NEW JERSEY
REPERTORY COMPANY

SUZANNE BARABAS
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

GABOR BARABAS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

PRESENTS

# HOW MY GRANDPARENTS FELL IN LOVE

## A MUSICAL

BOOK BY
CARY GITTER

MUSIC BY
NEIL BERG

LYRICS BY
NEIL BERG AND CARY GITTER

DIRECTED BY
SUZANNE BARABAS

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WITH
HARRIS MILGRIM
BECCA SUSKAUER

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MUSIC DIRECTOR/PIANIST
AARON BENHAM

CHOREOGRAPHER
JORDAN RYDER

MUSIC SUPERVISOR
MATTHEW LOWY

SCENIC AND PROPS DESIGN
JESSICA PARKS

COSTUME DESIGN
PATRICIA DOHERTY†

LIGHTING DESIGN
JILL NAGLE

SOUND DESIGN
NICK SIMONE

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER
ROSE RICCARDI

PRODUCTION MANAGER
DREW FRANCIS†

MARKETING DIRECTOR
KATIE ROSIN/KAMPFIRE

GENERAL MANAGEMENT
MICHALOS MANAGEMENT LLC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
EVAN BERGMAN & LEAH MICHALOS

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— CAST —

Charlie ..... HARRIS MILGRIM
Chava/Eva ..... BECCA SUSKAUER

## — NJ REP STAFF —

| | |
|---|---|
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| Executive Producer | GABOR BARABAS |
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| Managing Director | DEE DEE IRWIN |
| Literary Manager | JOEL STONE |
| Production Manager | JESSICA PARKS |
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| Facilities Manager | MARTIN FULLONE |
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| Public Relations | JOE TRENTACOSTA |
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| Resident Costume Designer | PATRICIA DOHERTY |
| Resident Lighting Designer | JILL NAGLE |
| Resident Sound Designer | NICK SIMONE |
| Resident Stage Managers | ROSE RICCARDI, KRISTIN PFEIFER |
| Production Assistant | IAN DUHART |
| House Manager/Volunteer Coordinator | KAREN WHARMBY |
| Scenic Artist/Props Assistant | BLAKE ROBINSON |
| Assistant Lighting Designer | JANEY HUBER |
| Master Electrician | JAMES LOCKHART |
| Wardrobe/Crew | HONEY SPOHR |
| Finance Company | Arts FMS |
| Head of Finance Committee | JOHN POCALYKO |
| New Jersey Rep Ambassador | DEE CANTALICE |

## — PRODUCTION STAFF —

| | |
|---|---|
| Associate General Manager | HEATHER ARNSON |
| Assistant Stage Manager | MIRIAM HYFLER |
| Wardrobe Supervisor | MOESHA PEREZ |
| Primary Electrician | JIMMY DEWHURST |
| Assistant Primary Electrician | BEANIE LAWRENCE |
| Audio Head / A1 | MIKE LEE |
| A2 | LINDSAY DIVERT |

Setting: February 1933. Rovno, Poland (now Rivne, Ukraine)

Run time: 1 hour, 45 minutes, including an intermission

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

† Member of United Scenic Artists. Designers in LORT Theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.

The Director is a member of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.

The Book Writer is a member of the DRAMATISTS GUILD

## NOTES ON *HOW MY GRANDPARENTS FELL IN LOVE*

New Jersey Rep was founded in 1997 in an old industrial building in a neighborhood where few ventured at nighttime. Our dream was to develop and produce new plays and to make a lasting contribution to the repertoire of the American Stage. Since then we have introduced over 150 world premieres to audiences and many of these have been subsequently produced by regional theaters throughout the US and overseas.

We gravitate to plays that tell compelling stories where we can explore the human condition together and ponder and learn something about ourselves. ***How My Grandparents Fell in Love*** is such a story. A deeply personal and true story of two people finding a connection despite a world closing in on them. A story of love at a time of rising hatred, the pursuit of the American Dream, and how one mends a broken world one heartbeat at a time.

