

# ROUTE



**By Roger Bean**

**THE NEW HIT  
MUSICAL COMEDY  
REVUE**



# ROUTE 66



Produced by

SPRINGER THEATRICALS

The Professional Touring wing of

THE SPRINGER OPERA HOUSE  
The State Theatre of Georgia

# ROUTE 66 THE NEW MUSICAL REVUE ANOTHER HIT SHOW FROM.....



Springer Theatricals. In 2008 they wowed audiences with their hugely successful 14-week tour of *THE TAFFETAS*. Prior to that, they had immense box office success with tours of *SOME ENCHANTED EVENING*, *A CLOSER WALK WITH PATSY CLINE*, *COTTON PATCH GOSPEL*, *MY WAY* and *FOREVER PLAID*. The 2008-2009 Season proved to be just as astounding with the Springer Opera House being the first regional theatre granted touring rights for productions of *GREATER TUNA* and *A TUNA CHRISTMAS* directed by 'Tuna' co-creator and original director, Ed Howard.

The 2009-2010 touring season proves to be no different. After a wildly popular tour in 2004, the Springer is firing on all cylinders once again and bringing back a bigger and better tour of Roger Bean's ***ROUTE 66***.

Here is a small sampling of the RAVE reviews from presenters and producers...

"WITTY, CHARMING, HILARIOUS, NOSTALGIC, AND TOTALLY ENJOYABLE FROM START TO FINISH! THESE WERE A FEW OF THE COMMENTS FROM OUR PATRONS WHO ATTENDED THE SPRINGER THEATRICALS' PERFORMANCE OF THE TAFFETAS IN THE BRUBECK ARTS CENTER. OUR HOUSE WAS FULL AND THE AUDIENCE WAS RESPONSIVE TO EACH SONG AND COMEDIC VIGNETTE AND GAVE THE COMPANY A STANDING OVATION. THE TAFFETAS PROVED TO BE A TOTAL AND COMPLETE SUCCESS FOR US."

-Jerry Bayne, WABASH VALLEY COLLEGE, MT. CARMEL, ILLINOIS

"ALWAYS PLEASED WITH THE QUALITY OF THE SHOWS! GREAT VOICES - GREAT PRODUCTION VALUE! WE ARE EXTREMELY GRATEFUL THAT THE SPRINGER BRINGS QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE PERFORMANCES ON THE ROAD. FROM ACTOR TO THE LOAD-IN/OUT IT IS A DREAM."

-Joe Gillie, OLD SCHOOL SQUARE/ CREST THEATRE, DELRAY BEACH, FLORIDA

"THE GIRLS & MUSICIANS WERE WONDERFUL - EXCELLENT PRODUCTION!"

-Leigh Woodham, DOLLY HAND CULTURAL CENTER, BELLE GLADE, FLORIDA

SPRINGER THEATRICALS WAS SUCH A PLEASURE TO WORK WITH! THE PROFESSIONALS WITH SPRINGER THEATRICALS UNDERSTAND THAT THE THEATRES THEY TOUR TO WILL HAVE A VARIETY OF SPACES AND EQUIPMENT AND THEY ARE ALWAYS HAPPY TO ACCOMMODATE. I HAVE ALREADY USED SPRINGER THEATRICALS FOR THREE OF THEIR SHOWS AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH AGAIN NUMEROUS TIMES IN THE FUTURE!"

-Mary Fran Crook, DIXIE CENTER FOR THE ARTS, RUSTON, LOUISIANA

"THE SPRINGER THEATRICALS' PRODUCTION OF THE TAFFETAS IS SIMPLY WONDERFUL. THE CASTING, THE SINGING, THE STAGING AND SCENERY ARE EXTRAORDINARY. IT IS A TREAT FOR ALL AUDIENCES. I WAS DELIGHTED WITH ALL OF THE LITTLE TOUCHES THEATRE WERE ADDED AND CAME AWAY FEELING HAPPY AND RENEWED. IT IS ABSOLUTELY A FIRST-CLASS THEATRE PRODUCTION."

-Arthur Whitelaw, BROADWAY PRODUCER (Tony Award Winning Revival of *YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN* and original New York Production of *THE TAFFETAS*)



## ROUTE 66

### A New Musical Revue by Roger Bean

#### THE SONGS AND STORY OF "ROUTE 66"

ROUTE 66 begins in Chicago and travels along the famed 'Main Street of America' to the coast of California. A large car radio delivers us to each new destination along our journey, with DJs and actual vintage radio ads building excitement along the way.

