

MERRIMACK REPERTORY THEATRE

2014-15 SEASON

# PLAYGUIDE

NOVEMBER 28 – DECEMBER 21, 2014

# 13 THINGS ABOUT ED CARPOLOTTI

book, music, & lyrics by  
Barry Kleinbort

based on a play by  
Jeffrey Hatcher

## A MAN OF MANY TALENTS

Barry Kleinbort on the thrills and challenges of setting a monologue to music.

## (MORE THAN) 13 THINGS ABOUT PENNY FULLER

The star of the show on a role 19 years in the making, and a life on stage.

## A LOOK BACK

MRT's 1997 production of *Three Viewings*

## FROM STAGE TO SONG:

Other plays that became musicals.

Charles Towers, Artistic Director



Elizabeth Kegley, Executive Director

**NOVEMBER 28 - DECEMBER 21, 2014**

# 13 THINGS ABOUT ED CARPOLOTTI

book, music, & lyrics by Barry Kleinbort  
based on a play by Jeffrey Hatcher

Featuring

**PENNY FULLER**

Music Director

**PAUL GREENWOOD**

Scenic Designer

**BILL CLARKE**

Stage Manager

**CASEY LEIGH HAGWOOD**

Lighting Designer

**BRIAN J. LILIENTHAL**

Assistant Stage Manager

**PETER CREWE**

Directed by

**BARRY KLEINBORT**

13 THINGS ABOUT ED CARPOLOTTI is produced by special arrangement with Alexis Williams, BRET ADAMS, LTD.,  
448 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036. [www.bretadamsltd.net](http://www.bretadamsltd.net).

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and Performance Conference.



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## THE CAST OF *13 THINGS ABOUT ED CARPOLOTTI*



**PENNY FULLER** (Virginia) **MRT:** *A Delicate Balance* (Winner of the 2009 IRNE award “Best Supporting Actress” for her role as Claire). **BROADWAY:** *Barefoot in the Park*, *Cabaret*, *Rex*, *Applause* (Tony Award Nomination), *An American Daughter*, Neil Simon’s *The Dinner Party* (Tony Award Nomination), *Dividing the Estate*. **OFF-BROADWAY/NEW YORK:** *A New Brain*, Lincoln Center Theatre; *As You Like It*, *Richard III*, *Henry IV pt. 1&2*, Shakespeare in the Park; *Three*

*Viewings*, *New England*, *Five By Tenn*, Manhattan Theatre Club; *Beautiful Child*, Vineyard Theatre; *Southern Comforts*, Primary Stages; *The Cherry Orchard*, York Theatre Company; *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*, Daryl Roth Productions. **REGIONAL:** *The Seagull*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Little Night Music*, *Do I Hear a Waltz?* **INTERNATIONAL:** *Sail Away*, *Lost Musicals* - London. **TELEVISION:** Emmy Award for *The Elephant Man*; Emmy nominations for: *China Beach*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *NYPD Blue*, *Miss Rose White*, *E.R.*; Recurring roles on: *Fortune Dane*, *Beverly Hills, 90210*, and *Mad About You*. **FILM:** *The Beverly Hillbillies*, *All the President’s Men*. **OTHER:** In 2004, Ms. Fuller began a collaboration with Barry Kleinbort who encouraged her to enter the world of cabaret. He created for and directed Ms. Fuller in 7 acts seen in New York at: *The Metropolitan Room*, *Birdland*, and *54 Below*. They co-taught at the O’Neill Cabaret Conference for eight years, and it was during the last year that Ms. Fuller had the idea to have Barry set her monologue in Manhattan Theatre Company’s *Three Viewings* to music. This creation became *13 Things About Ed Carpolotti* which was workshopped at O’Neill and had its first production in New York at 59E59 Theaters.



**PAUL GREENWOOD** A New Jersey native, Paul is well known as a pianist, arranger, and singer in New York City. For five years, he was resident pianist at the legendary New York nightclub, The Improvisation. Off-Broadway, he starred in the hit revue, *Our Sinatra*. He appeared with two time Tony winner Helen Gallagher in *Tallulah Tonight*. At Manhattan Theatre Club, he performed with Mary Cleere Haran in her acclaimed

1950’s tribute. Nationally and internationally, he has performed in concert halls, clubs, and cabarets including: The Oak Room at the Algonquin, Feinstein’s, Birdland, 54 Below, Town Hall, and Jazz at Lincoln Center. Paul has accompanied numerous performers in concert, television, and cabaret including: George Burns, Nancy Lamott, Jane Olivor, Art Garfunkel, Ann Hampton Callaway, Hilary Kole and Sylvia McNair. He was musical director in New York and Paris for the bilingual revue *Metropolita(i)n*. He arranged, music directed, and appeared in the original O’Neill Theater Center workshop of *13 Things About Ed Carpolotti*, as well as the New York premiere. Recently, he has performed critically acclaimed cabaret shows with Penny Fuller, Anita Gillette, and Loni Ackerman. Paul is a recipient of a Bistro Award and a MAC (Manhattan Association of Cabarets and Clubs).

