

LADIES IN BLACK

Book by
CAROLYN BURNS

Music & Lyrics by
TIM FINN

Based on the novel "The Women In Black" by
MADELEINE ST JOHN

Additional Material and Original Direction by
SIMON PHILLIPS



cspress

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AUTHOR
MADELEINE ST JOHN
(1941 – 2006)

AN EXTRACT FROM MADELEINE: A LIFE OF MADELEINE ST JOHN, PUBLISHED BY
THE TEXT PUBLISHING COMPANY AUSTRALIA (C) HELEN TRINCA 2018.

Chapter sixteen: The Women in Black

Madeleine had been writing plots in her head for years and she had a certain confidence in her ability. ‘I could do better than that,’ she announced to Florence Heller, while listening to a book reading on Radio 4.1 She had an ear for dialogue. Years of sitting on London buses and walking the streets had honed her facility with the vernacular. She understood tone and distinctions of class. These skills hadn’t helped her much with Madame Blavatsky, but they were superb for fiction. Madeleine wrote quickly, on her typewriter or longhand on the back of council notices and flyers thrust through the letterbox. She enjoyed making do with whatever was at hand.

Madeleine had lived outside of Australia for almost thirty years, but now she turned to the Sydney of her childhood and teenage years. *The Women in Black*, set largely in a department store called Goode’s in the 1960s, sparkles with hope and humanity. Madeleine was still experiencing inner turmoil but she believed that there were enough sad novels in the world.² That she wrote a light-hearted novel set in Sydney is, however, extraordinary given what the city represented to her. Sydney was the ‘gothic’ city associated with the tragic death of Sylvette and the stepmother who had replaced her so quickly at Castlecrag. It was the city of the father who had rejected her and the location of her loss and abandonment. But she put her anger aside to write about the past with affection and forgiveness. Indeed, while *The Women in Black* is not autobiographical, writing it was likely therapeutic, allowing Madeleine to enjoy a more idealised version of her home city.

Madeleine drew on the people she knew for many of her characters. The most spectacular example of art imitating life is Magda, the sales-woman in charge of Model Gowns at Goode’s. Magda is a Slovenian immigrant married to a Hungarian, Stefan. Husband and wife are exotic, glamorous and sophisticated. Magda’s confident European sensibility sets her apart from the other ‘women in black’ who are good, solid types, but who cannot match Magda’s style and exuberance. It is easy to see Madeleine crafting Magda as a blend of her French mother and Friedel Souhami, the German immigrant whom Madeleine knew in Castlecrag. In the 1930s, before her marriage to Ted, Sylvette sold cosmetics and, like all the Cargher women, she adored clothes and saw them as objects of beauty. Clothes mattered to Madeleine: she was always a ‘considered’ dresser, one friend recalled.³

The teenager in *The Women in Black*—the school-leaver Lesley, who adopts the more sophisticated name of Lisa when she goes to work at Goode’s for the summer—shares Madeleine’s sensibilities, though Lisa’s family is lower middle-class, a few rungs down from the St Johns. Unlike Lisa, Madeleine did not face family resistance to her going to university, but she claimed that had she not won a Commonwealth scholarship Ted would not have allowed her to go. Some of Madeleine’s university friends saw Colleen Olliffe and her family as the model for Lisa’s family.⁴ The Olliffes lived in the unfashionable southern suburb of Kingsford, and Colleen’s father, Joe, was a proofreader. Colleen worked in the ‘Christmas rush’ at Sydney department stores.