In the beginning we hear a radio DJ welcome us to Chicago, and four service station attendants burst into THE TEXACO STAR THEME. Each actor introduces himself to the audience in this string of hits: LET'S GO FOR A RIDE; BRING MY CADILLAC BACK; HOT ROD QUEEN; EVERY WOMAN I KNOW. The station bells ring, and it's time to head out onto the open road with ROUTE 66.

In St. Louis two men sing about THE MOTHER ROAD; two others remember good times in their hometown in USED TO BE; and a trucker has more than the road on his mind in the hilarious audience-pleaser GIRL ON THE BILLBOARD. Joplin brings us another trucker with SIX DAYS ON THE ROAD and a pair of sportsters unable to keep up with an old geezer in BEEP BEEP. On our way to Oklahoma City we meet a bus driver picking up travelers on his way to T-U-L-S-A STRAIGHT AHEAD; a trucker with a unique outlook on life (ROLAIDS, DOAN'S PILLS & PREPARATION 'H'); and a lonesome cowboy singing about those OKLAHOMA HILLS.

Amarillo brings us a law-man a little too big for his own britches in LONG TALL TEXAN; a humorous look at a lovely TRUCK STOP CUTIE; and the exciting Act One Finale - clogging and spooning to the audience favorite TRUCK DRIVIN' MAN.

Act Two starts us off with Willie Nelson's ON THE ROAD AGAIN, followed by a quick GALLOP TO GALLUP with a load of unruly cows. Winona finds us in the middle of nowhere with the haunting THE LONG RED LINE. In Flagstaff we see our roadsters once again as they try to outdrive a DIESEL ON MY TAIL. In Kingman two hippies explain their philosophy in (DON'T HAUL BRICKS ON 66), only to be caught shortly thereafter in Barstow by the HIGHWAY PATROL. San Bernadino brings us a wonderful a capella rendition of Roger Miller's KING OF THE ROAD in which the audience is encouraged to sing along.

The California sound of the 60s bursts upon us as we reach the outskirts of Los Angeles in THE LITTLE OLD LADY FROM PASADENA and DEAD MAN'S CURVE. In our final race toward the coast, we meet our crew at the Santa Monica Speedway in a medley of racing hits: SS 396; MOVE OUT LITTLE MUSTANG; HEY LITTLE COBRA; GTO. The Finale brings it all full circle with a wonderful new rendition of ROUTE 66.

But the evening's not complete without the exciting and energetic Encore that brings audiences to their feet: FUN, FUN, FUN/I GET AROUND.



“ROUTE 66 is like ‘Forever Plaid’ on high-octane fuel!”

-*Milwaukee Metro*

“Perfect summer fare! a big audience pleaser.”

-*Bert Bernardi, Artistic Director, The Theater Barn, NY*

"The audiences absolutely loved this show. They sang, they laughed, they remembered wonderful memories, but most of all they had a terrific time. The show is affordable, while being a box office bonanza. ROUTE 66 was an unexpected surprise hit."

-*Michael Barnard, Artistic Director, Phoenix Theatre*

“ROUTE 66 is revved up good entertainment that redefines the term ‘road show.’”

-*Tucson Weekly*

“An entertaining audience pleaser... filled with good music and lots of laughter.”

-*Republican-American, CT*

“A big, rollicking, happy musical - exceptionally entertaining!”

-*Ashland Daily Tidings*

“An enjoyable cross-country romp.”

-*The Arizona Republic*

“ROUTE 66 is well worth the trip! They sing, they dance, they wear zany costumes, they act up, then they pause for some serious, reflective moments. It’s quite a performance - one that had the audience on its feet cheering at the close. What a ride!”

-*Oregon Mail Tribune*

“ROUTE 66 is a winner! The high-energy guy-group singing and dancing, the mix of familiar songs with lesser-known gems, the variety in musical styles from the Beach Boys to country and the clever theme of a journey down Route 66 all combine to give the show enormous appeal to a broad audience. Full houses every night for 13 weeks!”

-*Jim Giancarlo, Artistic Director, Oregon Cabaret Theatre*

PUBLISHED ON MAY 27, 2004:

# Turn It Up

By JAMES REEL



Roger Bean's *Route 66: A Musical Journey Down the Mother Road* is, indeed, very much like a trip along America's most fabled highway. I'd happily climb into a van and hit the road with the cast of Invisible Theatre's production. Walter Belcher, Jay C. Cotner, David R. Fanning and Mickey Nugent can liven up even the dullest stretch of road, and they do it without daredevil antics.