### HARRIS MILGRIM
*(Charlie)*



Harris Milgrim is thrilled to reprise his role in this timely show after its acclaimed run at New Jersey Repertory Company. Broadway: ***Tootsie*** (OBC), ***Cats*** (2016 Revival OBC). Off Broadway: ***Grand Hotel***, ***Call Me Madam***, ***Paint Your Wagon***, ***Piece of My Heart***. Regional: ***Good Night, Oscar*** (George Gershwin), ***Frozen*** (Hans), ***RENT*** (Mark), ***West Side Story*** (Tony), ***The World Goes 'Round*** (Man #1), ***Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*** (Benjamin). For Beth.

@harrismilgrim

### BECCA SUSKAUER
*(Chava/Eva)*



Becca Suskauer is heartened to revisit Chava after developing the role in NJ Rep's acclaimed run. Nat'l tour: ***Pretty Woman*** (Vivian Ward U/S). Film: *Untitled Jesse Eisenberg Project*. TV: *Pretty Little Liars*. Off Broadway: ***Relapse***. Regional: ***Waitress*** (Dawn). Her single "Nobody Said" is out everywhere. Love to her family, Sherry Kayne, HCKR, Neil, Cary, SuzAnne, & the 59E59 team. Becca dedicates this performance to her grandmother Rose (Raisa), one of the youngest Holocaust survivors.

@beccaflower

### CARY GITTER
*(Book and Lyrics)*

Cary Gitter's previous shows at 59E59 include ***Gene & Gilda***, ***The Sabbath Girl: A New Musical*** (with composer/co-lyricist Neil Berg), and ***The Sabbath Girl***. His work has also been produced at George Street Playhouse, New Jersey Repertory Company, and Penguin Rep Theatre, where he is the playwright-in-residence. His debut novel, "Cammy Sitting Shiva," was published by Alcove Press in 2025. He dedicates this production to the memory of his grandparents Charles and Eva Gitter.

@carygitter

### NEIL BERG
*(Music and Lyrics)*

Neil Berg's Henry Award-winning musical ***The 12,*** written with Pulitzer and Tony winner Robert Schenkkan, was recently produced at Goodspeed Musicals, directed by John Doyle. Other recent shows include ***Grumpy Old Men*** and ***How My Grandparents Fell in Love*** at New Jersey Repertory Company, and ***The Sabbath Girl: A New Musical*** at 59E59 and Penguin Rep Theatre, both written with Cary Gitter. Neil is currently developing several projects, including ***My Cousin Vinny: The Musical*** for Broadway. For Rita & Lucas.

www.neilberg.com

## SUZANNE BARABAS
*(Director; NJ Rep Artistic Director)*

SuzAnne Barabas graduated from Villanova, summa cum laude with a BA in Theater. In the 70s-90s she founded the Cincinnati Repertory Company, the Cincinnati Children's Repertory Company, the American Repertory Theater of Philadelphia, Peanut Butter Theater (a luncheon theater for children), and the Matheny Arts Access Program for disabled children and adults (a model for programs in US). Member of AEA, DG, SDC. Co-founder New Jersey Rep and director of over fifty world premieres.

## AARON BENHAM
*(Music Director/Pianist)*

Aaron Benham is an award-winning music director, conductor, and composer. ***Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*** (nat'l tour), ***An American in Paris*** (nat'l tour), ***The Book of Merman*** (Off Broadway), ***It's All Your Fault, Tyler Price*** (LA, world premiere), Transcendence Theatre Co. (Sonoma), Writer's Theatre (Chicago), Second City (Chicago). As composer: *Bleed Like Me* (film), *Haunts Before Vegas* (documentary), ***Once Upon a Windy City*** (Chicago Opera Theater). BFA, Emerson College.

