**FIRE ANGEL**

**London run:** Her Majesty’s, March 24th (42 Performances)

**Music:** Roger Haines  
**Lyrics & Book:** Paul Bentley  
**Director:** Braham Murray  
**Choreographer:** Arlene Phillips  
**Musical Director:** Anthony Bowles  
**Producer:** Ray Cooney

**Cast:** Ian Burford (*Don Piranha*), Helene Chapelle (*Lucy*), Colm Wilkinson (*Barach*), Anthony Wood (*Angelo*), Julian Littman (*Bobby*).

**Songs:** Body Weary, Sun Man

**Story:** Don Piranha is a New York Mafia godfather with an urge to retire and to hand over his kingdom to his daughter, Lucy, and some suitable wealthy husband. Her suitor, Angelo, hoping to impress with his wealth, borrows the money from the moneylender Barach, whose daughter is in love with Angelo’s brother, Bobby.

**Notes:** This show had started as a rock version of Shakespeare’s “Merchant of Venice”. Called “Shylock” it had played the Edinburgh Festival in 1974 and been much praised. It had now been re-written, much enlarged, with Shakespeare’s characters removed, and turned into a lavish production updated to New York’s gangster-land. It was a total flop. However, the original Edinburgh version, later went on to have some successful small productions in regional theatres.

---

**SELL OUT**

**London run:** National Theatre (Cottesloe), May 9th (Guest season)

**Music:** Liza Martin  
**Book:** Tom Kempinski & Roger Smith  
**Director:** David Scase  
**Choreographer:** Annabel Sease

**Cast:** Included: Brian Southwood (*Ramsay MacDonald*), Lavinia Bertram, Stephen Rayment

**Songs:** Included: Gradually

**Story:** The show opens with the Wall Street Crash, moves to the grim march of the unemployed, and scenes of soup kitchens, election street meetings, clashes with the police and tells the story of Ramsay MacDonald, the first Labour Leader to be elected Prime Minister, and how he ended by leading a National Government which made cuts in the workers’ unemployment pay in order to please the international financiers. The wealthy are portrayed as “bright young things” of the flapper age, stockbrokers in striped blazers and boaters, and the underlying theme is of labour’s treachery to the workers. This was a piece of Brechtian agit-prop on a guest visit from the Manchester Library Theatre.

---

**GODSPELL (1st Revival)**

**London run:** Her Majesty’s, May 10th (6 week season)

**Music & Lyrics:** Stephen Schwartz  
**Book:** John-Michael Tebelak  
**Director:** Robert Cheeseman  
**Choreographer:** Rowan Stuart  
**Producer:** Cameron Mackintosh

**Cast:** Allan Love (*Jesus*), Susan Beagley, Paul Burton, Anna Daventry, Paul Kerryson, Edward Newborn, Valerie Minifie, Janet Shaw, Andrew Secombe.

**Notes:** This was a short “fill-in” following the collapse of “Fire Angel - it was already on a UK tour. (See Original London Production: Wyndham’s, November 17th 1971)
**LIONEL**

**London run:** New London, May 16th (5 weeks)

**Music & Lyrics:** Lionel Bart

**Book:** Allan Warren & John Wells

**Director:** Gillian Gregory

**Producer:** David Shaw

**Cast:** Todd Carty (*Young Lionel*), Clarke Peters (*Rick*), Avis Bunnage (*Ma*), Adrienne Posta (*Dawn*), Hugh Futcher (*Bernard*), Marian Montgomery (*Darling*), Aubrey Woods (*Cock*)

**Notes:** This was a musical version of his life-story, created from the works of Lionel Bart. It marked the stage debut of a 13 year old Todd Carty. It has a large, cumbersome set and was staged as a full-scale musical, costing around £250,000 at the time. It received terrible notices, closed after five weeks, and lost every penny.