# THE MEN BEHIND THE SCRIPT

*13 Things About Ed Carpolotti* started out as a monologue in the play called *Three Viewings* by playwright Jeffrey Hatcher. Barry Kleinbort wrote the book, music, and lyrics to adapt the monologue into a musical.



**BARRY KLEINBORT** (*Director/Book, Music, Lyrics*) Barry has earned the prestigious Edward Kleban Foundation Award for Lyric Writing, two Gilman-Gonzalez Musical Theatre Awards, the Second Stage Musicals Writers Award, the Jamie deRoy ASCAP award, two Back Stage Bistro awards and ten Manhattan Association of Cabarets (MAC) awards for his directorial and songwriting efforts. He wrote the book and lyrics for the musical, *Was*, (music by Joseph Thalken) which was the

inaugural production of the American Musical Theater Project in Chicago and is now being readied for other productions. He co-wrote with David Levy *Perfect Harmony*, a musical play about the lives of the Barry Sisters. As a composer/lyricist, he wrote music and lyrics for *Angelina* (based on "That Summer - That Fall" by Frank D. Gilroy,) *Second Avenue* (book by Allan Knee, for the Manhattan Punchline off-Broadway,) and *Metropolita(i)n*, a bi-lingual musical revue, which has successfully played both in Paris and New York. He provided scripts for eight PBS TV specials and most recently was an "artistic consultant" for *Cathouse: The Musical* for HBO. His newest musical *13 Things about Ed Carpolotti* starring Penny Fuller had a successful off-Broadway run at 59E59 theater and is now heading for regional theaters. Mr. Kleinbort has directed and/or written material for Brent Barrett, Petula Clark, Marvin Hamlisch, Michael Feinstein, Kaye Ballard, Regis Philbin, John Barrowman, Gregg Edelman, Tony Roberts, Anita Gillette, Karen Mason, Sylvia McNair, Heather MacRae, and many, many others. He has also directed topical revues and intimate theater productions, including Rita Gardner's *Try to Remember - A Look at Off-Broadway* and Kaye Ballard's off-Broadway revue, *Kaye Ballard-Working 42nd Street at Last!* He adapted and directed the New York premiere of Bob Merrill's musical, *The Prince of Grand Street* for the Jewish Rep and John Epperson's *Show Trash* at the Studio Theater in Washington, D.C. which just transferred to off-Broadway for a limited run. A highly acclaimed revue of his theater songs, *Big City Rhythm*, is available on Harbinger Records.



The cast of MRT's *Three Viewings*. From left: Priscilla Shanks as Mac, Annie Murray as Virginia, Michael Poisson as Emil. Photo by Eric Antonio.

**JEFFREY HATCHER** (*Playwright: Three Viewings*) Jeffrey Hatcher's Broadway credits include: NEVER GONNA DANCE (book). Off-Broadway credits include: THREE VIEWINGS and A PICASSO at Manhattan Theatre Club; SCOTLAND ROAD and THE TURN OF THE SCREW at Primary Stages; TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE (with Mitch Albom) at The Minetta Lane; MURDER BY POE, THE TURN OF THE SCREW, and THE SPY at The Acting Company; NEDDY at American Place; and FELLOW TRAVELERS at Manhattan Punchline. Other credits/theaters include: COMPLEAT FEMALE STAGE BEAUTY, MRS. MANNERLY, MURDERERS, MERCY OF A STORM, SMASH, ARMADALE, KORCZAK'S CHILDREN, TO FOOL THE EYE, THE FALLS, A PIECE OF THE ROPE, ALL THE WAY WITH LBJ, THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR, DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE and others at The Guthrie, Old Globe, Yale Rep, The Geffen, Seattle Rep, Cincinnati Playhouse, Cleveland Playhouse, South Coast Rep, Arizona Theater Company, San Jose Rep, The Empty Space, Indiana Rep, Children's Theater Company, History Theater, Madison Rep, Intiman, Illusion, Denver Center, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Rep, Repertory Theater of St. Louis, Actors Theater of Louisville, Philadelphia Theater Company, Asolo, City Theater, Studio Arena and dozens more in the U.S. and abroad. Film and Television credits include: "Stage Beauty," "Casanova," "The Duchess," and episodes of "Columbo." Grants/Awards: NEA, TCG, Lila Wallace Fund, Rosenthal New Play Prize, Frankel Award, Charles MacArthur Fellowship Award, McKnight Foundation, Jerome Foundation, and Barrymore Award Best New Play, IVEY Award Best New Play. He is a member and/or alumnus of The Playwrights Center, the Dramatists Guild, the Writers Guild, and New Dramatists.



