



FOREVER PLAID

Written and Originally Directed and Choreographed by

STUART ROSS

Musical Continuity Supervision and Arrangements by

JAMES RAITT

Originally Produced by

GENE WOLSK



*“Screamingly funny! Entirely enchanting, utterly entertaining, awesome!
.. will put a smile on your face, a hum in your throat and a tap to your feet!*

NEW YORK POST

“Letter-perfect! Sweet, funny and thoroughly amusing!”

THE NEW YORK TIMES

“The laughter doesn’t stop!... Delightful, original and funny!”

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MUSIC - FILM - THEATRE

“FOREVER PLAID”
(Executive Brief)



One of the most popular and successful musicals in recent memory, this deliciously goofy revue centers on four young, eager male singers killed in a car crash on the way to their first big concert, and now miraculously revived for the posthumous chance to fulfill their dreams and perform the show that never was.

Run Time: approx. 80 minutes (plus intermission)
Cast Size: 4
Band Size: 2 (Piano & Stand-up Bass)
Musical Styles: Pop

Cast Notes: FRANCIS - the Leader and caretaker of the group (Second Tenor - Lyric Baritone)
SPARKY - the clown-the-imp-the-scamp (Baritone)
JINX - the shy one (Tenor)
SMUDGE - the worrier (Bass)

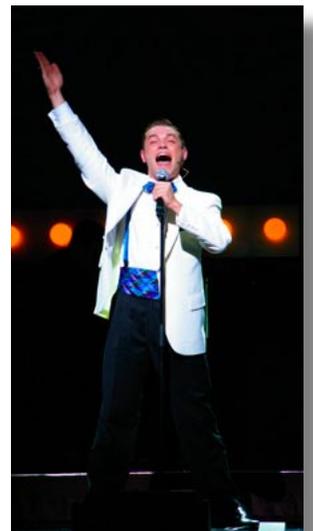
Popular Songs: Love Is A Many Splendored Thing
Three Coins In the Fountain
Heart And Soul
Sixteen Tons
Catch A Falling Star
Day-O

Off-Broadway: Opened May 20th, 1990, New York City (original Production)

RGAProduction: Casino Rama, Rama, Ontario, Canada
Fallsview Casino Resort, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada

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“Forever Plaid” - Costume looks



STORY SYNOPSIS

Book by: Stuart Ross

Music: VARIOUS

Lyrics: VARIOUS

Musical Continuity Supervision and Arrangments by: James Raitt

PROLOGUE

Once upon the time, on February 9th 1964, a semi professional harmony group was on their way to their first big gig at the airport Hilton cocktail bar, Fusill-Lounge. While driving in their cherry-red 1954 Mercury convertible, they were rehearsing their finale, "Love Is a Many Splendor Thing." They were just getting to their favorite E flat diminished seventh chord when they were slammed broadside by a school bus filled with eager Catholic teens from out of Harrisburg. The teens were on their way to witness the Beatles make their U.S. television debut on the Ed Sullivan show, and miraculously escaped uninjured.

The harmony group, however, was killed instantly.

The Show Opens - The setting is simple: four microphones, a piano and the bass. From the back of the house we hear heavenly voices chanting. Four men carrying candles and dressed in white dinner jackets walk through the audience, singing, "Deus Ex Plaid." Francis, the leader and most confident member of the group, leads them through the audience, "Holy Canoli! We're finally back on earth." While they're still technically dead they have their voices, and bodies, and dinner jackets. They talk to the audience trying to figure out what year it is. More than 20 years! To fight the tension caused by 20-plus years in limbo, they decide to sing. Sparky pipes in, "We could make the biggest comeback since Lazarus!"

"And now, for the first time on this or any other planet. Forever Plaid!" They sing, "Three Coins in the Fountain." As the song ends, Sparky addresses the audience, "We're Forever Plaid, and we're dead." He explains to the audience that, though they never got to do the show when they were a live, the stars have conspired with the expanding holes in the ozone layer to do the show now. They introduce themselves to the audience, in addition to Francis--who likes to be called Frankie--and Sparky, there's Smudge and Jinx. They also introduce the band. They finish the song and manage a sort of a segue into, "This or That/Undecided."

They decide they've never sounded so good in life. Unfortunately, they never managed to pick up their new plaid tuxedos so they show a tuxedo catalog and ask the audience to, "think Plaid." Smudge dedicates the next song to anyone who's ever been to a prom. They sing, "Moments to Remember," "To see you here, we're deeply glad/ Deeply grateful and deeply plaid."