---

**SOMETHING’S AFOOT**

**London run:** Ambassadors’ Theatre, June 17th (232 Performances)

**Music, Lyrics & Book:** James McDonald, David Vos & Robert Gerlach

**Additional music:** Ed Linderman

**Director-Choreographer:** Tony Tanner

**Musical Director:** Ian MacPherson

**Producer:** Danny O’Donovan & Alan Cluer

**Cast:** Michael Bevis (*Clive the Butler*), Ruth Madoc (*Lettie*), Peter Rutherford (*Flint*), Robert Dornig (*Dr Grayburn*), Dudley Stevens (*Nigel Rancour*), Sheila Bernette (*Miss Tweed*), Sally Smith (*Hope Langdon*), Joyce Grant (*Lady Grace*), Peter Bayliss (*Col. Gillweather*), Martin Smith (*Geoffrey*)

**Songs:** A Marvellous Weekend, The Man with the Ginger Moustache, Suspicious, The Legal Heir, You Fell Out of the Sky, I Owe it All

**Story:** A group of people are invited to Lord Dudley Rancour’s lakeside estate for the weekend, and when his Lordship is found dead, it’s a race against time to find out whodunnit. Clive, the butler is the first to die (due to an exploding balustrade) and throughout the show all the characters are killed off by complex and comical booby traps: Lettie, the maid (ground to bits in a giant vase), Flint, the caretaker (gas explosion), Dr Grayburn (poison gas in the telephone), Nigel, the black sheep of the family (bashed in the bonce by a sconce), and so on. Miss Tweed, as the self-appointed detective, quickly takes charge of the situation. At the end, it turns out that everyone invited could possibly stand in the way of young Hope Langdon, inheriting the estate and receiving his Lordship’s fortune. Prior to his death he has booby-trapped the house so that all the would-be heirs are killed – but sadly the deaths include Hope herself. Everyone is dead. Or are they???

**Notes:** Nominated for Best Musical of the Year, this was a send-up of the “whodunit” thrillers – in this case especially based on Agatha Christie’s “And Then There were None”, in which all the characters die in the course of the play. In spite of its “terribly British” style, it originated in America, and Tessie O’Shea played Miss Tweed on Broadway.
**SLEAK**

**London run:** Royal Court, July 20th (4 performances) Returned to Royal Court, September 12th (3 weeks) Transferred to Roundhouse, October 4th (23 Performances)

**Music & Lyrics:** C.P. Lee  
**Book:** Alberto y los Paranoias  
**Director:** Charlie Hanson

**Cast:** Jimmy Hibbert (*Norman Sleak*), C.P. Lee (*Sammy Sphincter*), Gorden Kaye (*Mike Plugge*), Arthur Kelly, Michael Deeks, Bob Harding, Judy Lloyd, Les Prior (DJ) Bruce Mitchell (Barmaid)

**Story:** A pop-music satire, where gormless punk guitarist, Norman Sleak, is spotted by seedy impresario Sammy Sphincter, and turned into a mega-star in the latest pop music craze, “snuff rock”, where the ultimate chic is to end up dying in the seediest way possible. Norman becomes a star and “snuffs it” in an appropriate manner, and Sammy goes off to in search of another gimmick and another mega-star.

**Notes:** The original four-day visit to the Royal Court was such a hit, that the show returned a few weeks later, and even transferred to the Roundhouse. It had all the makings of another cult hit, but it never really took off. The show did cross the Atlantic for an off-Broadway fringe production, but its opening coincided with the murder of John Lennon and its irreverent attitude to rock music was regarded as blasphemy.

---

**AFTER SHAVE**

**London run:** Apollo Theatre, August 24th (2 weeks)

**Music:** Nic Rowley  
**Lyrics & Book:** Stephen Wyatt  
**Director-Choreographer:** Christie Dickason  
**Musical Director:** Nic Rowley  
**Producer:** Cameron Mackintosh

**Cast:** Sue Aldred, Linda Dobell, Nicolette Marvin, Caroline Noh, Belinda Sinclair  
**Songs:** Low Flying Dutchman, Creation Myth

**Notes:** A musical revue written with women in mind, containing 24 sketches from rugger-buggery in the showers (“on with the after-shave, nothing too poofy”), to an assault on a man by three chain-and-leathered females (“everyone knows that a man who’s raped secretly enjoys it”). An all-woman cast, with the occasional man played by a woman, this was a series of feminist sketches some of which made their point, too many of which fell flat. It was a quick flop.