Barry enjoys a tapas meal at Los Golondrinos, Sevilla, Spain.  
Photo by Neil Kleinbort.

## A MAN OF MANY TALENTS

An interview with **Barry Kleinbort**, composer, lyricist, book writer, and director of **13 Things About Ed Carpolotti**.

### What is your background with Penny?

Penny and I were co-teachers for eight summers at the O'Neill Theater Conference in Waterford, Connecticut. We had put together seven cabaret type shows for Penny to do, one per summer. Penny didn't want to do an eighth. She invited me over to her apartment and said, "I want to read you something." She proceeded to perform out-loud the monologue from Jeffrey Hatcher's *Three Viewings* (which she had preformed at the Manhattan Theater Club). Penny always had a fondness for this piece because it made her move back to New York after decades in L.A. She finished reading it to me and said, "What do you think?" And I said, "It's very nice." And then she said, "I think you should turn this into a musical for me." And I said, "But, there's nothing intrinsically musical about it." Penny smiled and said, "You'll think of something."

So, that eighth summer, in lieu of a cabaret evening, we premiered a reading of a new musical, *13 Things about Ed Carpolotti*.

### What in *Three Viewings* first spoke out to you, musically?

Musicals are tricky creatures. And adding music to anything

requires a dramatic justification. What sings? What does music bring to the material that isn't already there? How does it flow through the text? Where are the emotional peaks that can handle the expansion of song? I read the monologue over and over, made mental notes each time I did and scribbled down possible ideas. And I still couldn't find the musical doorway in. I was stumped.

In Jeffrey Hatcher's piece, Virginia has a physical reaction to stress. Every time she gets nervous, her collar bone grows hot and turns a bright red. I thought, "What if, instead of feeling hot and turning red when she was nervous, she hummed?" And the humming motif then opened the door for me to the potential musical shape of the piece. From the get-go, music was functioning dramatically. And the music now feels firmly embedded into the piece. The transitions from scene to song are fluid... sometimes you're not even aware that we've shifted. That brings me great satisfaction.

There's a song that Virginia sings at the end of the show, "One More Spring," that crystallizes for me the difference between the play and the musical. It gives voice to what was only subtextually there for our heroine. Finding the strength and beauty in loss. And it touches people in the audience deeply. Music has the power to do that.

### Did you find yourself having to make changes to Jeffrey Hatcher's writing as you went? Does a musical have to inhabit its own plane of reality, to some extent?

*Three Viewings* is an evening of three character studies, each segment taking place in a funeral parlor. The first thing I did was remove the story from the funeral parlor and set it in Virginia's living room where there would be a baby grand piano, a "musical element," as part of the stage environment. This change of locale automatically encouraged me to re-examine the details of Jeffrey Hatcher's story line.

I knew the ending of Jeffrey's piece was the single most important moment, and so I literally worked backwards, trying to find all the major musical moments that would help support and reinforce that given. I mentioned earlier about creating Virginia's humming as a device for incorporating some introductory musical element into the piece. And that got me thinking more about how music functions in our everyday lives. It's literally all around us from dawn to dusk: TV's, cell phones, iPods, and in cars, stores, restaurants... music can trigger memory. It's tied subconsciously to emotions and romantic longings. That's also the case, in my opinion, of the movies. So I decided to make Virginia an amateur film buff, which helped align her deep romantic connections to a boundless world of fantasy.

In Jeffrey's script, Virginia talks about going to the Green Mill Luncheonette, and this led me to my own recollections of diners as a kid, the kitschy kind with little metal jukeboxes at every table. And this led to Virginia and Ed having their musical connection to the past through "You Are My Happiness," which I wrote to be "their song." It's the only piece in the score that is written intentionally as musical pastiche, a 50's pop ballad. This provides yet another layer to the changing reality levels of a character that has to fluidly shift from story telling to song

and then back again, moving continuously between realism (speaking) and fantasy (singing).

### The score has several recurring musical bits. How do you choose what music will return throughout, and what will just appear once and be done?

I have always been drawn to the concept of musical motifs when I compose. For me, they help unify the score. When I begin the writing process, I look for musical phrases that might prove useful. They can be short—four bars, eight bars long—a mere germ of an idea. From the very first time I read the script, the house on Bray Barton resonated deeply within me. In fact, the first few bars of music I wrote were what I title the “Bray Barton” theme. Eight measures of music heard at the very top of the show and then repeated throughout. The house represented to her forty years in a marriage. It was purchased for her by the man she loved unwaveringly during all that time. And suddenly that shelter, that haven, is going to be taken away from her. That’s a strong moment for song but also a strong emotion worthy of reiteration.