They decide that the choreography for the next number is too complicated using real microphones. So they use what they used in rehearsal in the stock room of Smudge's family's plumbing supply company: plumbers' helpers. They sing, "Crazy 'bout Ya Baby."

Jinx tells the audience, "we always wanted to be in I-II-II (He can't say "love")" They explain that they were just too busy, what with Jinx' speech therapy and Audio-Visual Club. They sing, "No Not Much." At the end of the song, Jinx's nose starts to bleed and Francis starts do wheeze. Smudge needs a Roloids. While Jinx and Francis recover, Smudge, not used to doing the patter, does his best. He tells the story of how he used to hang around his parents' diner and wait for the jukebox lady. She would give him the old records and that's how he came to love the old songs. They had always dreamed of making their own album.

Not knowing much about romance, the boys imagined that their beautiful Spanish teacher's first name was Perfidia like the song of the same name. They sing, "Perfidia."

Smudge tells the audience that Perfidia means betrayal in love. Jinx hears the cue for his big number and

hesitates. The others encourage him and they sing, "Cry." "If your sweetheart sends a letter of goodbye/it's no secret you'll feel better if you cry." In addition to singing about men who love they also sing about men who work... hard: they sing, "Sixteen Tons/Chain Gang."

Of course, each of them had their day jobs: Smudge was in bathroom fixtures, Francis was in dental supplies, Jinx was auto parts, and Sparky--better dresses. They sing, "The Catering Trail."

They managed to make it into the newspaper. Jinx reads a notice in the Wilkes-Barre Chronicle announcing that though the Bobby Darin concert was sold out, the Lady's Championship Bowling League had plenty of seats to hear the local singing group, Forever Plaid at their next meeting. "This group's sound is to contemporary music as Formica is to marble."

Another newspaper headline reads, "Auto failure leaves star of Kraft Music Hall, Perry Como, stranded in town." With harmonies behind, they tell the tale of how Sparky, realizing he was working on Perry Como's car, yanked out the carburetor. Then, he suggested to Mr. Como that he take in the Forever Plaid show while they waited for the car to be fixed. The performance started but Sparky couldn't take the guilt. He stopped the show, revealed the carburetor and apologized to Mr. Como. In gratitude for Sparky's honesty, Mr. Como gave them his Golden Cardigan. Francis appears with a gold-colored Cardigan sweater on a red velvet pillow. They sing, "Sing to Me, Mr. C," and, "Catch a Falling Star."

Francis announces, "The Plaids go Calypso!" Christmas lights around the theater light and they sing, "Dey-O," and, "Kingston Market." They segue right into, "Jamaica Farewell." They sing, "Matilda," with the audience singing along.

Francis announces that it's time for the musicians union break. Sparky sits at the piano and plays, "Heart and Soul," and they begin the song. The group takes volunteers from the audience to play the piano part and they sing the next verse.

Jinx tells how the only time his family wasn't squabbling was 8:00 p.m. on Sunday night for the Ed Sullivan Show. Francis chimes in, "Brought to you by the Lincoln-Mercury division of the Ford Motor Co. Introducing the new Mercury Monterey, featuring Merco-Matic drive." They sing, "The Mercury Commercial." Smudge announces, "... the entire Ed Sullivan Show in three minutes and eleven seconds. They sing, "Lady of Spain," while they mime Groucho, spinning plates, ballet, Jose Jimenez and Topo Gigio.

Suddenly there's a burst of thunder and lightning. And usher brings in the big plaid box. They look inside, almost take the contents out. They change their minds and take the box off stage. From off stage we hear Francis say, "We're finally like a real group."

The guys enter, now wearing plaid tuxedo jackets and sing, "Shan-gri-la/Rags to Riches," featuring a newly confident Smudge taking the solo. It's time for the finale but Smudge doesn't want to go back, "Maybe if we don't finish the show, we can pick up where we left off." They wonder what it would be like if they had a second chance. Francis says, "Why not? We came back once, we can do it again . . . A perfect chord. One perfect moment. That's all anyone has the right to ask for. And we had our share. Rehearsing in the stock room was our Madison Square Garden. Seating in the upholstered comfort of the Mercury was our Carnegie Hall. The opening of the Stroudsberg Sears was our Ed Sullivan Show. And it was good, dammit? Excuse me. But it was good. Real good . . . it's time to go. We touched our dream. So please, let's sing the last song, and go like Plaids.

They sing, "Love is a Many Splendored Thing."

The curtain falls