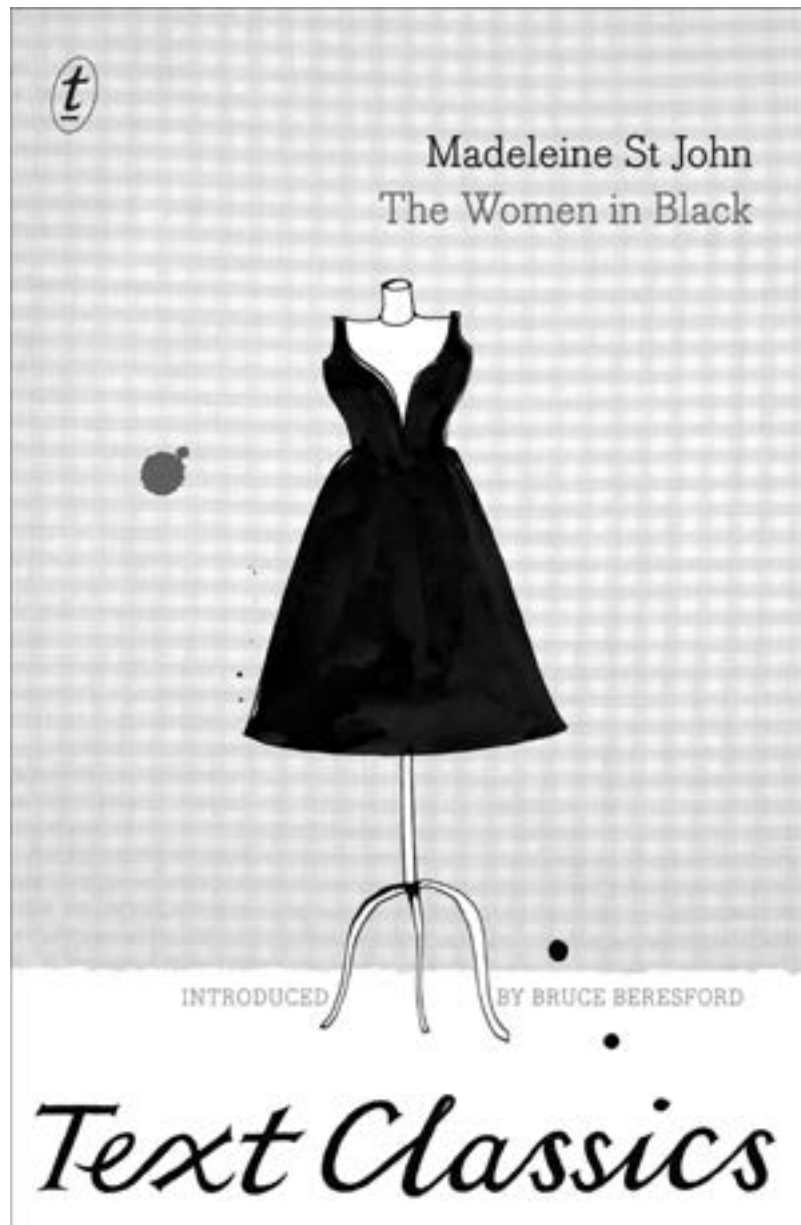
The novel resonates with Madeleine’s emotional experience. Lisa is offered a choice between the dominant but mundane world of Anglo-Australia and the vivid future promised by the migrants arriving in Sydney after the war. Madeleine’s life as a child and teenager oscillated between these

worlds, but *The Women in Black* rises beyond the divisions. There is acceptance as the newcomers show the Australians different ways to live and as the migrants are reshaped by their new country. It is a big idea, this clash of cultures, but lightly articulated by Madeleine. The novel is warm but not sentimental. Madeleine is amused by rather than judgmental of the society she describes. When Frank rushes away after a night of abandoned sex with his wife, Madeleine offers a telling commentary on the Australian male, but there is humour and compassion. In her fiction, Madeleine revealed a humanity she could not always summon in life.

She dedicated the novel to M & Mme J. M. Cargher. Her grandparents, with their different foods and accents, their menial jobs and marginal place in Australian life, were put centre stage. The dispossessed Europeans became the teachers who were ready to guide the Anglo-Australians to a more refined world. As Magda says, 'Ah, the people here know nothing.'⁵

Elements of Madeleine's early life appear in the novel. Lisa's fascination with a special party dress in *Model Gowns* recalls Madeleine's love of her mother's Dior copy, which she was wearing the last day Madeleine saw her. Sylvette's life resonated in the story of Rudi as he looks for an Australian wife. Madeleine was never sure why Sylvette married Ted.⁶ The novel offers an explanation: Rudi and Fay—just like Sylvette and Ted—will both gain from their partnership. Fay looks forward to a bigger life when she weds the European, while Rudi will find a place in his new world, through his Australian spouse.