Reprises can be effective if they are built on the information that the audience has already stored. In other words, I’m actually counting on them *not* hearing the reprise as new musical information. Audiences are emotionally savvy. Subliminally, they get it.

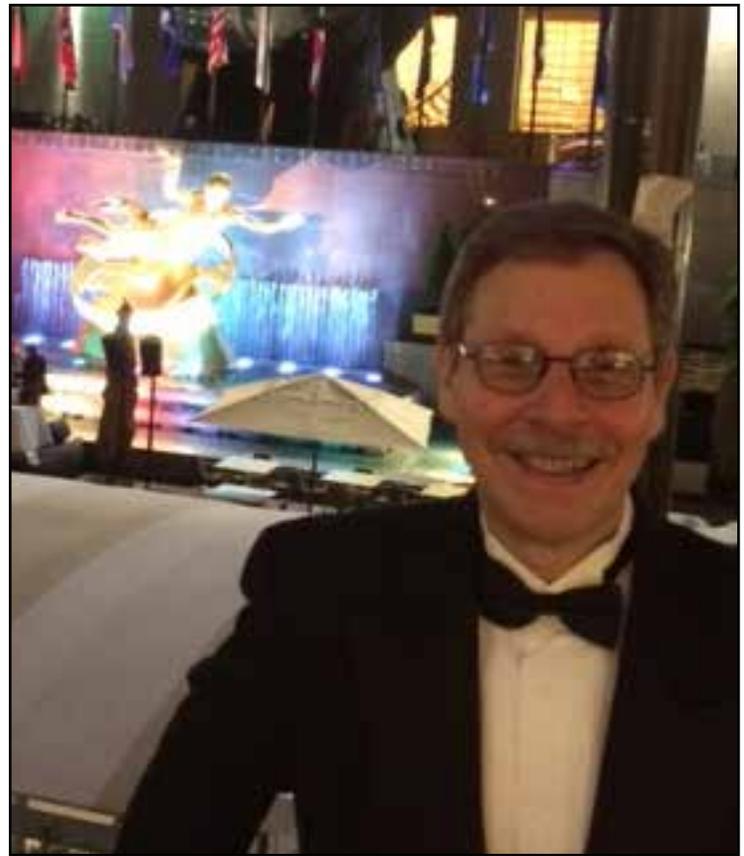
### Was there a moment in your musical life when you knew you wanted to do theatrical work?

I think I always wanted to do some kind of work in show business, especially in the musical theatre, even before I knew what that was. My mother played the piano by ear and she would teach me songs from musicals that she had seen, but I had no idea how, or even if, they functioned in the shows they were from. The first professional musical I actually saw onstage was the National tour of *Oliver!* when it played Chicago. Sean Kenney’s set for *Oliver!* revolutionized scenic design at that time. It had two revolving staircases that kept changing configurations and I couldn’t believe that anything so magical existed. From then on, I knew that I had to be involved in some way, shape or form with musical theatre. But, it wasn’t the songs... it was the stairs!

### What writers and composers do you admire?

I like different writers for different things. But, at the top of the list, I would put Marc Blitzstein, who heavily influenced most of the post WWII generation of writers through works like *The Cradle Will Rock* and *Regina*, his opera of *The Little Foxes*. Frank Loesser said that he wrote *The Most Happy Fella* because of *Regina*.

I respond to writers who are not afraid to move beyond the boundaries of traditional song, but then will unapologetically embrace it if that’s what the content dictates.



Barry attending the 2014 Tony Awards. Photo by Jack Gindi.

### Is there a performer you’ve always wanted to write for?

I have had the pleasure of writing specifically for several performers – Kaye Ballard, Marcia Lewis, Regis Philbin, (yes, that Regis Philbin), and now the extraordinary Penny Fuller – and there’s something tremendously liberating to a writer when he knows who’s ultimately going to deliver the goods... he can write to their strengths, their unique personae, their attitudes. Of the performers currently on Broadway, I would very much like to write for Bryce Pinkham, Annaleigh Ashford, Jessie Mueller, and Christopher Sieber.

### What’s your next project?

My next project is... rather unusual... okay, it’s totally bonkers, which may be part of its allure. It’s a musical riff on the life of a scandalous Parisian prostitute who was nicknamed “Casque d’Or” (“Golden Helmet,” which referred to her garishly dyed blonde hair). The story was made into a gritty French film starring Simone Signoret in the early 1950s, but her true story is even grittier, sexier and more bizarre than the film: Candid, brash, earthy and, most importantly, deeply delusional. Delusion is a wonderful trait for a character... it sings!