## JORDAN RYDER
*(Choreographer)*

Jordan Ryder is a choreographer and movement director whose passion for carving out space for accessible, story-driven dance fuels her work. She is the founder of RyderDance, which has presented work in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, and beyond. Theater credits include movement direction for multiple Off Broadway productions, most recently ***White Rose: The Musical***. A graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, she teaches throughout New York City and is a proud member of SDC.

www.ryderdance.com

## MATTHEW LOWY
*(Music Supervisor)*

Matthew Lowy is an NYC-based music director and composer. Select theater: ***Just Desserts*** (MD, AMT Theater), ***Gotta Dance*** (vocal director, York Theater), Sarah Silverman's ***The Bedwetter*** (assoc. MD, Arena Stage), ***The Sabbath Girl*** (MD, 59E59 Theaters), ***Fiddler on the Roof*** (assoc. MD, Paper Mill Playhouse). Tours: ***A Chorus Line, 42nd Street.*** Broadway subbing experience: ***Wicked*** (Key 1), ***The Music Man*** (Piano/Keyboard), ***Beetlejuice*** (Key 2). Composer in the Advanced BMI Workshop.

www.matthewlowy.com

## JESSICA PARKS
*(Scenic Designer)*

Jessica has been resident scenic designer for NJ Repertory Company since 2010. Recent designs include ***Can't Run Can't Dance*** by Gregg Henry, José Rivera's ***Your Name Means Dream***, and ***Comfort*** by Neil LaBute. I would like to dedicate this show to my dear friend, my assistant in chaos and a wonderful artist, Donna Stiles. None of these shows and countless others would have been possible without you. We miss you every day and look forward to a time when we will see each other again.

## PATRICIA DOHERTY
*(Costume Designer)*

As NJ Rep's resident costume designer, Patricia's work includes over 120 shows. NYC: ***Southern Comfort*** (Public Theater — Annette O'Tool, Jeff McCarthy), ***Dinner with the Boys*** (Acorn Theatre, Dan Lauria), ***Academia Nuts*** (NYMF/2014 Best Musical), ***The Devil's Music*** (St. Luke's), ***Love Therapy*** (DR2). 59E59 Theaters: ***Freed***, ***Fall to Earth***, ***Poetic License***, ***Housewives of Mannheim***, ***Butler***, ***Small World***, ***Fern Hill*** (Jill Eikenberry, Dee Hoty, John Glover). Regional: Alley Theatre, Barrington Stage, Cleveland Playhouse, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre.

## JILL NAGLE
*(Lighting Designer)*

New York City credits include designs at Theatre Row, 59E59, Daryl Roth, The Westside Arts, La Mama, Bank Street, The Pulse, and the NY Shakespeare Festival. Jill is the resident lighting designer at NJ Repertory Company and technical director at Montclair Kimberly Academy. Jill has also designed shows for Chester Theater, Luna Stage, Dreamcatcher Repertory, The Theater Project, Montclair State University, and New Jersey City University.

## NICK SIMONE
*(Sound Design)*

NJRep resident sound designer and chief audio engineer for Fenix Studios in Staten Island. Shows include: ***A Progressive Love Story***, ***The Norwegians***, ***North to Maine***, ***IYOM***, ***Wild Children***, ***Time Travelers Trip to Niagara***, ***The Diorama***, Shakespeare's ***Hamlet*** at Bryant Park, ***Extreme Weather***, ***Don't Dress for Dinner***, ***Villainous Company***, ***Capone***, and ***Romantic Trapezoid***. Teaching artist: Roundabout Theatre Company, Apollo Theater, and Sundog Theatre specializing in sound design and musical disciplines. He has credits on multiple albums, films, broadcasts, streaming, music videos, and mobile apps and has worked with up-and-coming talent and platinum selling artists in different genres from Lorde to Coldplay.

## ROSE RICCARDI
*(Production Stage Manager)*

Off Broadway: ***Pen Pals***, ***What Doesn't Kill You***, ***Butler***, ***Terms of Endearment***, ***Martin Luther on Trial***, and ***In The Pocket "A Sideman's Tale"***. Riccardi has been a NJ Rep company member since 1998 and has worked on over a hundred productions for them including: ***The Bookstore***, ***How My Grandparents Fell in Love***, ***A Tailor Near Me***, ***Adult Fiction***, ***Whores***, and ***Donna Orbits the Moon***. Rose has also been a proud member of Actors' Equity since 1999.