Madeleine showed the manuscript to James Hughes, who saw immediately that it was a very different proposition from the Blavatsky biography. He sent it to Esther Whitby, an old friend, with whom he had worked at Andre Deutsch.⁷ The company published many great writers—John Updike, Norman Mailer, Philip Roth, V. S. Naipaul, Brian Moore, Jean Rhys and Gitta Sereny among others—and was one of London's most respected houses. Esther Whitby was a talented editor and she thought Madeleine's novel was 'in every way a perfect little book'.⁸ Her colleagues agreed that it was an exciting find, just the sort of writing the small publisher relished. And Madeleine was given a contract and paid an advance of £1000, a small but welcome sum.



INTERVIEW WITH TIM FINN

New Zealand songwriter Tim Finn has spread his wings from pop music to embrace musical theatre and opera. David Spicer spoke to both Finn and a leading lady in black, Trisha Noble ahead of the national tour in 2017.



On the forecourt of the Sydney Opera House the Finn family experienced another moment of musical exhilaration. Last November on the 20th anniversary of Crowded House's 'farewell concert' Tim joined the band, led by his younger brother Neil, along with thousands of others in the crowd who sang along.

"It was beautifully poignant. Tears were shed in a massive celebration," he said.

What was noticeable was the

high standard of the impromptu choir.

"There was a good balance of male and female voices. People wanted to sing and there was a natural amplification which was pretty magical."

Crowd singing is not always so good. He ruefully remembers average blokes struggling with the high pitch of 'I hope I never have to see you again' at another concert.

Fans of Tim Finn are getting new opportunities to hear his songs. Most exotic is an opera commissioned by three companies. Star Navigator will explore the story of Tupaia, a Tahitian star navigator who travelled with Captain Cook from Tahiti in the South Pacific Ocean to Batavia, now Jakarta, on the first voyage of the Endeavour.

"I found it refreshing. The opera world is not elitist but (those I'm working with) are keen to interact with people and refresh the form."

Star Navigator is what he describes as a song based opera. It will be staged in a few years.

The worlds of music theatre and pop music are closer in form, but Tim says they still have different song-writing requirements. He says that in a musical a "song has to pull a story along or express what a character is feeling at the time.

"Also pop music is full of imperfect rhyme, whereas in music theatre audiences use rhyme to anticipate the lyrics."

The idea for a musical based on the Madeleine St John's popular 1993 novel, *The Women in Black*, came



to Tim when he picked up the novel at an airport. He soon rang Director Simon Phillips to suggest it be adapted into musical, and so their collaboration, along with writer Carolyn Burns, began.

The novel takes place in an upmarket Department Store in Sydney.

“It is set in 1959, but I never thought I was writing a 1950’s musical. I composed the best songs for each character.”

Tim says he immediately felt a connection to the central character of the novel – Lisa – a seventeen-year-old girl who is working in the Department Store over the Christmas holidays, whilst waiting for her Leaving Certificate results.

“She makes a daring announcement on her first day at work about what she wants to do with her life. It made me think what would it have been like if I had announced when I was growing up that I wanted to be a songwriter? I had not even met a songwriter.”

Of course not only did Tim Finn become a famous songwriter, but so did his younger brother Neil.

“I was six years older; luckily he had his own talent. He was off and running when he was 13.”



One of the leading ladies in *Ladies in Black*, Trisha Noble, has her own connection to the story.

“It takes me back to my childhood, going to these beautiful stores - Mark Foy’s, David Jones, Anthony Horderns, Farmers - so many elegant top class stores.

“My mum or grandma would take me to the store wearing a hat and gloves. It was a whole day outing; lunch in their restaurant and service by these ladies in black, with beautiful make-up.

“These women were so impeccably trained to be of service. They stood apart with their grooming; some could be quite intimidating.

“I can remember going to these stores. We would bring back these gorgeous dresses. My mother would buy two or three at a time.

“In those days it was magic. Children were mesmerised by the glorious Christmas windows. The 1950’s were so uncomplicated.”