I’ll be heading to France in January to continue working on an adaptation with a French librettist, Christophe Mirambeau. Wish me “bonne chance.”



Penny Fuller in the Off-Broadway production of *13 THINGS ABOUT ED CARPOLOTTI* at 59E59 Theatres, 2012. Photo by Carol Rosegg.

## (MORE THAN) 13 THINGS ABOUT PENNY FULLER

An interview with **Penny Fuller**, accomplished leading lady of *13 Things About Ed Carpolotti*.

### Tell me a little about your history with Barry.

A pianist friend of mine suggested me [for some cuts on a CD], and that's when I met Barry Kleinbort. He liked the way I worked, and we began to talk, to be fairly friendly, and coffee, and breakfast and stuff, and then one day he said "you know, you should do a cabaret, I'd love to direct you in a cabaret." The next day, Michael Bush [from the Manhattan Theatre Club] called me and said "Penny! I want you to come: I've just been made the cabaret conference director at the O'Neill, and I want you to come and teach, like you did in Rome."

So I bring Barry to a meeting and I'm thinking, "I can't teach!" I mean I had taught once in Rome, but that was a miracle, I was teaching to Italians who didn't know what I was saying anyway...

So now it's Wednesday, which is the day the conference opens, and we say "Oh my god, we have to teach today!" We hadn't even talked about it; we just said "We'll just leap off into

the void." And we did. It was the most miraculous combination of Director-Composer outside person looking in, and Actor-Performer inside looking out, and sometimes we'd even switch places.

We did this for eight years, at the O'Neill.

### And that's when you presented the idea for *13 Things*?

Well it was the last year, and we were running out of ideas for the cabaret! And I said "Barry, sit down, I wanna read you something," and I read him that monologue (from *Three Viewings*), because I'd always loved it, and I said "Do you think you could make a musical?" And he said "No." And I said "mmm... Why?" He said "Because there's no hook for music," I said "Well you'll think of something." And he did! Ha! And it was twice as much fun because Michael Bush, who ran the O'Neill, was the man who brought me to New York to do *Three Viewings* in 1995.

### You debuted the role of Virginia in *Three Viewings*, correct?

Yes, I did. There was another actress in it, I was still living in California, and she was going cuckoo because she didn't like being solo, on the stage. She wanted an acting partner. And I guess, because of all the Shakespeare and soliloquies and stuff, plus the singing, I'm not afraid to be alone on stage, and talk to someone who isn't there. So Michael called me to come in, I said "I can't, it's my daughter's senior year in high school." But then I read the play, and I said "Goodbye honey, I'll be back in six weeks!" and I had nine days to get up in the part.

### So you've been acquainted with this role for a long while. What's it like getting to know her all this time?

Well she changes, because I change. And of course she changes because it's a musical, so it's a different character.

In rehearsal [for *Three Viewings*], in the funeral home, under my left thigh was a white envelope. The way they were directing it was I take the envelope up, I open it, and I read it to the audience. It's not sealed, because I, presumably, have already read it. And I'm just narrating to the audience.

And I said, "No, no, no, no, no..." She's never read it! She's frightened to read it, she doesn't know what's in it, Joy (the secretary) just gave it to her, said "it's from your husband who's been dead about two months," and when she opens it, she's nervous. *Of course* it has to be that she's seeing it for the first time, and the audience is experiencing it with her.

That was the thing that I brought to it that I think inured Jeffrey to me.

So when I got the idea [for *13 Things*], I went to Jeffrey and I said, "I want your permission to take that monologue and make it into a musical—and if you're up for it I'll have you meet Barry." So we had lunch, and then Barry began.

Barry said "I need to go to Paris, that's where I write the best." And I said "Yeah yeah yeah." So I commissioned him to go to Paris and write, and he came back about two months later, and the first thing he had written was "Bray Barton."

## When you go out on stage in a one-person show like this, what's going through your head?

My career has been so crazy, because my first big job was being the standby in *Barefoot in the Park*, and the first time I went on I'd only been over the third act twice. When I was the standby in *Cabaret*, first time I went on, I'd had four rehearsals. So I've never had time to get nervous.

I can get in the zone, I think, pretty easily. It's so great to feel—whether you do or not—that you have control. And if I started getting nervous, and doubtful and all that stuff, I wouldn't want to do this anymore.

You get into a zone, you get into this place, and you have to trust that this place is like a big warm pool of creativity, or like those steel or aluminum HVAC pipes that go up outside a building, connected to, up there, you know, the creative consciousness of the world. And if that's clear, and if you're steady, then it'll all be okay.