## MIRIAM HYFLER
*(Assistant Stage Manager)*

Select credits: ***Zack***, ***Crooked Cross***, ***Sump'n Like Wings***, ***Partnership***, ***Becomes A Woman***, ***The Rat Trap***, ***Chains*** (Mint Theater Company); ***King James***, ***Sense & Sensibility***, ***The National Pastime*** (Syracuse Stage); ***Shanghai Sonatas*** (Master Players Concert Series); ***On Blueberry Hill***, ***Maz and Bricks*** (Origin Theatre/Fishamble); ***aDa*** (La Mama); ***Cymbeline***, ***Capsule 33*** (Barrow Street Theater); several shows/seasons with Shakespeare & Company, Gateway Playhouse, Irish Repertory, Phoenix Theatre Ensemble, Pan Asian Rep, The Play Company, New York Classical Theatre, and New Century Theatre.

## DREW FRANCIS
*(Production Manager)*

Recent productions: ***The Bookstore***, ***False Steps***, ***Beau***, ***Storm of Forgetting***, ***The Worthy***, ***Bathhouse PPTX.***, ***WERK! The Patio Series***, ***Hang Time***, ***BLUE*** by Raja Feather Kelley, ***The Lucky Star*** at 59E59 Theaters, ***Songs About Trains***, ***The Hang*** by Taylor Mac (Drama Desk), feature film *Beau* (Best, Montreal Film Festival), ***Rescue Rue***, NYU Steinhardt from 2014-present. ***Phonemophonic Alphabet Brass Band***, Park Street Armory. Wheelhouse Theater, Directors Company, BAM, Lincoln Center, JACKArts, Bushwick Starr, New York Music Festival, Queens Orchestra, RipeTime, Japan Society, St. Ann's Warehouse, NYU Creative Design Fellowship.

## KATIE ROSIN
*(Marketing Director, Kampfire PR)*

Off Broadway highlights include ***Slam Frank***, ***Diversion***, ***Ashes and Ink***, ***Eisenhower: This Piece of Ground***, ***The Creeps***, ***KHAN!!! The Musical***, ***Daughter of the Wicked***, ***The Lucky Star***, ***She Like Girls*** (GLAAD Award nominee), ***Glimpses of the Moon***, ***Elizabeth Rex*** (IT Award), and ***Triple Threat: (mis) UNDERSTANDING MAMMY*** (Drama Desk nominee). A seasoned director of communications, she has led initiatives for

Broadway Podcast Network, Spruce Peak Arts, New Place Players, and now serves as publicist for The York Theatre and CMO for Stage Time.

www.kampfirefilmspr.com

## EVAN BERGMAN

*(Executive Producer/NJ Rep Associate Artistic Director)*

He has directed sixteen productions for New Jersey Rep—many of them world premieres—and is proud of the company's commitment to discovering exceptional playwrights. His theater credits include work at Jane Street, The Duke, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Daryl Roth, Barrington Stage, Bay Street, Arclight, The Tiffany, and 59E59. His films include *Different Than Yesterday*, the award-winning *Winner* (Amsterdam International Film Festival), *Day Zero*, and *Dig a Hole, Find a Finger*. He is currently developing *The Alternative* and *Life on the Flats*.

