

A classic film still of Gene Kelly in a rain scene. He is wearing a blue suit and a hat, singing joyfully with his arms outstretched. He is leaning against a black lamppost with a glowing white globe. The background is a brick building with a door, and it is raining heavily. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and greys, with the warm light from the lamp and the yellow text providing contrast.

GENE KELLY

A LIFE IN MUSIC



TE AHUREI
TOI O
TĀMAKI

AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL





PROGRAMME

GENE KELLY

A LIFE IN MUSIC

Saturday 15 March 2025, 7.30pm
Great Hall, Auckland Town Hall

2hrs 30mins inc interval

Written & Presented by
Patricia Ward Kelly

Auckland Philharmonia
Conducted by Neil Thomson

'Has Anybody Here Seen Kelly?'
(Gene Kelly, 1959 TV Special)

'Stardust' Montage
(Carmichael)

'The Worry Song'
(*Anchors Aweigh*, 1945,
Fain/Freed)

'Our Love is Here to Stay'
(*An American in Paris*, 1951,
Gershwin/Gershwin)

'I Like Myself'
(*It's Always Fair Weather*, 1955,
Previn/Comden & Green)

'An American in Paris Ballet'
(*An American in Paris*, Gershwin)

'Entrance of the Clans'
(*Brigadoon*, 1954, Loewe)

'Heather on the Hill'
(*Brigadoon*, 1954, Loewe/Lerner)

'I Got Rhythm'
(*An American in Paris*, 1951,
Gershwin/Gershwin)

'You Wonderful You'
(*Summer Stock*, 1950,
Warren/Brooks & Chaplin)

'Ballin' the Jack'
(Gene Kelly TV Special)

'Why am I So Gone (About That Gal)?'
(*Les Girls*, 1957, Porter)

'The Hat My Dear Old Father Wore'
(*Take Me Out to the Ball Game*, 1949,
Schwartz/Jerome)

'Broadway Melody' Gotta Dance
(*Singin' in the Rain*, 1952, Brown/Freed)

'Broadway Melody' Scarf Dance
(*Singin' in the Rain*, 1952, Brown/Freed)

'Coffee House Ballet'
(Gene Kelly TV Special, 1959, Mancini)

Gene Kelly on the Muppet Show
(TV Show 1980)

'Singin' in the Rain'
(*Singin' in the Rain*, 1952, Brown/Freed)

— INTERVAL —



**Performed by
Auckland Philharmonia
Pipers & Drummers from
PME Entertainment
Clips courtesy of
Warner Bros. Entertainment**

Recording is prohibited



Project Team

Writer & Presenter

Patricia Ward Kelly

Conductor

Neil Thomson

Technical Director

Pat McGillen

Audio Extraction

Chris Drozdowski

Orchestrations Reconstructed by

John Wilson & Simon Nathan

Music Preparation by

JoAnn Kane Music Service

Press & Marketing by

Jaclyn Graham, Injoy Studios



**Gene Kelly – A Life in Music is
presented by Te Ahurei Toi o Tāmaki
Auckland Arts Festival with support from**

Platinum Patrons

Janet Clarke & John Judge



Pictured (top-to-bottom): Patricia and Gene Kelly in 1994, photo by Albane Navizet; Gene Kelly and Cyd Charisse, 'The Heather on the Hill' from *Brigadoon*; Gene Kelly, 'Can It Be I Like Myself' from *It's Always Fair Weather*; Gene Kelly and Mitzi Gaynor, 'Why Am I So Gone (About That Gal)?' from *Les Girls*.