The foursome first appears in 1940s gas-station uniforms, singing the old Texaco jingle. Before long, they're off on a trip tracing Route 66 in song, pulling out of the garage in Chicago, quickly putting the Midwest in their rear-view mirror, and swinging across the tops of Texas, New Mexico and Arizona on the way to a Beach Boys medley at road's end in Los Angeles. Along the way, they cruise through a set of truck-driver songs and contend with the highway patrol and a certain little old lady from Pasadena. During their brief offstage rest stops, we see slides of 1950s and '60s Chevys and Ramblers, and hear recordings of old radio commercials for cars with fins and long-forgotten brands of gasoline.

The show works well in the far more intimate environs of Invisible Theatre. There's a much more direct connection between performers and audience, a physical proximity that lets you see the sweat sheeting by evening's end, reminding you that these guys are working hard to entertain you.

But the cast members, together with musicians polish up each car tune and take it out for a spin with the pride and joy of an owner of a '64 Mustang. Belcher sets the standard for infectious fun in his first solo number, "Let's Go for a Ride." Belcher manages to draw you straight into his performance even though he's singing a song that couldn't survive the demise of the 1950s doo-wop group that made it briefly famous. Similarly, Nugent makes the most of the novelty song "Roloids, Doan's Pills and Preparation H," a paltry item to represent the career of Dave Dudley, the father of truck-driving country music.

Sometimes, though, music, staging and performance all come together to perfection. Here, "The Long Tall Texan" is a masterpiece of camp, with Fanning decked out in white-fur chaps and an equally furry 10-gallon hat that somebody supersized. He cocks his stick pony just so and is fey enough to generate hilarity without doing anything really offensive. Now, that's talent.

This isn't Shakespeare, and it's not even Kerouac, but *Route 66* is revved up to good entertainment at Invisible Theatre. It's a production that redefines the term "road show."

# Get kicks at 'Route 66'

Deseret News (Salt Lake City), Jun 26, 2006 by Jay Wamsley

ROUTE 66, Old Lyric Repertory Company, Logan, through Aug. 2 (435-752-1500). Running time: 88 minutes (one intermission).

LOGAN -- The days of AM radio and service stations that actually provided service are nostalgically remembered in the second offering of the Old Lyric Repertory Company, the musical "Route 66," written by former Utahn Roger Bean.

The production's title, of course, refers to the once-famous highway that linked Chicago and Los Angeles. "Route 66" is a musical revue, a back-to-back non-stop remembrance of music to sing along with, presented by four actor-singers.

A large, overhead radio dial and voiceovers mimicking radio announcers from the 1950s is the plot device to move the show along as the four cast members take a road trip from their Midwestern full-service gas station to California. Tunes about cars and communities and cowboys take the stage, sometimes in solo, often as a harmonizing quartet. The group is at its best when the four are all on stage together. Their harmonies are as smooth as a grape Nehi.

The audience loved the songs from the '50s, particularly those when the music was played down and the nonsense was played up. Just when the music could have become repetitive, costumes and interaction was introduced to keep the fun at a high level. Call was especially delightful as a 50-gallon-hat-wearing Texas cowboy, as well as a waitress just one scene later.

"Route 66" uses a background recorded soundtrack, rather than a live band. Patrons accustomed to OLRC revues having a live band will miss that, but it would have taken a heck of a band to keep up the lickety-split pace that dominates most of the show.

"Route 66" is an easygoing, pleasant, if not perfect, trip down memory lane.

## *Covedale Theater's 'Route 66' goes down easy*

**Review By MARK STERNER**

2/21/07

*Route 66* is a Rock & Roll musical revue by Roger Bean that premiered at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater in 2001. The play has no traditional book, but follows the path of the old Route 66 highway, from Chicago to Southern California, with musical numbers from the late 1950s through the early '60s.

There are four male performers...who are responsible for all singing, dancing and clowning around. There's also a crackerjack quartet of musicians on stage who keep the proceedings moving along at a lively pace -- far superior to the trend of having recorded music accompany live stage shows these days.

The ensemble guys know their way around a stage, never dropping a beat or a movement, as far as I could tell. They start out dressed in Texaco service station uniforms, proclaiming the "Texaco Star Theme," and damned if they didn't look just like real live gas jockeys!

The musical package began with renditions of such Rock & Roll classics as "Let's Go for a Ride," "Bring My Cadillac Back," and the eponymous classic "Route 66." Wending their way westward, the men changed into cowboy flannels which represented the Oklahoma/Texas portion of the trip. This included a sweet solo rendition of "Oklahoma Hills," as well as some silly riding on a toy hobbyhorse.

The second act consisted of similar fare until, just when you knew you couldn't take another Texas two-step, the gang of four actually reached California and donned Hawaiian shirts. The Beach Boys' "Little Old Lady from Pasadena" set the tone of the last quarter of the show, which was light, upbeat and energetic.

Not a particularly challenging evening of theater, but it had the audience happily tapping its toes.