

Ruthie Henshall

Award-winning singer, actress, dancer and TV personality Ruthie Henshall is familiar to millions through her work on stage and screen, and 2009 is set to be her busiest year yet with a whole host of recording, performing, presenting and writing commitments, ensuring her profile has never been higher.

A long-established star of both Broadway and the West End, not only will Ruthie be releasing a brand new solo album later this year, accompanied by a series of concerts, but she is currently gracing British TV screens as one of the judges on *Dancing On Ice*, which is regularly seen by over 10 million people per show.



This follows her highly acclaimed 2008 performance in the lead role of *Marguerite* at the Theatre Royal Haymarket – a brand new musical collaboration between Alain Boublil, Claude-Michel Schönberg, Michel Legrand and Herbert Kretzmer who between them are responsible for *Les Misérables*, *Miss Saigon*, *Martin Guerre*, *Windmills Of Your Mind* and *Yentl*.

Marguerite was the latest in an unparalleled string of musical successes for Ruthie; a list that includes roles in such huge hits as *Cats*, *Miss Saigon*, *Chicago*, *Les Miserables* and *Oliver!* amongst many others. In fact, Ruthie Henshall, has rarely been absent from the West End stage during the past twenty one years, chalking up an Olivier Award and a string of further nominations in the process .

Ruthie trained at Laine Theatre Arts in Epsom, Surrey, and soon after leaving she landed a role in a touring production of *A Chorus Line* playing Maggie. This was swiftly followed by her West End debut at the New London Theatre in *Cats*, where she appeared in a variety of roles including Jemima, Demeter, Griddlebone and Grizabella.

At the age of 21 Ruthie was cast as Ellen in *Miss Saigon* at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Following this Ruthie created the role of Aphra in *Children of Eden* at the Prince Edward Theatre. The following summer was spent at the

Chichester Festival Theatre performing in Shakespeare, Moliere and the musical Valentine's Day, based on Shaw's 'You Never Can Tell'.

Following Chichester, Ruthie was chosen to play Fantine in Les Miserables at London's Palace Theatre, a role she was invited to reprise as part of the 'Dream Cast' at the 10th Anniversary Concert at the Royal Albert Hall in 1995, which was filmed for television.

Ruthie went on to play Polly in the original London cast of Crazy for You in 1993, for which she was nominated for her first Olivier. Her second nomination followed the next year, when she won the award for 'Best Actress in a Musical' for her portrayal of Amalia Balash in She Loves Me at the Savoy Theatre.

Ruthie was then invited to Canada to recreate the role of Polly in Crazy For You, where she spent three months starring opposite Mickey Rooney. She returned to the West End in 1996 to star as Nancy in Sam Mendes' revival of Lionel Bart's Oliver!

After a further season in Chichester playing Polly in Divorce Me, Darling, Ruthie went on to star as Roxie Hart in the opening production of Chicago at the Adelphi Theatre. She was nominated for her third Olivier and won the 'Theatregoers' Award for the Most Popular Musical Actress in The Last 21 Years'.

In 1998, Ruthie headed to America to establish a career on Broadway and after only three weeks was offered a leading role in Ziegfeld Follies of 1936. From here Ruthie starred as Velma Kelly in the Broadway production of Chicago and later starred in Miss Saigon and Putting It Together, which was recorded for DVD.

After three years in America, Ruthie returned to the West End stage in 2001 to star as Peggy Sue in Peggy Sue Got Married, gaining her a fourth Olivier nomination. In December 2001, Ruthie joined Michelle Gomez and Loretta 'Hotlips' Swit in The Vagina Monologues at the Arts Theatre.

Ruthie returned to the London production of Chicago in 2003, this time as Velma, and followed this with the UK tour of Fosse. Her next West End Role was as Marian Halcombe in Andrew Lloyd Webber's The Woman In White at the Palace Theatre.

In 2006, Ruthie returned to the New York stage, playing Emma in David Ives's two-hander *The Other Woman* and in 2007 starred in the *Encores!* production of *Stairway to Paradise* at City Centre.

As well as two UK concert tours, including a sell-out concert at the Royal Festival Hall, Ruthie has also toured the USA in a series of free concerts to thank the American public for their help and support after the events of 11th September, *New York Loves America – The Broadway Tour*. In 2004, Ruthie made her Proms debut at the Royal Albert Hall, performing a programme of songs by Kurt Weill. Other recent concert appearances include Proms in the Park, *Showtime at the Stadium*, the *Richard Rodgers Centenary Gala* at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, *Music from the Movies* with Lesley Garrett, and Bryn Terfel's *Faenol* festival, all televised by the BBC.

In 2004, Ruthie made her feature film debut in Ahrens and Menken's *A Christmas Carol* with Kelsey Grammer and Jane Krakowski. In 2005/6, Ruthie filmed *Celebrate Oliver!* and the *Sound of Musicals* series for the BBC. Other television credits include *Hey, Mr Producer!*, *Law and Order* and *Mysteries of 71st Street* for CBS.

In addition to her current appearances in *Dancing On Ice*, Ruthie continues to present *Friday Night Is Music Night* for Radio 2 and will be appearing regularly on British TV screens throughout 2009 with a string of projects soon to be announced.

Ruthie will also be releasing her fourth solo album later this year with some very special concerts planned to accompany it.

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