---

**DEAN**

**London run:** London Casino, August 30th (35 Performances)  
**Music:** Robert Campbell  
**Book:** John Howlett  
**Director:** Robert H. Livingstone  
**Choreographer:** Noel Tovey  
**Musical Director:** Clive Chaplin  
**Producer:** Steven Bentick

**Cast:** Glenn Conway (*James Dean*), Anna Nicholas (*Pier Angeli, Natalie Wood, Elizabeth Taylor*), Murray Kash (*Elia Kazan, Nicholas Ray, George Stevens*), Betty Benfield (*Hedda Hopper, etc*), Ken Caswell, Robert Booth, Matt Zimmerman, Dudley Rodgers, Jane Egan

**Songs:** The Ballad of James Dean, What Price Gold, Gonna Make Him a Star, Girl in Times Square, Just One Knock on that Door, Lost in LA, Running Out of Time, Misery Mystery

**Notes:** This was the life-story of James Dean. A lot of pre-publicity heralded a “search for a star” to find an actor to play James Dean, and a young American, Terence Robey was “discovered”. During rehearsals the director, Robin Hawdon, walked out, claiming he could not work with Terence Robey. The new director took over, but shortly afterwards Terence Robey himself was replaced with Glenn Conway (who had played “Hair” and “Grease” in the West End). Since the real-life character of James Dean was sullen and boorish, and the songs were unmemorable, the whole thing turned out to be a rather unattractive and uninteresting musical. It lasted a month.
WHITE SUIT BLUES
London run: Old Vic, September 19th (Guest season)
Music: Mike Westbrook
Lyrics: Mark Twain & Adrian Mitchell
Director: Richard Eyre
Producer: Nottingham Playhouse

Cast: Trevor Peacock, Sylveste McCoy, Annie Haynes, Malcolm Storry, Polly Warren, Lola Young

Songs: Include: Flowin’ down the river  Flowin’ on forever.

Story: This was based on the writings of Mark Twain and his “adventures in the afterlife”. The dominant theme is that of loss and bereavement, for Mark Twain suffered the cruel deaths of his wife and three of his children, and he unleashes a bitter and withering tirade against the God that lets such things happen. In flashback there is a fence-painting scene evoking Mark Twain’s childhood in Hannibal, Missouri, and the show is full of humour, with jokes ranging from Jane Austen and the English themselves, and anachronistic comments on the Beach Boys and pop music. Finally, God or no God, the show provides the audience with a happy ending: Mark Twain is joined by Huck and Jim and his lost family on a raft drifting down the wide Mississippi.

Notes: A Nottingham Playhouse production, part of the regular guest seasons of invited provincial theatre companies.

---

BUBBLING BROWN SUGAR
London run: Royalty Theatre, September 28th (784 Performances)
Music & Lyrics: Various
Book: Loften Mitchell
Director: Robert M. Cooper, re-created by Charles Augins
Choreographer: Billy Wilson
Musical Director: Richard Leonard
Producer: Jack Levin

Cast: Billy Daniels (Sage), Lon Satton (Checkers), Elaine Delmar (Irene), Clarke Peters (Jim), Aimi Stewart (Ella), Helen Gelzer (Young Irene)
Charles Augins (Director), Stephanie Lawrence, Miquel Brown, Bernard Sharpe,

Songs: Included: Some of These Days, His Eye is on the Sparrow, Swing Low Sweet Chariot, Sweet Georgia Brown, Honeysuckle Rose, Sophisticated Lady, Stompin’ at the Savoy

Story: Three middle-aged entertainers Irene, Sage and Checkers, showbiz veterans of many years, return for a nostalgic visit to Harlem, where they meet a young couple, Jim and Ella. The old troupers take Jim and Ella back to Harlem's golden days of black entertainment, the days of Swing and Blues, when black entertainers fascinated the white visitors in the Cotton Club, in Small's Paradise and in the Savoy Ballroom.