## LEAH MICHALOS

*(General Manager/Executive Producer)*

Broadway: Producer, ***Chicken & Biscuits***. Select Off Broadway: Lead producer for ***Beau the Musical***, ***The Bookstore***. General manager: ***Red Bull Theater's Richard II***, ***The Orchard*** (with Mikhail Baryshnikov, Jessica Hecht), ***The Lucky Star***, ***My Life on a Diet*** (Lortel & OCC noms), ***Terms of Endearment***, ***On a Stool at the End of the Bar*** (GLAAD nom), ***Butler*** (for NJ Rep), ***Jericho***, ***Almost Home***. Upcoming Off Broadway (2026): ***Seagulls on Sullivan Street***, Red Bull's ***Titus Andronicus***, ***Carole Cook Died for My Sins***, ***The Save***.

www.michalostheatricalmgmt.com

## HEATHER ARNSON

*(Associate General Manager)*

Off Broadway: General manager: Ivan T. Productions' ***Chekhov + Turgenev***, ***About Love***. Associate general manager: Red Bull's ***RICHARD II***, ***The Bookstore***, ***The Lucky Star***. Upcoming: Red Bull's ***Titus Andronicus***. Select credits: Ephraim Sykes' ***Blessins 'n Lessons*** (director/developer), ***Chez Joey, Pal Joey/NYCC*** (associate director). TV/film/digital: Director, writer, co-creator of the docu-series *HERE'S TO THE LADIES WHO...*; director /concept creator for the *Writers Guild of America (WGAE + WGAW) Awards*. Literary: author of "EMMA: Portrait of a Girl Lost and a Woman Found" (debut novella, 2026 release).

## GABOR BARABAS

*(Executive Producer)*

Gabor Barabas graduated NYU with a BA in English Literature and University of Cincinnati School of Medicine. Trained in Neurology at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and founded Division of Pediatric Neurology at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Practiced over thirty years and also served as medical director of the Matheny Medical and Educational Center for disabled children and adults. Co-founder of New Jersey Rep, producer of over 150 plays including Off Broadway. Poet and translator.

## DEE DEE IRWIN

*(Managing Director)*

Dee Dee Irwin served as director of marketing and communications/associate producer for Laguna Playhouse, spent 12 years as part of Nederlander's Broadway in Hollywood Box Office team, and part of the gang that produced Brian Henson's ***Puppet Up! Uncensored*** at the legendary Jim Henson Company Lot. Originally from Los Angeles, Dee Dee holds an MA in Humanities, a BA in Theatre, and is a proud member of IATSE 857.

## JOEL STONE

*(Literary Manager)*

In 1998, Joel's play ***Horrors of Doctor Moreau*** was NJ Rep's first script-in-hand reading. He has been an adjunct professor of playwriting at Monmouth University for over ten years and was commissioned by NJPAC to write ***The Calling***, a new play that debuted at NJ Rep. His short plays ***Doodle-Lee Doo*** and ***The Hot Roll*** were published in collections by

Smith & Kraus. He won New Jersey Theatre Alliance's Award of Excellence in 2024.

## BRIAN SNYDER
*(Technical Director)*

Brian is currently the technical director for New Jersey Repertory Company. He has a BA in Studio Art from Montclair State University and is a NJ Certified Teacher of Art. Though his passion is sculpture, he has over 20 years of experience in building trades, education, theater, TV and film - including (but not limited to) NJ Rep, Two River Theater, George Street Playhouse, 59E59 Theaters, CBS Studios, Netflix, HBO, and Disney.

## MARTIN FULLONE
*(Facilities Manager)*

Martin Fullone is a professional creative director for the past 20 years in the media and entertainment space. In addition to his passion for working on upcycled metal sculptures he has been working with the latest advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and combining the generative AI imagery with real world objects.

## JT PUBLIC RELATIONS
*(PR/Public Relations)*

Founded by Joe Trentacosta, JT Public Relations is a full-service entertainment public relations firm. For over 20 years, they have handled over 300 projects on Broadway, Off Broadway, and numerous events. Current projects: ***Pen Pals*** (producer), Anthony Rapp's ***Without You***, ***Dog Man the Musical***, and the international hit ***Katsura Sunshine's Rakugo.*** Joe is currently developing a Broadway-bound musical about the ***Six Triple Eighth Postal Battalion*** with Holly Garman and Blair Underwood.

