

CHICAGO

By John Kander, Fred Ebb, and Bob Fosse | April 4-6 2024

Who?

Producer: Ellie Atlee

Director: Jordi Bertrán Ramírez

Stage Manager: Maya McGrory

Music Director: Isaac Yu

Choreographer: Sadie Pohl

Preferred Contact Email: ellie.atlee@yale.edu

What?

Sex... liquor... and all that jazz!

The longest running American musical on Broadway, *Chicago* is the iconic story of two certified killers, Roxie Hart and Velma Kelly, who would do anything for their moment in the spotlight. Featuring the notorious defense lawyer Billy Flynn, the cunning businesswoman Matron “Mama” Morton, and Roxie’s lovably invisible husband Amos Hart, Kander and Ebb’s musical delivers some of the most recognizable and beloved numbers in the musical theater canon. Join us as we celebrate this show-stopping musical, filled with glitz and glam, dances to impress, and songs to serenade.

When?

Vocal Auditions ([sign up for one 10-minute slot](#)):

- Wednesday, September 27, 7-10 pm @ Broadway Rehearsal Lofts 207
- Friday, September 29, 6-10 pm @ 220 York Street Ballroom
- Saturday, September 30, 7-10 pm @ 220 York Ballroom
- Sunday, October 1, 10-1 pm @ 220 York Street Ballroom

Dance Calls ([sign up for one 90-minute session](#)):

- Thursday, September 28, 4-5:30 pm @ Schwarzmans Dance Studio
- Saturday, September 30, 10-11:30 am @ Benjamin Franklin Dance Studio
- Sunday, October 1, 5:30-7 pm @ Benjamin Franklin Dance Studio

Callbacks: October 2 & 4 (times TBD based on actor availability)

Casting Call: October 8 starting at 12 pm

First Rehearsal: Read Through: Wednesday, October 25, 7-10 pm

Tech: March 25 - April 3, 2024

Performance Dates: April 4-6, 2024

Overall Dates (First Read Through to Strike): 10/25/2023 - 04/07/2024

Time Commitment

Academics, student jobs, the health of our actors... these all supersede any extracurricular activity—theater included. We want this process to be a balance, one where actors feel comfortable with the workload of the show while simultaneously encouraged to challenge themselves and stray outside of their comfort zone. While the entire team is here to support you throughout this process, we expect all actors to be committed to the project. We have done our best to outline the specific time commitments for each role below, but please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Weekly Estimated Time Commitment:

Fall Semester:

- Roxie Hart, Velma Kelly, Billy Flynn:
 - 1-1.5 hour music rehearsals, 2-3 times a week
 - 1 hour table-work sessions, every week
- All other roles:
 - 1 hour music rehearsals, 1-2 times a week
 - Two 1-hour character sessions total

Spring Semester:

- Roxie, Velma, Billy Flynn
 - 1 hour blocking rehearsals, 1-2 times a week
 - 1.5 hour dance rehearsals, 2-3 times a week
- Merry Murderesses, Ensemble, Fred Casely,
 - 1 hour blocking rehearsals, 1 time a week
 - 1-1.5 hour dance rehearsals, 2 times a week
- Amos Hart, Mary Sunshine, Mama Morton
 - 1 hour blocking rehearsals, 1-2 times a week

Content Warnings

Includes sexual content, staged violence, and depictions of death, including gun violence.

See below for the full list of stage combat and intimacy.

Audition Expectations

Please fill out the [audition form](#) *before* auditioning. All auditions will have two components: one 10-minute individual vocal audition and one 90-minute dance call. All actors are required to attend both, *even if the character you are auditioning for does not dance*. After auditions, we will hold callbacks for specific roles. **Just because you are not called back does NOT mean you aren't being considered for the cast.** There are myriad roles in this show, we simply cannot call them all back. The reason we have such a comprehensive audition process is so that we are able to cast people in many of the roles just based on their first audition.

Please see below for more details on what to expect at the audition.

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production timeline:

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Casting Call: October 8 starting at 12 pm

First Rehearsal: Read Through: Wednesday, October 25, 7-10 pm

Sing Through: Wednesday, December 13, 6-9 pm

Off-Book Deadline: January 15, 2024

Dance Through: March 3, 2024

Designer Run: March 6, 2024

Sitzprobe: March 7, 2024

Tech: March 25 - April 3, 2024

Performance Dates: April 4-6, 2024

Overall Dates (First Read Through to Strike): 10/25/2023 - 04/07/2024

the cast:

All roles are open to actors of any gender identity, race, or ethnicity. We want you to feel free to make each character your own, even in the audition room. Please be specific in indicating what roles you would be comfortable being cast as in the audition form so we can ensure to only consider you for roles you are excited for.

