PAGEANT PRODUCTIONS, LLC

in association with

CANON THEATRICALS

present:

Miss America's Ugly Daughter
Bess Myerson & Me

Written and Performed by
Barra Grant *

Featuring
Monica Piper *

Elisha Schaefer
Set Design

Florie Bunzel
Costume Design

Ian James
Lighting Design

Tom Jones
Projection / Sound Design

Mark Adler
Composer

Frier McCollister
General Manager

Barbara Koletsky
Company Manager

Phil Gold *
Production Stage Manager

C. Raul Espinoza
Marketing Director

Lucy Pollak
Press Agent

Deborah Keaton
Graphic Designer

Produced by
Suzi Dietz

Directed by
Eve Brandstein

* Appearing through an Agreement between this theatre, Pageant Productions LLC, and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Barra Grant
Writer & Performer

The Cast

Barra Grant (Daughter) studied acting at the Drama Centre, London and starred in the BBC series "Take Three Girls". She appeared in several plays at the Mark Taper Forum and was a featured actress in both comedic and dramatic television. As a screenwriter Barra wrote *Slow Dancing in the Big City* and *Misunderstood*, starring Gene Hackman. She produced the *Dirty Dancing* television series and wrote various daytime television shows including the Emmy-winning *The Tap Dance Kid.* Her play, *A Mother, A Daughter, and a Gun* has been produced in L.A., Chicago, and New York, starring Olympia Dukakis. She wrote and directed her play *Spa* at the Coast Theater in Los Angeles. Barra also wrote and directed the features *Life of the Party* and *Love Hurts,* with Carrie-Anne Moss, Janine Garafalo and Jenna Elfman. She is a story teller who has told her stories throughout the city. Grant has received Director's Guild and Humanitas nominations as well as winning The Writer's Guild award.

Monica Piper (Voice of Mother) has performed on some of America's most prominent stages, landing her own Ace Award-winning Showtime Comedy Special *No, Monica...Just You*, and being chosen as one of that Network's **Comedy All Stars**. Nominated for an American Comedy Award as one of the top five female comedians in the country, she was recruited by Roseanne Barr, to write on the series *Roseanne.* Thus, began her television career. She went on to write for *Mad about You* and *Veronica's Closet* and became the head writer and producer of the #1 children's animated series, *Rugrats*, for which she won an Emmy Award. Monica has developed and written on series for Nickelodeon, Disney and the Cartoon Network. She returned to her first love, performing, and is proud to be an artist-in-residence with the Jewish Women's Theatre of Los Angeles. Monica wrote and stars in her critically acclaimed one-woman play, *Not That Jewish*, which ran to sell-out crowds in LA, before playing over 200 performances Off Broadway, and for which she received a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle nomination for Best Solo Performance. Monica will be performing *Not That Jewish* every Thursday in February at the Braid Theatre in Santa Monica. As a stand up, she headlines fundraising events across the country.

Debbie Kasper (understudy) is a two time Emmy nominated writer for *Roseanne* & *The Rosie O'Donnell Show* and award winning performer. She's created over forty roles for regional, off-Broadway and off-off. Her one-woman show won the drama Logue award as the best in Los Angeles. Her book of personal Essays will be out in May - *A Poke in the Eye With a Sharp Stick.*

The Team

Eve Brandstein (Director) has helmed the recent theatrical productions of *Miss America's Ugly Daughter*, at The Broad Stage, Rain Pyror's *Fried Chicken & Latkes*, which Eve will executive produce as a television series. She directed both the original production and the recent revival of Monica *Piper's Not That Jewish.* Also the off-Broadway productions of *Shut Up, Sit Down & Eat*, a hit that ran for two years, and *Voices of Swords*; the N.Y. and L.A. premieres of *Revisiting Wildfire*, Ronnie Spector's *Beyond the Beehive*, *Waiting for Jack - A Beat Poetry Reunion, Claiming Allen Ginsberg* and Suzanne Wang's *Cracked Open.* For L.A.'s Jewish Women Theatre, Eve has directed *Stories From the Fringe - Women Rabbis Tell All*, *Saffron and Rosewater, He Said- She Said, Hold Me*, *Heal Me, Jacob's Ladder*, *Past and Present Russian American Stories*, *More Courage - Muslim / Jewish Stories*, and *Crossing Our Red Sea.* Eve has contributed to nearly every facet of the entertainment industry as a director, studio executive, producer, writer/creator, talent manager, casting director and author. She is currently producing *Poetry in Motion* since 1988, a spoken-word at Beyond Baroque in Los Angeles and at the Cutting Room in New York City.

