no short skirts, tight jeans or sandals.

There is no need to prepare anything for this audition, it will be taught to you by the choreographer on the day.

## **THE PANEL**

You will be auditioning for a panel made up of the creative team including Director & Choreographer, Musical Director, and Producer. Please be aware that other individuals including production staff may be present at some stages of the process.

## **ORCHESTRA**

To submit an expression of interest in being part of the **Come From Away** orchestra, please send a brief email outlining your instrumental and ensemble experience. A guide to the required instrumentation is listed on **page 7** of this document.

Please email: [orchestra@empiretheatre.com.au](mailto:orchestra@empiretheatre.com.au) to submit your interest.

## **BUILD AND CREW**

If you are interested in helping sew, cut, paint, light, lift, or iron the wonderful costumes, sets and special effects that make up the magical **Come From Away** world then drop us a line. We are always looking for volunteers interested in making magic happen. Please let us know where your skills and interest lie.

Please email: [productions@empiretheatre.com.au](mailto:productions@empiretheatre.com.au) to submit your interest.

## **ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER**

To submit an expression of interest in being involved as an Assistant Stage Manager for **Come From Away**, please send a brief email outlining your experience and interest in similar roles.

Please email: [productions@empiretheatre.com.au](mailto:productions@empiretheatre.com.au) to submit your interest.

## YOUR COMMITMENT TO REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES

All people auditioning should be prepared to commit to attending rehearsals and performances on the dates listed below.

### MEET AND GREET

Our meet & greet will take place at The Empire Theatre at a time to be advised. This is when the cast and crew get together for the first time to see the design presentation.

Here you will get your scripts, read through the show, and meet the Team.

### REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

A rehearsal schedule listing required cast members for specific scenes will be issued. Not all cast will be required at all rehearsals. A lead role commitment may be higher than for smaller roles and ensemble. A schedule detailing this and any other required times over production week will be distributed at the start of rehearsals. We must have full commitment to attend all of these rehearsals in order for you to be involved.

#### FROM SATURDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY REHEARSALS WILL BE HELD

Saturday	10am to 5pm
Sunday	10am to 5pm
Monday	6pm to 9.30pm
Thursday	6pm to 9.30pm

### DRESS REHEARSALS

Tech and Dress rehearsals will be scheduled from **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025**. These scheduled rehearsals must be attended by all members of the Company.

#### PERFORMANCES

Performance #1	19:30 Hrs	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Performance #2	19:30 Hrs	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Performance #3	14:00 Hrs	16 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Performance #4	19:30 Hrs	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2025
Performance #5	19:30 Hrs	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2025
Performance #6	14:00 Hrs	23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2025

Additional performances may go on sale to meet demands.

## ROLES

PRIMARY CHARACTERS - LOCALS		AGE RANGE	VOCAL TYPE
<b>CLAUDE</b>	The gregarious and well-liked Mayor of Gander, Newfoundland, Claude loves his work, the townspeople and his daily traditions, but he's never had to deal with a crisis of this magnitude before.	40's – 60's	Gruff, natural sounding Baritone with a strong high G.
<b>BONNIE</b>	A no-nonsense mother of 3, Bonnie is the head of the Gander area SPCA. When she discovers animals are trapped on the planes she stops at nothing to ensure their safety – but in frustration, she often lashes out at those around her.	30's – 40's	Mezzo, with belt up to B.
<b>BEULAH</b>	The head of the Gander Legion, with a firefighter son, who walks Hannah to her church and prays with her.	40's – 60's	Mezzo, with belt up to B.
<b>OZ</b>	The quirky constable in the two-person Gander police force. When the town's population suddenly doubles, Oz helps out in unexpected ways.	30's – 50's	Strong contemporary Tenor up to G.
<b>DOUG</b>	An Air Traffic Controller, married to Bonnie, who tries to help his wife and the animals.	30's – 40's	Warm, natural Baritone or Baritenor with an easy E and strong pop sensibility.
<b>JANICE</b>	An eager new local TV reporter, Janice is thrown into the deep end on her first day. Initially naïve about the world, Janice must face the pain and confusion around her.	20 years old.	Contemporary Soprano with strong pop belt and mix up to E.
<b>ANNETTE</b>	A local teacher at the Gander Academy and mother to a lot of children.	40's – 60's	Strong Mezzo with an easy mixed or belted C#.
<b>GARTH</b>	The head of the local union, representing the Bus Drivers.	30's – 40's	Strong contemporary Tenor up to G.