Trisha can also relate to the experience of the young lead, Lisa. However her job after she left school was on national television.

“When I was 17 I was appearing on *Bandstand* with Peter Allen.

“I too came from a protective family.

“It was a bit of a shock working on TV. We were going into people’s living rooms. They took an ownership of us, and would walk up in the street and say anything - complimentary or quite nasty.”

Trisha Noble plays two characters in the musical, who she says are “180 degrees apart.”

The first, Miss Jacobs, has been working in the glove department for over 40 years.

“She is dignified, but is defined by a tragedy in the past when she lost her fiancé in the First World War.

“We are up on the top floor, which is for model gowns. It’s run by a mad Hungarian character who is a refugee. She refers to herself as a refo, which is gorgeous. Long before political correctness everyone was light hearted.”

The other, Mrs Crown, “has three adult daughters, is a bit rough around the edges and doesn’t mind calling a spade a spade.”

There are lots of quick changes of character and quick changes of wigs.

Trisha’s favourite song in the musical is called ‘The Bastard Song’.

‘He’s a bastard, a bastard, a standard issue bastard, a bastard, coming home half plastered, I don’t know how it’s lasted ...’

It comes from a line in novel about the characteristics of Frank, the son-in-law of Mrs Crown.

“Frank is a little bit dismissive. He just wants to have TV dinners and is not very attentive.”

Trisha implies that many men of the era could be classified as standard issue bastards.

“In the 1950’s men were intimidated about talking about relationships. Today they are more open to communicating.”

Tim Finn says ‘The Bastard Song’ “has had a huge response.”

Enjoying the sound of laughter in the audience from the first season he “wants to write another funny song.”

She was being kind to him... “But it is not a parody of people who lived in the 1950s. There was tenderness in (novelist) Madeleine St John’s razor.”

Trisha Noble believes that ‘The Bastard Song’ could only “be understood by an Australian or New Zealand audience.”

Tim Finn has a foot over both sides of the ‘ditch’. He married an Australian and works here often, although he is based in Auckland.

Ladies in Black is the first original musical he has written and he is still getting used to the culture.

During a rehearsal “Simon Phillips complained that the music was too loud” as he wanted to hear the lyrics of every song, whereas Tim thought it was “too soft” as he was used to the volume at rock gigs and wanted the music to wash over him.

“I have found it liberating working in musical theatre.”

He enjoyed being given a deadline and “rushing back to the hotel to compose a song quickly.”

Once he had worked out (with Carolyn Burns) the structure of the book the “songs came thick and fast.”

With the success of Ladies in Black it sounds like Tim Finn will keep scouring novels in airport lounges for his next project.

The Queensland Theatre production began its 2017 tour in Sydney (Jan 3 – 22), followed by seasons in Brisbane (Jan 28 – Feb 19), Melbourne (Feb 25 – Mar 19) and Canberra (Mar 27 – Apr 2).



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Production images by Lightbox Photography.

BIOGRAPHY: CAROLYN BURNS

Carolyn Burns was born and raised in New Zealand. After leaving University she combined working as a journalist for TVNZ with writing drama for children, both in the theatre and on television. She devised and wrote an 18-part TV adventure-comedy for children called *THE RETRIEVERS* and then wrote her first stage play for adults, *OBJECTION OVERRULED*, which was performed by all the major theatre companies in New Zealand and nominated for a NZ literary award.

After moving to Australia she continued writing for both ABC's children's television as



well as the stage. Her work included the theatrical piece, *SMASH HIT*, an anti-drink-drive musical for secondary schools. She wrote several plays for children, one being *BEYOND THE LABYRINTH*, a musical adaptation of Gillian Rubenstein's 1989 Australian Book of the Year commissioned and performed at the Adelaide Festival Centre in 1994. She was then commissioned to create a stage version of the film musical *HIGH SOCIETY* by the State Theatre Company of South Australia. The production toured Australia from 1993 to 1996 and had a 33-week UK tour in 1998. The STCSA also commissioned her to adapt Katharine Susannah Prichard's novel *HAXBY'S CIRCUS*, which was performed at the Festival Theatre Playhouse.