Suzi Dietz (Producer) has been producing theater in Los Angeles since 1979. In addition to presenting shows in a variety of venues over the years, Dietz also ran a number of theaters. She was the artistic director of the LA Stage Company, where she produced the long-running *Nuts* and Christopher Durang's *Sister Mary Explains it All for You;* the producing artistic director of the Pasadena Playhouse, where she produced *Mail;* and The Canon Theater, where she produced Caryl Churchill's award-winning *Cloud Nine* and the long-running *Love Letters*, among many others. In 2006, after the Canon was torn down, she turned her attention to the east, where she now produces both on and off-Broadway. She is the recipient of numerous awards such as a *Drama-Logue* Lifetime Achievement Award and five Tony nominations, including one for Suzan-Lori Parks' Pulitzer Prize-winning *TopDog Underdog* and another for *Fela!,* conceived and directed by Bill T. Jones. She is the Executive Producer of *Every Act of Life,* a documentary about Terrence McNally, which premiered at the TriBeCa film festival, and can be seen on iTunes and on PBS' American Masters this summer.

Elisha Schaefer (Set Design) has been, the resident set designer/ technical director, since 2012, at de Toledo High School in West Hills (2016 Jerry Herman Award nomination for scenic design), and also designs for worship spaces and community organizations with Laurie Gross Studios. Theatre: *Revisiting Wildfire* (Odyssey Theater). *Always,*

The Team

Patsy Cline (Maine State Music Theatre), *The Wiz* and *Oliver!* (Lobero Theater), *The Man in the Newspaper Hat* (45th St. Theater), *The Glass Menagerie* (Mountain Playhouse), *A Taste of Honey* (Cherry Lane Studio), *White Noise* and *River's End* (NYMF). Film: *The Boundary* and *Saveta's Gift* (NYU Grad Film). LGS Projects: Curtain for Adas Israel Congregation (IFRAA Award), Stone murals and shade structure for Mount Sinai Cemetery, Stained concrete rotunda and stained-glass windows for Hillside Cemetery. Elisha holds a BA in theater from Vassar College, and resides in the San Fernando Valley with his fiancée, Anna, and their St. Bernard, Nana.

Florence Bunzel (Costume Design) Television: *Tales from the Crypt* (1989,1990), ABC's *Camp Wilder* (1993), Nickelodeon's *All That*, *Drake and Josh*, *The Amanda Show* (1996-2002) Carley-Werner's *Grounded For Life* & *The Tracy Morgan Show* (2002-2005) Film: *Highway to Hell* (1989), *The Perfect Game* (2007), *Movie 43* (2010) Theater: *The Rug Merchants of Chaos* Pasadena Playhouse (1991), *Gravity Shoes* Hudson Avenue Theater (1996), *Complexity* New American Theater(1996), *63 Trillion* New American Theater (2015)

Ian James (Lighting Design) graduated from Chapman University with a BA in Technical Theatre. He follows his passion for the arts through lighting design for theatre, dance, nightclubs, live music events and music festivals.

Tom Jones (Projection & Sound Design) has previously designed for the Wallis's Inaugural Gala, *Love, Noel*, *Baseball Swing*, and *Trumpet of the Swan*, *At Home at the Zoo*, Sorting Room [2016-17], The Wallis Mancini Celebration (the Wallis), *The Who's Tommy*, *In the Heights*, *The Three Penny Opera*, Lipinsky Family Jewish Arts festivals, Federal Jazz Project, *Superior Donuts*, and *A Hammer, a Bell, and a Song to Sing* (SD Rep), *Fried Chicken and Latkes*, *Not That Jewish* (JWT)