Auckland Philharmonia
Musicians for *Gene Kelly – A Life in Music*

CREDITS

Concertmaster

Jessica Mathaes

Assistant Concertmaster

Miranda Adams

First Violins

Christine Haeun Lee #

Ainsley Murray

Lucy Qi Zhang

Lydia Sewell *r*

Alexander Shapkin

Claire Geho *r*

Natalia Harvey *r*

Gillian Ripley *r*

Second Violins

Joella Pinto-Roberts +

William Hanfling #

John Han *r*

Jocelyn Healy

Ewa Sadag

Katherine Walshe

Hanny Lee *r*

Owen Ruff *r*

Violas

Robert Ashworth β

Julie Park +

Christine Bowie

Yuxin Chen

Gregory McGarity

Susan Wedde

Cellos

David Garner +

Chen Cao #

Liliya Arefyeva

Begonia Chan

Katherine Hebley

Martin Roberts

Basses

John Mietus +

Daniel Chiva Sanz #

Evgueny Lanchtchikov

Adrian Whitehall

Flutes

Melanie Lançon β

Luca Manghi +

Jenni Seddon Mori *

Oboe/Cor Anglais

Kira Shiner

Clarinets

Jonathan Cohen β

Jaeyong Nam

Bass Clarinet

Amy Wang

Bassoons

Yang Rachel Guan

Ebbett +

Sam Brough *

Horns

Gabrielle Pho β

Drew Morgan +

Simon Williams #

Taran Plamondon #

David Kay

Saxophones

Michael Jamieson

Andrew Uren

Mark Hobson

Callum Passells

Tomomi Johnston

Trumpets

Huw Dann β

Jonah Levy +

Stephen Bemelman

Mike Booth

Trombones

Douglas Cross β

Ben Lovell Greene +

Grant Sinclair

Timothy Sutton *

Tuba

Alexander Jeantou *

Timpani

Steven Logan β

Percussion

Jennifer Raven #

Dominic Jacquemard #

Shane Currey

Lenny Sakofsky

Harp

Ingrid Bauer *

Piano/Celeste

David Kelly

Guitar

Dixon Nacey

Bass Guitar

Eric Scholes

Drum kit

Eric Renick β

Key

β *Section Principal*

+ *Associate Principal*

* *Principal*

Sub Principal

r *Rotating*





NOTES

Gene Kelly – A Life in Music is a Symphonic Cinema

Tribute to the life and work of legendary dancer, director and choreographer Gene Kelly. Blending beautiful film clips from well-known M-G-M musicals with less-known pieces, including rarely seen television specials, the show is woven together with captivating, behind-the-scenes stories about the making of these magical works. This very personal journey into the unique landscape of music and dance is capped by the presence of a magnificent orchestra onstage playing live to Kelly's dancing on screen.

While most people think of dance when they think of Gene Kelly, music is central to his work, particularly the American popular song of his youth. It influenced him, inspired him, and, in many ways, defined him. Kelly worked closely with composers, arrangers and musicians to achieve the results he wanted on film, and held these artists in the highest regard, knowing it was they who made his creations possible. This evening highlights and celebrates the work of these talented individuals, many of whom Kelly described as the unsung heroes of the movie musicals.

* * *

The number of people with firsthand knowledge of the making of the famous M-G-M musicals is rapidly diminishing. As creator and host, Patricia Ward Kelly brings an intimate perspective to the show, not only through her husband's engaging personal stories but with priceless memorabilia, including rare film scores, letters and handwritten notes.

Since the original arrangements were destroyed in 1969, world-renowned composer/conductor John Wilson meticulously re-created the orchestrations. As with other symphonic/cinema shows, the music has been carefully 'scrubbed' from the film clips, but in this case, Kelly's singing, dialogue, and taps are left brilliantly intact, giving audiences the sense of a vivid live event. The symphony plays, Patricia Ward Kelly speaks, and Gene Kelly sings and dances — a really exceptional concert experience.

Gene Kelly – A Life in Music premiered with The Royal Scottish National Orchestra, conducted by Neil Thomson in April 2018 with sold-out performances at Usher Hall in Edinburgh and Glasgow Royal Concert Hall.



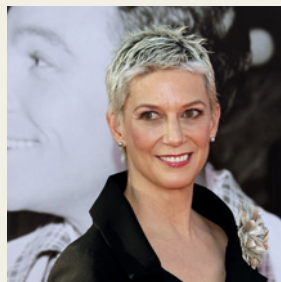


While **Gene Kelly's** on-screen appearances showcase his charming exuberance, breathtaking athleticism and easy grace, it is his work behind the camera, as a director and choreographer, for which he wished to be remembered. Tireless and exacting, Kelly overcame technical challenges as well as studio resistance to accomplish his goal of changing the look of dance on film. In doing so, he not only influenced cinema history but also inspired groundbreaking creative partnerships with cinematographers, lighting designers, sound engineers, animators, composers, arrangers and musicians. As he once remarked: "There are no auteurs in musical movies. The name of the game is collaboration."