After moving to Melbourne in the mid-90s she worked as an in-house script editor for Channel 7 for the top rating Police drama *BLUE HEELERS*. Since 2000 she has worked mainly as a freelance dramaturge and script consultant, and occasionally collaborated with stage director Simon Phillips, working both as a dramaturge and/or script writer on a number of shows, including more recently, the new Bobby Darin Musical, *DREAM LOVER*. Carolyn adapted the film *NORTH BY NORTHWEST* for the stage (MTC 2015/2016, Theatre Royal Bath/Royal Alexandra Theatre Toronto 2017) and Madeleine St John's *THE WOMEN IN BLACK* into the stage musical, *LADIES IN BLACK* (QTC/MTC 2015/2016/2017).

BIOGRAPHY: TIM FINN

Regarded as one of the greatest songwriters of his generation, New Zealand native Tim Finn continues to embrace the true definition of a renaissance man while fuelling an all-inclusive, creative fire that constantly drives him onwards and upwards.

Having established himself in the early 1970s as a founding member of art-pop-rock pioneers Split Enz and later as a member of the internationally successful band Crowded House (alongside brother Neil), Finn has penned some of the most treasured songs in contemporary music. The likes of I See Red, Poor Boy, My Mistake, Dirty Creature, I Hope I Never and



Six Months In A Leaky Boat immediately come to mind. His time in Crowded House, established around the recording of the acclaimed Woodface album, was mostly co-written with his brother and included the timeless classics Weather With You, It's Only Natural and Chocolate Cake.

Add to this, an incredibly successful solo career that continues to mature and has delivered songs such as Fraction Too Much Friction, Made My Day, Persuasion and Not Even Close. Finn has toured the world and worked with some of the industry's most accomplished artists and producers.

In recent years Finn has been helping develop new work for theatre. Aside from the musical Ladies in Black, which he received a Helpmann Award for Best Australian New Work, Finn, with NZ playwright Ken Duncan and film-maker Sue Healey has co-written and performed in the one-man show White Cloud, a poetic examination of family and identity; The Fiery Maze, a raw and provocative song cycle written with the late Dorothy Porter, which had its premiere at Malthouse Theatre in 2016, and was picked up for inclusion in the 2017 Sydney Festival. He is currently developing Star Navigator, an ambitious work commissioned by West Australian Opera and New Zealand Opera.

Who knows what is next for Tim Finn? One thing is for certain, he is showing no signs of slowing and the desire to create, write and perform is as strong as it ever was.

BIOGRAPHY: SIMON PHILLIPS

Simon began his career in New Zealand before immigrating to Australia in 1984 to take up a position as lecturer and director at the West Australian Academy for Performing Arts. He was an associate director at the Melbourne Theatre Company from 1987 to 1989 before being appointed Artistic Director of the State Theatre Company of South Australia from 1990 to 1993. He returned to the Melbourne Theatre Company as Artistic Director from 2000 to 2011, overseeing the design and construction of the company's new headquarters and the Southbank Theatre.

His directing credits range from new works to contemporary and Shakespearean classics to musicals to opera. He has directed works by most of the great contemporary writers, as well as the premieres of many works by leading Australian writers, including David Williamson, Hannie Rayson, Stephen Sewell, Matt Cameron and Joanna Murray-Smith.

Simon's musical credits in Australia include *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (which has had numerous international seasons including the West End and Broadway), the new Australasian version of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Love Never Dies* (which was filmed by Universal, has had seasons in Tokyo and Hamburg, and the USA), *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The Twenty-Fifth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Urinetown the Musical*, *Company*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Cabaret*, *Dream Lover – the Bobby Darin Musical* and two adaptations by his wife, Carolyn Burns: *High Society* (which also toured the UK) and *Ladies in Black*, which won the Helpmann for best new Australian work. Most recently his production of *Muriel's Wedding, the Musical* opened to public and critical acclaim in Sydney.

Simon's opera credits include *The Turk in Italy*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Falstaff*, *La Bohème* and *Lulu* for Opera Australia, *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni* for Opera New Zealand and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Billy Budd* for Hamburg State Opera.

He has received seven Green Room Awards and six Helpmann Awards.