You do not need any experience in dance or musical theater to audition. Many roles *do not require dancing*, so don't be intimidated by the dance call!

Roxie Hart: A housewife tired of her married life, Roxie is set on becoming a star. Full of passion and a cutthroat ambition, she is capable of anything... even murder. She struggles throughout the show to keep her fame from behind prison bars. *This role includes instances of intimacy and stage violence. See below for details.*

Velma Kelly: A seasoned vaudeville performer, with all the toughness it requires. Velma is used to the seedy game of fame, and she has established herself within the Women's prison as a verified celebrity. Still, her stardom is continuously challenged by the younger novelties, like Roxie, and Velma must fight to keep her position.

Billy Flynn: A flashy and successful lawyer. It's a man's world, and he's the man. Billy is exceedingly charming, but that charm is a performance in itself. Though he claims otherwise, his only love is money. *This role includes instances of intimacy and stage violence. See below for details.*

Matron "Mama" Morton: If it's a man's world, Chicago's Women's Prison is a woman's, and it's Mama's. She is the queen of this prison. Morton is harsh, but you can buy her loyalty with deference and maybe a bit of dough. She's got a lovable side, though. *This role does not require dancing.*

Amos Hart: The loyal husband of Roxie, Amos does everything he can for his ungrateful wife. He is extremely endearing, and earnest. *This role does not require dancing. This role includes instances of intimacy. See below for details.*

Mary Sunshine: The cunning "female reporter!!" She cuts backdoor deals and does anything to get a good story – even if it's not exactly true. *This role does not require dancing.*

Fred Casely: Roxie's lover and murder victim. Fred is a furniture salesman who promises Roxie that he can get her a slot performing in a nightclub, but was really just using her for sex. He is strong willed and fairly arrogant. *This role includes instances of intimacy and stage violence. See below for details.*

The Merry Murderesses of the Cook County Jail

Hunyak: This heartbreaking character is a Hungarian immigrant falsely accused of murdering her lover. She goes to the gallows swearing her innocence. She cannot speak English, and her institutional murder is a painful misunderstanding. *This character has a stylized execution.*

Mona: Just a girl who has a thing for artists... but not for their ‘artistic’ infidelities. She kills her boyfriend after finding out he has not one, not two, but three other girlfriends.

Liz: A woman who is at her wits end of her husband not listening to her. She kills him for popping his gum despite her warnings.

June: After being accused by her husband of screwing the milkman, June stabs her angry partner to death. She’s strong and will not put up with anything.

Annie: Annie enjoys simple things – like creating a home for her man, mixing him a drink, letting him put his feet up. When she finds out he’s Mormon and married six times over, though, she mixes him a special drink (poison).

Ensemble: Includes Master of Ceremonies, Go-To-Hell Kitty (*role includes stage violence*), Sergeant Fogarty, Bailiff, Court Clerk, Judge, Doctor, Martin Harrison, Harry, and the Jury. *Some actors may play multiple roles.*

We are also actively recruiting members for our band, including parts for violin, upright bass, banjo, trumpet, trombone and reed instruments. If you are interested, reach out to our music director Isaac Yu at isaac.yu@yale.edu.

audition expectations:

Vocal Auditions: Please [sign up](#) for a 10-minute slot on our YCA and prepare 32 bars of a song you love—it doesn’t have to be musical theater! We want to see your style and what you feel confident singing. Please bring in sheet music for our accompanist, who will play along with you. Alternatively, please feel free to sing one of [these](#) selections from the show (Cell Block Tango for sopranos and altos, Razzle Dazzle for tenors and basses). Plunk tracks and piano backings for practice are provided. Our director, Jordi, might give you some direction and ask you to do it again. **Please arrive at least 10 minutes early** and text our stage manager Maya McGrory (301 221-2668) when you’ve arrived.

For **video auditions**, please send in a video recording of a 32-bar selection of your choice and an introduction with your name, year, and preferred pronouns. *Video auditions will be accepted via **email** (to ellie.atlee@yale.edu) until Saturday, September 30th at midnight.* Please submit the [audition form](#) before sending your tape.

Dance Calls: Our 90-minute dance call will consist of our choreographer Sadie Pohl leading a warm up and teaching a 45-second combination to a song from the show. The last 10 minutes of the dance call will be devoted to splitting up into smaller groups and performing the choreography. Please come on time in clothes you feel comfortable moving around in! Please sign up for one dance call [here](#).

rehearsal expectations:

The *Chicago* team has planned a lengthy rehearsal process in order to ensure a manageable schedule week to week so no one feels rushed or panicked about making it work—come April we will be more than prepared for an amazing show.