Eugene Curran Kelly was born in Pittsburgh on 23 August 1912. He began his professional career teaching at his family's dance studio during the Great Depression while simultaneously earning a bachelor's degree in economics at the University of Pittsburgh. He made his Broadway debut in 1938 as a dancer in Cole Porter's

Leave It to Me! Three years later, after a successful run as the title character in the Rodgers and Hart musical *Pal Joey*, Kelly answered Hollywood's call. His first feature film was the 1942 M-G-M musical *For Me and My Gal*, starring opposite the great Judy Garland.

Over the next five decades, Kelly worked on nearly 50 films as an actor, director, choreographer, writer and producer, often filling multiple roles. He earned a Best Actor nomination for his performance in the 1945 musical *Anchors Aweigh*. In 1951 the Academy of Motion Pictures presented him with an Honorary Oscar® "in appreciation of his versatility as an actor, singer, director and dancer, and specifically for his brilliant achievements in the art of choreography on film." In 1960, he was honoured with the French Légion d'honneur; in 1985 he was presented with the American Film Institute's Lifetime Achievement Award; and in 1994 he received the National Medal of Arts from President Clinton. Mr. Kelly died in 1996 at the age of 83.



Patricia Ward Kelly is the wife and biographer of legendary dancer, director and choreographer Gene Kelly. She and her husband met at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, DC, in 1985, when he was the host/narrator for a television special and she was a writer. Soon after, he invited her to California to write his memoir, a job for which she recorded his words nearly every day for over ten years. They married in 1990 and were together until his death in 1996. Currently, Mrs. Kelly serves as Trustee of The Gene Kelly Image Trust and Creative Director of The Gene Kelly Legacy, Inc., a corporation established to celebrate Gene Kelly's artistry worldwide. She lives in Los Angeles where she curates the Gene Kelly Archives and is completing the book about her late husband. For more information about Gene Kelly and upcoming events, please go to the official Gene Kelly website genekelly.com.

Neil Thomson was born in London in 1966, studied violin and viola at the Royal Academy of Music (1984–87) and conducting with Norman Del Mar at the Royal College of Music (1987–89). He was a member of the conducting class at Tanglewood Summer School in 1989 where his teachers included Gustav Meier, Seiji Ozawa, Kurt Sanderling and Leonard Bernstein. In the UK he has conducted the London Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philharmonia, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Hallé, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Ulster Orchestra and the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera. Since March 2014 he has been the Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of the Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra in Brazil.

The **Auckland Philharmonia** is a leading performing arts organisation in Aotearoa New Zealand, serving Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, the country's largest and most vibrant city, with concerts, events and activities throughout the year.

Internationally renowned as an orchestra of high-calibre performance, innovation, passion and versatility, the orchestra presents more than 60 performances annually, showcasing many of the world's finest classical musicians as well as exciting collaborations with New Zealand's most inventive contemporary artists.

We are proud to support both the Royal New Zealand Ballet and New Zealand Opera in their Auckland performances. We also work in partnership with Te Ahurei Toi o Tāmaki Auckland Arts Festival, Auckland Live, Synthony and the University of Auckland, among other organisations.

Through our Learn & Participate programme we offer numerous opportunities for over 20,000 young people and adults to get involved with the orchestra, in schools and communities throughout Tāmaki Makaurau.

More than 250,000 people experience the orchestra live each year, in the concert hall and through special events, recordings, livestreams and other media offered to viewers globally.

As a registered charitable trust, we are grateful for the ongoing support of our core funders Auckland Council, Creative New Zealand and Foundation North and many other organisations and individuals, who help us to continue enriching our wonderful city and its people through music.



Te Ahurei Toi o Tāmaki Auckland Arts Festival is a melting pot of shared experiences, whakaaro, live entertainment and kōrero every March.

Our lifeblood is arts and culture in contemporary Tāmaki Makaurau. We care deeply about celebrating artists both here in Aotearoa and from around the world, serving the creatives and communities behind the works we present, honouring te reo and te ao Māori in all that we do, and contributing to a better city and society. That's us.

Every March you'll see a big reunion with our city's arts community — many of whom we consider our whānau whānui, our extended family — alongside our mahi towards better accessibility and education opportunities for our audiences. We're also passionate about the works we curate and our

collaboration with the many people who make those experiences happen. We strive to celebrate with generosity; human connection and manaakitanga will always be at the heart of what we stand for.

When we're on, we're on a mission to make Auckland an amazing place to socialise and be entertained in. Whether you're discovering the city for the first time or rekindling your love for its hidden gems, we truly believe there's something for everyone at the Festival.

6—23 o MĀEHE · MARCH 2025

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FESTIVAL.**

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