<b>PRIMARY CHARACTERS – COME FROM AWAYS</b>		<b>AGE RANGE</b>	<b>VOCAL TYPE</b>
<b>BEVERLEY</b>	The first female captain for American Airlines Pilot, Beverley Bass has always loved flying, when her world suddenly changes.	50's	Strong Mezzo with an easy mixed or belted C#.
<b>DIANE</b>	A traditional divorcee from Texas, who is terrified that her son may have been flying at the time of the attacks. When she finds out that he's safe, she's given a new lease on life and discovers a wilder, more carefree side of herself.	50's	Warm, natural contemporary Soprano with strong mix up to D.
<b>NICK</b>	An English oil engineer who is focused on his work, Nick's life is turned upside down when he falls for Diane.	50's	Warm, natural Baritone or Baritenor with an easy E and strong pop sensibility.
<b>KEVIN T</b>	The head of an environmental energy company in Los Angeles, Kevin was on vacation with his boyfriend (and secretary, also named Kevin), when they are stranded in Gander. Inspired by the town's generosity, Kevin creates the Pay It Forward Foundation.	30's – 50's	Strong contemporary Tenor up to G.
<b>KEVIN J</b>	Kevin's boyfriend and secretary. Sarcastic and unhappy, he wants to leave as soon as possible.	30's – 50's	Tenor or Baritone.
<b>BOB</b>	A hardened New Yorker, Bob is suspicious of where he's landed, fearing that it's World War 3, that someone is going to shoot him and steal his wallet – but instead, he ends up losing his New York jadedness.	20's – 40's	Baritone.
<b>HANNAH</b>	The mother of a firefighter in Manhattan, Hannah waits for news about her son and is comforted by Beulah.	40's – 60's	Contemporary Soprano with strong pop belt and mix up to E.

<b>ENSEMBLE</b>	
<b>FEMALE ENSEMBLE</b>	Smaller parts include town staff, passengers, children, air-traffic controllers and animals.
<b>MALE ENSEMBLE</b>	Smaller parts include town staff, passengers, children, air-traffic controllers and animals.

For further information please email: [auditions@empiretheatre.com.au](mailto:auditions@empiretheatre.com.au)

## **COME FROM AWAY INSTRUMENTATION**

Whistle	Drums
Mandolin	Bass
Guitar	Bodhran
Fiddle	

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## **MUSICAL NUMBERS**

- Welcome to the Rock
- 38 Planes
- Blankets and Bedding
- 28 Hours/Wherever We Are
- Darkness and Trees
- Darkness and Trees Reprise
- Lead Us Out of the Darkness
- Phoning Home
- Costume Party
- I Am Here
- Prayer
- On The Edge
- Screech In
- Me and the Sky
- Stop the World
- Somewhere in the Middle of Nowhere
- Something's Missing
- Finale



# THE PLOT

On the morning of September 11, 2001, the townsfolk of Gander (including Claude the mayor, Oz the police constable, Beulah the teacher, Bonnie the SPCA worker, and others) describe life in Newfoundland and how they learn of the terrorist attacks taking place in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Shanksville, Pennsylvania ("Welcome to the Rock").

The attacks result in the closure of US airspace, diverting 38 international aircraft to Gander International Airport. The passengers on these aircraft doubled the population of the small Newfoundland town, which is unequipped for the influx of stranded travellers ("38 Planes"). The Gander townspeople spring to action and prepare to house, feed, clothe, and comfort the nearly 7,000 passengers, along with 19 animals in cargo ("Blankets and Bedding"). Meanwhile, the pilots, flight attendants, and passengers are initially forbidden from leaving the planes, forcing them to contend with confusing and conflicting information about what has happened and why they were suddenly grounded ("28 Hours / Wherever We Are").

Once allowed off the planes and transferred to nearby emergency shelters ("Darkness and Trees"), the passengers and crew watch replays of the attacks on the news and learn the true reason why they were grounded ("Lead Us Out of the Night"). The frightened and lonely passengers desperately try to contact their families and pray for their loved ones while the townsfolk work through the night to help them in any and every way they can ("Phoning Home / Costume Party"). The travellers are initially taken aback by their hosts' uncommon hospitality, but they slowly let their guards down and begin to bond with the quirky townsfolk and each other. The "islanders" in Gander and the surrounding towns open up their homes to the "plane people", regardless of their guests' race, nationality, or sexual orientation. Two women, Beulah (from Gander) and Hannah (from New York), bond over the fact that both of their sons are firefighters, but Hannah's son remains missing after the attacks ("I Am Here"). Hannah asks Beulah to take her to a Catholic church, and a number of characters make their way to other houses of worship around town ("Prayer").

To alleviate rising fear and mounting tensions ("On The Edge"), the townspeople invite the passengers to be initiated as honorary Newfoundlanders at the local bar ("Heave Away / Screech In"). The gravity of the attacks nevertheless continues to set in as US airspace is eventually reopened. One trailblazing pilot, Beverley Bass, comments on how her once optimistic view of the world has suddenly changed ("Me and the Sky"). While one pair of passengers develops a romance despite the terrible circumstances ("The Dover Fault/Stop the World"), another couple's long-term relationship falls apart under the stress of the event.

As the passengers and crew fly away to their homes, they joyously exchange stories of the immense kindness and generosity that the Newfoundlanders showed the strangers in their time of need ("Somewhere in the Middle of Nowhere"), but not before a Muslim traveller, faced with increasing prejudice from his fellow passengers, undergoes a humiliating strip search prior to boarding. The townsfolk in Gander return to normalcy but comment on how empty their town now seems and how different the world now feels. The passengers and airline staff who return to the United States are faced with the horror of the attacks' aftermath — including Hannah, who learns that her firefighter son died during the rescue efforts ("Something's Missing").

Ten years later, the crew and passengers of the once stranded planes — the "come from aways" — reunite in Gander, this time by choice, to celebrate the lifelong friendships and strong connections they formed in spite of the terrorist attacks ("Finale"), as Claude the mayor professes, "Tonight we honor what was lost, but we also commemorate what we found."