But I don't know what's going through my head. I think "I'm Virginia. What is this envelope? What am I doing? *What is happening?*" I'm gonna do my play. Look out, everybody. And come with me on this journey.

## You've had this huge career and performed in the original productions of some of the best loved shows. Any stories?

Yeah, you gotta pay for 'em.

*Barefoot in the Park*, Liz Ashley, she was at the theatre and in agony in a back spasm. They put this fur coat on me that was so heavy it almost knocked me over. Gave me the flowers, handed me a big purse, and on I went, put the flowers in the can like I was supposed to, took off the coat, and thought, "I have no idea what comes next." And this was like, seven seconds into the show. And I thought, "well if I just go sit down over there and cry, everybody will understand." And I went to go sit down. I saw this suitcase there, and I remembered, "Ah! In the suitcase are the logs that I take out and put in the fire." And I never forgot another thing. But Robert Redford, and Mildred Natwick, and Kurt Kaszner are all sort of terrified. By this time, I was cool as a cucumber.

## What's it like to premiere a Neil Simon role?

That's hard. They had done this play, *The Dinner Party*, in Los Angeles, and it had been a disaster. Well, hello, it's a play about being locked in a room, and it was done on an open thrust stage, so already you're in trouble. The big wigs from New York came out and said "Neil, forget it, we're not gonna bring it to New York." I wasn't in this production, you understand.

And then there was an opening at the Kennedy Center in Washington. And so somebody had the bright idea to put it in a proscenium, and put it there for three weeks.

And I'd heard, through my spies, that they were gonna offer me the part. I said yes, we brought it to Washington, and Neil came, and it was a huge hit. I think that Len Cariou and I—we never discussed it, but without anything being said, or anything



being done, it got very sexy. It had danger in it, which I don't think it did before. And Neil did come up to us, and said "thank you for saving my play."

The first time, I'm kind of rolling and sliding around on the couch, and when it was over I was embarrassed, I said "ooh, is that okay?" And they said "Oh my God, it's great!" And Len and I never discussed it, we just knew how to play that play.

## Do you ever find yourself starstruck when working with someone whose work you admire?

I don't think so. I did a couple of movies with Bette Davis... TV movies. I'd met her before anyway, and she'd always been fantastic and wonderful to work with, but when I was in LA, and she lived a couple of blocks from me, she called me one day and I thought "OH MY GOD IT'S BETTE DAVIS!" When it was on the phone, disembodied, and it was that voice, it was Bette Davis. But I realized she was one of us, and we were working together.

Redford became a very close friend. And he wasn't Robert Redford... I mean, he was Robert Redford, but he wasn't the big Robert Redford... I'm friendly with him still, we used to play charades and stuff like that in those days.

## Where's your heart, east coast or west coast?

Oh Jesus I hate the west coast. I prefer the east coast, I should say. One of the reasons I went to the west coast was because I had been in *Barefoot in the Park* for two years, and I thought "I can never do a long run again as long as I live. I'm going to Hollywood."

I left when they called me to do *Three Viewings*.

## What are your loves outside of acting and singing?

I love to read, and I love to go to concerts, and I love to "put in." 'Cause you have to "put out" so much as a performer, you have to take so much of yourself and what you see and what you experience, and morph it somehow into whatever character or song. So when I'm not putting out I like to "put in."

I have this fantasy that [in Lowell] I'm going to lie in bed all day and read books until I have to go do the play. I have a feeling it's not gonna happen.

# A LOOK BACK

MRT produced Jeffrey Hatcher's *Three Viewings* as part of the 1996-97 Season. The play consists of three extended monologues—all set in the same funeral parlor.