Notes: This was a “compilation” revue, with a token plot around which a whole string of song and dance numbers were created. It ran for 766 performances on Broadway.
**I LOVE MY WIFE**

**London run:** Prince of Wales, October 6th (401 Performances)

**Music:** Cy Coleman

**Lyrics & Book:** Michael Stewart

**Director:** Gene Saks

**Choreographer:** Onna White

**Producer:** Harold Fielding

**Cast:** Ben Cross (Wally), Richard Beckinsale (Alvin), Deborah Fallender (Cleo), Liz Robertson (Monica), Adrian Brown, Bob Emmines, Simon Woolf, David Brown.

**Songs:** Love Revolution, Someone Wonderful I Missed, Sexually Free, Hey There Good Times, Lovers on Christmas Eve, Everybody Today is Turning On

**Story:** On Christmas Eve, at the urging of the husbands, Wally and Alvin, two happily married and well adjusted couples in Trenton New Jersey agree to indulge in the currently fashionable pursuit of wife-swapping. From what they’ve heard it’s all the rage, so they decide to arrange a foursome. The wives, Cleo and Monica, are happy to fall in with the idea, which will add some excitement to the festive season. Of course, because they are basically decent, clean-living people, they abandon the plan at the last minute because, as the men sing, “I love my wife”.

**Notes:** Based on a French comedy by Luis Rego. The cast of four was augmented with an instrumental quartet who doubled as friends and occasionally added their own thoughts and songs. The songs were treated as comments on the morals and ideas of the time rather than as integrated numbers.

---

**MAGGIE**

**London run:** Shaftesbury Theatre, October 12th (42 Performances)

**Music, Lyrics and Book:** Michael Wild

**Director:** Tom Hawkes

**Choreographer:** Sally Gilpin

**Cast:** Anna Neagle (Comtesse de la Briere), Anna Sharkey (Maggie), Peter Gale (John Shand), Briony McRoberts (Lady Sybil), Leonard Fenton (Alick Wylie), Clifton Todd (James Wylie), Mark Brackenbury (David Wylie)

**Story:** The Wylie family is worried about their daughter, Maggie, a plain young woman who they fear will never be married. (Everyone sees Maggie as rather dull, domestic and not too bright, except the witty Comtesse de la Briere, who recognises her intelligence and drive.) They discover a penniless young student, John Shand, has been breaking into their library to read books he cannot afford for his University course. The Wylies strike a deal: they will pay for his education if, at the end of five years, he agrees to marry Maggie. John honours his commitment to Maggie, marrying her although he does not love her. John aims to become a Member of Parliament, and Maggie uses her intelligence and connections to get him elected, but never allowing him to see that she is the power behind his rise to fame. Eventually John decides his wife is too plain for his new status, and he begins an affair with the beautiful Lady Sybil Lazenby. Maggie is prepared to give up her husband if Sybil can help advance his career more than she herself can. However, when John is preparing a speech that will make or break his career, he realises Sybil is no help to him, and Maggie is his inspiration

**Notes:** Adapted from J.M.Barrie’s play “What Every Woman Knows”, this originated at the Billingham Forum. It was too old-fashioned and predictable for most of the critics and had a very short run.
**ELVIS**

**London run:** Astoria, November 28th (614 Performances)
**Music & Lyrics:** Various
**Director:** Jack Good
**Choreographer:** Carole Todd
**Musical Director:** Keith Strachan
**Producer:** Ray Cooney

**Cast:** Timothy Whitnall (*Young Elvis*), Shakin’ Stevens (*Middle Elvis*), P.J. Proby (*Older Elvis*), Helen Baker, Tanith Banbury, Anna Macleod, Yael O’Dwyer, Richard Ashley, Paul Felber, Stephen Leigh, Richard Piper, Shaun Simon

**Songs:** Included: Heartbreak Hotel, Blue Suede Shoes, Hound Dog, Love Me Tender, Jailhouse Rock, Are You Lonesome Tonight, etc.