That being said, we have listed the entire rehearsal schedule so that you can see for yourself the level of commitment this show will be for each role. Please take the time to review the schedule and make sure you can commit entirely to the show (the dates in March are subject to shift around, so don't stress if there's a conflict there, but do let us know if you've been cast!). The commitment level is not too arduous, especially in the fall. We have planned it that way, aware of the length of this process, so that no one gets fatigued.

The fall rehearsals will mainly consist of learning the music of the show. Higher commitment roles (Roxie, Velma, Billy) will have 1-1.5 hour musical rehearsals 2-3 times and a table work session per week, while all other roles will have an hour long music rehearsal per week and two character sessions total. In the spring we will focus on blocking and dance, ramping up to only 4-5 hours of commitment per week for the highest commitment roles. **Tech week is March 25th – April 3rd** and we expect actors to not be involved in other productions during that period. Actors will be called from 6-11pm on weekdays, with longer hours on the weekend of the 30th. We will make sure to have days off and rest periods to make sure everyone is feeling their best!

We're hoping to have an inviting and collaborative rehearsal space, where we encourage new ideas and lots of joy! We are beyond pumped to embark on this process with you all, and cannot wait to see you all up on stage!

actor safety & consent:

Listed below are the moments in this production with stage violence and stage intimacy, and we encourage that you read them through. Actor safety and consent is paramount in a show like *Chicago*, and we will ensure that this process is a comfortable and fun experience for our cast and team! We will work with intimacy and violence coordinators from the Undergraduate Production for any and all moments that cause concern. If at any moment you would like to request an intimacy coordinator present in the room, or feel uncomfortable we will accommodate that immediately, canceling rehearsal and/or calling a meeting with the producer. We want this show to be exciting to everyone involved so we will protect that creative space. Please reach out to us with any questions!

staged violence:

Act 1. Scene 1 - Roxie shoots Fred

ROXIE: So that's final, huh Fred? (*FRED stands, puts on his jacket, and straightens his tie. ROXIE gets the gun out from under the pillow.*)

FRED: Yeah, I'm afraid so, Roxie.

GIRLS: Oh Fred!

FRED: Yeah? (*Turning back to Roxie*)

ROXIE: (*Pointing the gun at him*) Nobody walks out on me. (*She shoots him.*)

FRED: (*As he falls, clutching stomach*) Sweetheart...

ROXIE: Don't sweetheart me, you son-of-a-bitch! (*She shoots him again, he dies.*)

Act 1. Scene 12 - Kitty kills her husband and his lovers

A BEAUTIFUL GIRL (GO-TO-HELL KITTY) enters. She crosses to the bed and looks at HARRY's feet. Harry's already in bed – which is par for the course with Harry. She goes to change... And when she returns, she notices something rather odd... (TWO WOMEN'S FEET appear in the bed next to HARRY. TWO MORE WOMEN'S FEET appear next to Harry's feet a beat later.) Extremely odd... puzzled, she disappears for a second. (*Kitty exits again, and returns with a TOMMY GUN.*) When she returns she gently awakens Harry....

KITTY: Oh, Harry... (*the man in bed awakens, so do the two girls next to him.*)

HARRY: Ok, Are you going to believe what you see or what I tell you?

KITTY: WHAT I SEE! *(She guns down Harry and Girls. They die in slow motion.)*

Act 1. Scene 12 - Kitty knees Billy in the groin

KITTY: *(Goes for Billy in the groin with her knee)* Get out of here!

Act 2. Scene 6 - Roxie and Fred simulate a fight

FRED: It doesn't matter. You're mine! You're mine! You're mine! *(He shakes her. He flings her aside. She falls over the witness stand.)*

staged intimacy:

Act 1. Scene 1 - Roxie and Fred simulate sex

ROXIE: Oh Fred?

(Fred appears. He takes off his pants. She holds the sheet back for him and he jumps into bed. The "Action" is very mechanical and business-like. When it's over, FRED sits on the edge of the bed and pulls on his trousers. ROXIE sits up slowly – as if to say, "That's it?"

Act 1. Scene 7 - Billy flynn takes clothes off to tank top and boxers

(Center Drum Doors partially open. BILLY FLYNN appears in silhouette. He is dressed "to the teeth," and very elegant. During the following Fan Dance with the GIRLS, he strips to his underwear [and a tank top].)

Act 2. Scene 6 - Roxie kisses Amos on the cheek

CLERK: Roxie Hart to the stage! *(Roxie crosses to the stand as a bewildered Amos rises. Roxie stops before Amos and kisses him on the cheek and hands him her knitting.)*

contact us:

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Isaac Yu, music director, isaac.yu@yale.edu