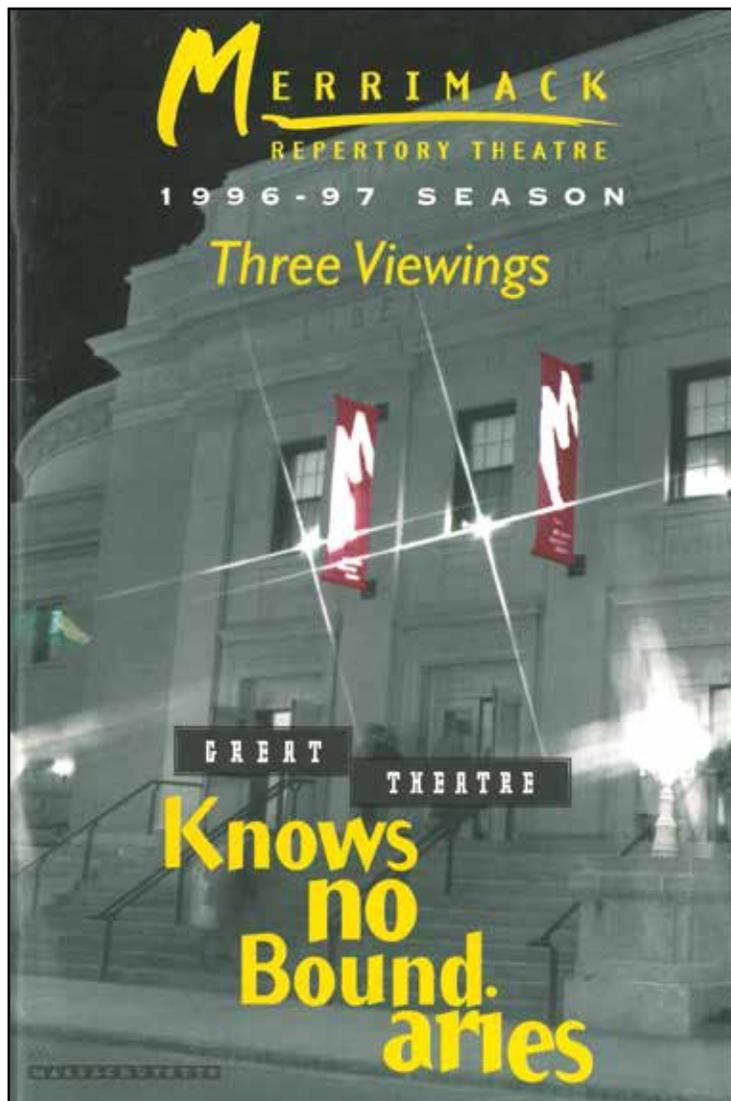
In the first monologue (“**Tell-Tale**”), mortician Emil (played at MRT by Michael Poisson) pines over one of the real estate agents that hovers at the funerals in at his funeral home. “**The Thief of Tears**” presents Mac (Priscilla Shanks), a woman who steals jewelry off of corpses—and arrives at her own Grandmother’s funeral to obtain a coveted ring. The third segment is the (non-musicalized) “**Thirteen Things About Ed Carpolotti**,” featuring Annie Murray as Virginia. Interestingly, characters from *13 Things* “show up” in the other stories as well: Bob O’Klock, Art Wise, Danny Spahr, and Ed Carpolotti himself are all mentioned in the preceding monologues.

MRT’s production was directed by David G. Kent, the company’s Artistic Director from 1987-2000. The surrealist set by designer Leslie Taylor featured a larger-than-life rose descending from above, and the walls of the funeral home peeled back at the center to reveal the Midwestern landscape.

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**THREE VIEWINGS**  
by  
**JEFFREY HATCHER**

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**M**ERRIMACK  
REPERTORY THEATRE

**THE CAST**  
(in order of appearance)

**TELL-TALE**

Emil ..... MICHAEL POISSON

**THE THIEF OF TEARS**

Mac ..... PRISCILLA SHANKS

**THIRTEEN THINGS ABOUT ED CARPOLOTTI**

Virginia ..... ANNIE MURRAY

**TIME: Now**

**PLACE: A funeral parlor**

Top Left: *Three Viewings* '97 - Annie Murray reads “the letter” as Virginia at MRT.  
Bottom Left: The cast and production team of MRT’s *THREE VIEWINGS*. Clockwise from top left: Dave Brown, Kendall Smith, Priscilla Shanks, Harriet Sheets, Michael Poisson, Janice Coppi, Janet Tong, Harry Pagan, Michael Gepner, Frances Nelson McSherry, Kara Weeks, David G. Kent, Annie Murray, (unknown). Photos by Eric Antonio.  
Right: Playbill Cover and interior production listing for MRT’s *THREE VIEWINGS*.

# RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES

Articles and reviews for MRT's 1996-97 production of *Three Viewings* published by local newspapers and journals



# MUSICALS FROM PLAYS

**13 Things About Ed Carpolotti** is based on a segment of *Three Viewings*, Jeffrey Hatcher's 1995 play (which MRT produced in 1997). It's hardly the first show to take the play-to-musical route; many of the best-known musicals began their lives as straight plays. Here are just a few:

**1. CAROUSEL:** The Rodgers and Hammerstein classic is taken from the 1909 play *Liliom* by Ferenc Molnár. The writers, at first reluctant to do the adaptation, saw its potential when Rodgers proposed changing the setting from Budapest to coastal Maine.

**2. MY FAIR LADY:** George Bernard Shaw's 1912 *Pygmalion* was the basis for the Lerner and Lowe musical. The characters of Henry Higgins and Eliza Doolittle come from the mythological figures of Pygmalion and Galatea.

**3. THE FANTASTICKS:** The 1960 musical fable by Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt is derived loosely from *Les Romanesques* by Edmond Rostand, who also wrote *Cyrano de Bergerac*. *The Fantasticks* was presented at MRT in 2008.