**Story:** The musical tells the story of Elvis Presley's life and career, from the beginning until his death. Elvis was portrayed by three actors each covering Elvis in his early years, Elvis in his army and movie star years; and Elvis in his Las Vegas years.

**Notes:** An unknown Tracy Ullman was understudy and stand-by in this show. During the run P.J. Proby was replaced with Bogdan Kominowski.

---

**DRAKE’S DREAM**

**London run:** Shaftesbury Theatre, December 7th
  Transfer to Westminster Theatre, Feb 1st 1978 (82 Performances)
**Music & Lyrics:** Lynne and Richard Riley
**Director:** Nicolas Young

**Cast:** Paul Jones (*Francis Drake*), Donald Scott (*Burleigh*), Janet Shaw (*Mary Drake*), Caro Gurney (*Queen Elizabeth*), Bill Bradley (*Philip of Spain*), David Burt (*Thomas Doughty*)

**Songs:** Listen all you Sea Dogs, At the Court of Queen Elizabeth, I’ve Always Had a Dream, When the Winds Command us Away, Nova Albion, God of the Waters, Sailing Around

**Story:** Advertised as “come sailing round the world with Paul Jones in a funtastic (sic) musical adventure for all the family”. It was a history lesson with a lot of anachronisms – King Philip of Spain talking to Queen Elizabeth 1st from a telephone box – and a lot of references to TV shows and pantomime business. After the Christmas season it was re-directed and toned down by a new director, Ken Hill, for a transfer to the Westminster Theatre. However, it lasted less than four weeks in its new form.

---

**HANS ANDERSEN (Revival)**

**London run:** Palladium, December 19th (6 months?)
**Music & Lyrics:** Frank Loesser
**Book:** Beverley Cross
**Director:** Tommy Steele
**Choreographer:** Irving Davies
**Producer:** Harold Fielding

**Cast:** Tommy Steele (*Hans*), Sally Ann Howes (*Jenny Lind*), Anthony Valentine (*Otto*), Lila Kaye (*Louise Meisling*), Geoffrey Toone (*Max Klaus*), Simon Adams (*Jonas*)

**Notes:** See Original Production: Palladium, December 17th 1974
OLIVER (2nd Revival)
London run: Albery Theatre, December 21st (1,139 Performances)
Music, Lyrics, Book: Lionel Bart
Director: Robin Midgley & Larry Oaks
Choreographer: David Phethean
Musical Director: Chris Walker
Producer: Cameron Mackintosh

Cast: Roy Hudd (Fagin), Gillian Burns (Nancy),
Michael Atwell (Bill Sykes), Marcus D'Amico (Oliver),
Stephen Kebell (Artful Dodger), Robert Bridges (Mr Bumble),
Joan Turner (Widow Corney), Graham Hamilton (Mr Sowerberry)

This second revival was a Haymarket Leicester production which toured under the management of Cameron Mackintosh.

Notes: See Original production: New Theatre, June 1960
First Revival: Piccadilly Theatre, April 1967.

THE POINT (Revival)
London run: Mermaid Theatre, December 22nd (Christmas season)
Music & Lyrics: Harry Nilsson
Adaptation: Ron Pember & Bernard Miles
Director: Colin Bennett
Choreographer: Gillian Gregory
Musical Director: Mike McNaught

Cast: Davy Jones (Oblio), Micky Dolenz (The Count's Kid),
Colin Bennett (The Count), David Claridge (Arrow),
Noel Howlett (The King), Clovissa Newcombe,
Mark Penfold, Roy Sampson, Gary Taylor

This revival, a completely new production, one year later, offered two star-names from the Monkees pop group, Davy Jones and Micky Dolenz.

Notes: See Original London production:
Mermaid Theatre, December 16th 1976