Mark Adler (Composer) is an Emmy-winning composer and music director with over 80 film scores to his credit, including the Oscar-nominated feature documentary *Food, Inc.* Other film scores include Barra Grant's *Love Hurts* and *Life Of The Party*; *Focus* (based on Arthur Miller's novel and starring William H. Macy and Laura Dern); *Bottle Shock* (with Alan Rickman and Chris Pine); *Picture Bride* (with Youki Kudoh and Toshiro Mifune); HBO's *The Rat Pack* (with Don Cheadle, Ray Liotta and Joe Mantegna). With roots as a singer-songwriter, he has toured with former Grateful Dead vocalist Donna Jean Godchaux (a

high point was an appearance at San Francisco's Fillmore Auditorium.) He recently performed an evening of his songs at Pacific Resident Theater's Sunday Concert Series. Mark is beyond excited to be working with the great team on this production, his first music for the theater. With much gratitude to Barra, and thanks to Joanie.

Phil Gold (Production Stage Manager) is pleased to rejoin *Miss America's Ugly Daughter*, after subbing in on its previous run at The Edye at the Broad Stage last summer. Other credits include *Soul Doctor* (International Tour), *Sisterella* (European Tour), *In a Booth at Chasen's* (El Portal Theatre), *Dirty Blonde* (Laguna Playhouse & Coyote StageWorks), *The Cocktail Hour* and *Love, Loss & What I Wore* (Coyote StageWorks), *The Wonderful Winter of Oz* and *A Cinderella Christmas* (Lythgoe Family Panto), *Hold These Truths* and *Smokey Joe's Café* (Pasadena Playhouse), *I Only Have Eyes For You* (Montalban Theater), *Billy Elliot*, *Les Misérables, Next to Normal,* and *Smokey Joe's Café* (McCoy Rigby), and *Forever Plaid* (Cabrillo Music Theatre), among others.

C. Raul Espinoza (Marketing Director) is a dedicated and passionate theatrical marketing consultant/producer with a career spanning 16-years. Raul was Marketing Associate and Audience Development Manager (2002- 2009) at Center Theatre Group. As an independent consultant, Raul worked on Broadway Tours of *In The Heights, West Side Story,* and John Leguizamo's *Sexaholix...A Love Story* and *Ghetto Klown*. In NYC he worked for The Public Theater's *Richard III* starring Ron Cephas Jones, *Into the Woods* and *Wild With Happy.* Raul consulted numerous local theatre companies and productions in L.A. A career highlight for Raul was the 5th Anniversary Broadway Reunion concert of *In The Heights* in Washington Heights. This past year Raul consulted the Geffen Playhouse's *The Untranslatable Secret of Nikki Corona* and the Mark Taper Forum's *Valley of the Heart* by Luis Valdez in association with El Teatro Campesino.

Lucy Pollak (Press Agent) has been providing publicity services to the Los Angeles performing arts community for the past 26 years. Prior to that, she was production manager/staff producer at the Odyssey Theatre, where she co-produced over 100 productions with artistic director Ron Sossi. She is the recipient of a Los Angeles Drama Critic's Circle Award (*Master Class*), an L.A. Weekly Award (*Mary Barnes*), four Drama-Logue Awards (Mary Barnes, *Idioglossia*, *Accidental Death of An Anarchist*, *It's A Girl!*), and a Women in Theatre Recognition Award.

The Team

She has served on the boards of directors of the Los Angeles Theatre Alliance (now L.A. Stage Alliance), Women in Theatre.

Deborah Keaton (Graphic Designer) is the Creative Director and founder of KeatonLA, a Silicon Beach branding and communications group. Deborah and her team combine strategic thinking, creative vision, thoughtful design, and flawless execution to connect people and brands in interesting ways. Deborah works with some of the world's largest and most beloved brands, including Disney, NBC Universal, DreamWorks, Adidas and Target. Deborah studio strives to forge emotional connections with consumers through human insights, empathic design, rich storytelling, and playful innovation and was inspired by Barra and her incredible story. Deborah is so grateful to have been given the opportunity to create the logo, One Sheet and advertising and marketing designs for *Miss America's Ugly Daughter*. Barra has been a dream client or, more appropriately, a beautiful one.