## JANEY HUBER
*(Assistant Lighting Designer)*

Janey began her relationship at NJ Rep in 2004 as a patron, quickly becoming a subscriber. She then brought 30 years of administrative experience in community college and graduate nurse-midwifery education, women's healthcare, and theater management to her 5-year role as managing director. Since retiring, she remains in the NJ Rep family volunteering as artistic associate, assistant lighting designer, and assistant director. Her BA and MS degrees, from East Stroudsburg University, are in aquatic biology.

## JIMMY DEWHURST
*(Production Electrician)*

Jimmy is a NYC-based freelance production electrician, lighting programmer, and pyro apprentice. Recent work at Powerhouse Arts, National Sawdust, and Kings Theater. Jimmy is delighted to be back working at 59E59 working alongside Beanie, Drew, and the rest of the crew! Enjoy the show!

## BEANIE LAWRENCE
*(Assistant Production Electrician; they/she)*

Beanie Lawrence is a Brooklyn-based creative. They spend most of their time at NYU Steinhardt where they work as the theatrical lighting technician or on the road as a touring technician.

# NEW JERSEY REPERTORY COMPANY IN NEW YORK



James Pickens Jr. and Richard King in ***A Tailor Near Me***



Wendie Malick and Gary Cole in ***Closure*** Photos by Andrea Phox

Hailed by *The New York Times* as "a godsend to audiences and playwrights," NJ Rep brings decades of bold storytelling to New York City this year with their recent production of ***The Bookstore*** and now ***How My Grandparents Fell in Love***.

## NEW JERSEY REPERTORY COMPANY

NJ Rep was founded in 1997 with the mission to produce new plays and make a lasting contribution to the American Stage. In 28 seasons it has produced over 150 world premieres. Productions at 59E59 Theaters have included ***The Housewives of Mannheim*** (2009), ***Jericho*** (2011), ***Poetic License*** (2012), ***Butler*** (2014), ***What Doesn't Kill You*** (2021), and ***The Bookstore*** (2026), and are all part of this journey.

## NJ REP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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WE'D LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF OUR THEATER

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# CURATOR'S NOTE



Welcome back to our good friends, New Jersey Repertory Company! This company chooses and produces some of the finest new plays in the tri-state area and their summer season is not to be missed.

After the opening night party of ***The Sabbath Girl***, I was chatting with the composer, Neil Berg, about his upcoming musical at NJ Rep and how much I looked forward to seeing his next collaboration with Cary Gitter. He kindly insisted on driving, and our time together—from the conversation in the car to the musical itself—was filled with laughter, warmth, and sincerity.

On that beautiful summer day, I was fortunate to find a new friend and this all too relevant and poignant show that you are about to see.

**VAL DAY**
Artistic Director,
59E59 Theaters

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## OUR MISSION

59E59 Theaters was established by the Elysabeth Kleinhans Theatrical Foundation in 2004 to grant professional space and expertise to non-profit theater companies premiering their work in New York City. Under the leadership of Val Day, Artistic Director, and Brian Beirne, Managing Director, 59E59 Theaters presents a year-round curated program of Off Broadway plays and musicals that are nurtured and supported by providing performance spaces and equipment as well as production, ticketing, FOH, marketing, and press support. These theater companies receive 80% or more of the ticket revenue and pay no weekly rent to 59E59.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

59E59 Theaters reside on the traditional homelands of the Lenni-Lenape People on the Lenape Island of Mannahatta. We acknowledge the Lenni-Lenape as the original people of the land who were forcefully removed during colonization resulting in erased and excluded peoples and culture. We are grateful for the opportunity to work on the land and honor their elders, past and present alongside future generations for their stewardship and continuing relationship with their territory.

This presentation is not a production of the Elysabeth Kleinhans Theatrical Foundation, Inc., which offers its facilities, when available, for productions by not-for-profit theater companies. For further information regarding licensing this theater or other theaters in this Theater Building, contact Brian Beirne, Managing Director. The use of cameras and other recording devices in the Theater is prohibited by law. There is no smoking in this Theater or any part of the Theater Building.