**4. A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM:** The 1962 musical comedy was inspired by the farces of ancient Roman playwright Plautus, the oldest surviving intact works of Latin literature. MRT presented *Forum* in 1993.

**5. HELLO DOLLY:** The 1964 Jerry Herman musical has an impressively long lineage: It's based on Thornton Wilder's 1955 *The Matchmaker*, which is a rewriting of his own 1938 flop *The Merchant of Yonkers*, which is based on *Einen Jux will er sich machen (He Will Go on a Spree)*, an 1842 Austrian musical play by Johann Nestroy and Adolf Müller, which was based, finally, on the 1835 *A Day Well Spent* by English playwright John Oxenford. Phew!

**6. CHICAGO:** The origin of the 1976 Kander and Ebb musical lies 50 years earlier, in a play of the same name by Maurine Dallas Watkins. Watkins worked the play to encompass two real-life, unrelated murder cases she had covered as a reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*.

1. *Carousel*, Original Broadway Cast Album Cover;

2a. *My Fair Lady*, Original Broadway Poster;

2b. A 1912 illustration depicts Mrs. Patrick Campbell as the original Eliza in Shaw's *Pygmalion*;

3a. *The Fantasticks*, Original Cast Album Cover;

3b. *The Fantasticks*, MRT 2008-09 (From Left: Daivid Vilella, Ira Denmark, Nick Mannix). Photo by Meghan Moore;

4a. *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, Broadway Revival Cast Album Cover;

4b. *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, MRT 1993-94 (Phillip Patrone, David Benoit, unknown). Photo by Kevin Harkins;

5. *Hello Dolly!*, Original Broadway Poster;

6a. *Chicago*, Original Broadway Poster;

6b. *Chicago*, Current Broadway Show, The Ambassador Theatre, 2010



# MUSICAL NUMBERS

The songs featured in *13 Things About Ed Carpolotti*.

THE HOLIDAYS

WHERE DID WE MEET

AT THE LIBERTY THEATER

WHERE DID WE MEET, PART II

WE'RE GONNA BE FINE

YOU ARE MY HAPPINESS

THE HOUSE ON BRAY BARTON

THIRTEEN THINGS ABOUT ED CARPOLOTTI

SINS

WE'RE GONNA BE FINE (REPRISE)

ONE MORE SPRING



Penny Fuller in the Off-Broadway production of *13 THINGS ABOUT ED CARPOLOTTI* at 59E59 Theatres, 2012. Photo by Carol Rosegg.

# GLOSSARY

Terms and places in *13 Things About Ed Carpolotti*

**THE BELL JAR** : The only novel written by poet Sylvia Plath, who committed suicide one month after its 1963 publication. Its protagonist suffers a mental breakdown, and the work is thought to be semi-autobiographical.

**CALYPSO**: a style of Caribbean folk song, primarily from Trinidad. Calypsos are usually witty or satirical, and follow a simple ballad form, with eight-line stanzas broken into two four-line refrains.

**GONE WITH THE WIND**: 1939 epic romance film, based on the 1936 novel by Margaret Mitchell. Set during the Civil War and reconstruction period, it was re-released in theatres several times throughout the 20th century.

**THE KING AND I**: American musical based on the real-life British governess Anna Harriette Leonowens, who worked for King Mongkut of Siam. The film version starred Yul Brynner and Deborah Kerr.

**MARTIN AND LEWIS**: American comedy duo comprised of singer/straight man Dean Martin, and comedian Jerry Lewis. Arguably the most popular comedy duo of the early 1950's, they split up in 1956.

**MY FRIEND IRMA GOES WEST**: 1950 film sequel to *My Friend Irma* (1949), the big-screen debut of Martin and Lewis.

**BOO RADLEY**: The reclusive neighbor character in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the 1962 film based on Harper Lee's 1960 novel about the trial of a black man falsely accused of rape.

**ROMAN À CLEF**: A novel that portrays real-life people thinly disguised as fictional characters. In French, literally "novel with a key." Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* is considered an example.

**SASKATCHEWAN**: Canadian province, one of only two fully inland provinces in the country. The majority of its landscape is characterized by vast expanses of open prairie and farmland, resembling the Great Plains of the U.S. (which it borders).

**TALISMAN**: An amulet or object bearing a sign that is believed to avert evil and bring good fortune. The scarab beetle was an important funerary amulet in ancient Egypt, associated with rebirth. Over 1,000 tiny "Hammers of Thor" have been found across northern Europe in the last millennium, worn by Vikings for protection.

**TIMBUKTU**: City in Mali. Once a trading post on the trans-Saharan caravan route.