Yazmeen Mirgoli (Social Media) is a public relations and marketing specialist, artist, filmmaker, costume designer, editor, and all around creative. Most recently, she graduated from UCLA as a Communications major, and Film, TV, and Digital Media minor, and launched her debut fashion line Yaz Mania, as well as her production company Yaz Media. Find her at: TheYazCollective.wixsite.com/website

Carolyn Laws (Social Media) is excited to be back in the Theatre, as she studied Theatre at UNC Greensboro and got her BFA in Acting. She has been in marketing and social media for two years in Los Angeles. She also is a social media coordinator and casting assistant for Real2Reel Casting, and a content creator for Forest Nation.

Barbara Koletsky (Company Manager) was as a Production Associate and Costumer on the Broadway Production of *Not That Jewish* in New York, at the New World Stages. Prior to moving with the show, she was the Assistant Producer in its Los Angeles debut in association with the Jewish Women's Theatre. She has worked with Jewish Women's Theatre for the last ten years across numerous shows ranging in roles including Assistant Producer to Lighting Designer and Stage Manager. In her earlier career, she served as the President for a Special Event's Company R.S.V.P. which entailed everything from budgeting to leading a team on day of executions to achieve flawless events. As well, began her career in marketing and promotions at Polygram Records.

The Team

Frier McCollister (General Manager) is an independent theatrical producer and general manager based in L.A. He recently produced Sandra Tsing Loh's hit *Sugar Plum Fairy* at The Skylight Theatre. He was Associate Producer for South Coast Repertory's 2017 production of the show and SCR's production of Ms. Loh's *The Madwoman In The Volvo.* With Joel Viertel, he is the original producer of the hip hop dance hit GROOVALOO. He served as general manager on a wide range of commercial productions in Los Angeles, notably *The Vagina Monologues* (Canon Theatre); *Signs Of Intelligent Life In The Universe* (Ahmanson Theatre); Eric Idle's *Rutlemania*! (Montalban; Blender NYC); and *Pee Wee's Playhouse* (Club Nokia). As general manager, he operated the Coronet Theatre and The Falcon Theatre (now The Garry Marshall Theatre) and served as Managing Director of the Saban Theatre in Beverly Hills.

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Bess Myerson
Miss America 1945

The Life of Bess Myerson
(1924-2014)

1924 Bess Myerson is born in the Bronx to Russian immigrants Louis and Bella Myerson.

1945 Myerson becomes the first Jewish Miss America.

During her tour as Miss America, she is prevented from speaking in certain venues across the country, because she is Jewish. She becomes discouraged and returns home before the official end of her reign. Shortly thereafter she is recruited by the Anti-Defamation League to speak out against discrimination. She writes a speech entitled, "You Can't Be Beautiful and Hate" and, under the auspices of the ADL, tours the country with it.

1951 She begins a lucrative television career as the mistress of ceremonies, known as the "Lady in Mink," for *The Big Payoff*.

1958-1967 She is a regular panelist on *I've Got a Secret*.

1954-1968 She co-hosts the Miss America pageant along with distinguished co-hosts such as Walter Cronkite, while also becoming active in New York City politics.

1969 Mayor John Lindsay appoints Bess Commissioner of New York City's Department of Consumer Affairs, and she becomes the most visible city official apart from the mayor during the years she served under him, from 1969 to 1973.

1979 Myerson publishes *The Complete Consumer*.

1982 She co-authors *The I Love New York Diet* with Bill Adler, which reaches the *New York Times* best-seller list.

1977 She continues her career in city politics as the campaign chair for Ed Koch.

1980 She runs for U.S.Senate but loses in the primary.

1983 She is appointed Commissioner of Cultural Affairs. During her tenure from 1983 to 1987, she dramatically increases financial support to many of New York's cultural institutions.

1987 Myerson's Mafia boyfriend Andy Capasso is indicted. An investigation into Myerson's involvement finds her guilty of "serious misconduct." She is subsequently indicted on six counts, including conspiracy, obstruction of justice, and mail fraud.

1988 She is acquitted of all charges.

1998 Myerson serves as national commissioner of the Anti-Defamation League and endows the ADL's annual Bess Myerson Campus Journalism Award.

Throughout the rest of her life she continues her involvement with Jewish causes, acting as spokeswoman for Israeli Bonds and the United Jewish Appeal. She is instrumental in the founding of The Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City, which houses the Bess Myerson Film and Video Collection.

2014 Bess Meyerson dies in Los Angeles.

Bess Myerson Gallery

Miss America's Beautiful Daughter