ORIGINAL CAST & PRODUCTION TEAM

The Queensland Theatre Company in association with Queensland Performing Arts Centre presented the world premiere of Ladies in Black on the 14th of November 2015 at the Playhouse QPAC.

| <u>Role</u> | <u>Name</u> |
|---|-----------------------|
| Lisa | Sarah Morrison |
| Magda | Christen O’Leary |
| Mrs Miles/Customer | Carita Farrer Spencer |
| Patty | Lucy Maunder |
| Fay | Naomi Price |
| Frank/Joe | Andrew Broadbent |
| Rudi/Lloyd/Fred | Bobby Fox |
| Myra/Dawn/Customer | Kathryn McIntyre |
| Mr Miles/Stefan | Greg Stone |
| Miss Jacobs/Mrs Crown | Deidre Rubenstein |
| Miss Cartwright/Joy/Customer | Kate Cole |
| Composer/Lyricist | Tim Finn |
| Director | Simon Phillips |
| Playwright | Carolyn Burns |
| Orchestrations | Guy Simpson |
| Musical Director/Additional Orchestration | Isaac Hayward |
| Designer | Gabriela Tylesova |
| Lighting Designer | David Walters |
| Choreographer | Andrew Hallsworth |
| System Sound Designer | Matthew Erskine |
| Associate Designer | Hannah Sandgren |
| Musician – Drums/Percussion | John Parker |
| Musician – Acoustic/Electric Guitar | Toby Loveland |
| Musician – Acoustic/Electric Bass | Andrew Johnson |
| Musician - Violin | Andrew Maddick |
| Musician – Cello | Kathryn McKee |
| Stage Manager/Assistant Director | Jessica Burns |
| Deputy Stage Manager | Daniel Sinclair |
| Assistant Stage Manager | Pip Loth |

THE CHARACTERS

Minimum Eight Females and Three Males. Potentially, speaking parts for up to 11 women and 6 men.
Optional Chorus.

LISA. 16. A thin, shy bookworm, who is described as having neither style nor beauty, yet emerges with both at the end of the story. Highly intelligent, and desperate to learn more about literature, her holiday job at Goodes teaches her more about life than she could have imagined. G#3-D5.

MYRA/DAWN. A double for a woman in her mid to late twenties. Myra is Fay's best friend - buxom, cheerful and out for a good time. Dawn is Patty's sister - forthright, cynical and rough round the edges. A3-B4.

PATTY. 32 year old, unhappily married shop assistant at Goodes. She has failed to have a baby and her husband is chronically uncommunicative, so she has become stitched up and a little malicious as a result. Underneath she is vulnerable and unhappy. G3-Eb5.

FRANK. Patty's 35-40 year old husband. Described by others as 'gormless' Frank is a tile salesman with little ambition or vitality. Humiliated by his potential responsibility for his childless marriage, he hides his low self esteem in taciturn introspection. G#2-G4.

MAGDA. An exotic Hungarian of about 40. In charge of Model Gowns at Goodes, she is the embodiment of European style, glamorous, educated and beautifully presented. While undoubtedly somewhat forbidding, she has warmth, wit and great insight. A3-E5.

RUDI/LLOYD/FRED. Potentially all played by one actor in his mid to late 30s. Lloyd and Fred are two Australian men on the look-out for a good time. Rudi is Hungarian refugee on the look-out for a wife. He is charming, well-read, irrepressible, a beautiful dancer and a genuine lover of women. C3-A4.

MRS MILES. Lisa's mother, in her late thirties or forties. She dotes on her daughter, is proud of her and wants the best for her, but is nervous of rocking the boat and upsetting her conservative husband. A product of her era, she is neither educated nor sophisticated, but her love for her daughter ultimately gives her courage. D4-A4.

MISS CARTWRIGHT/JOY/CUSTOMER. A potential double for an actress of about 40. Miss Cartwright is the blue-stockings, crisply authoritative manager of the Ladies Department at Goodes. Ideally tall and definitely stylish, she is all business, having dedicated her life to it, but is not without compassion or wit. Joy is Patty's older sister. Exhausted by motherhood and housework, she doesn't live up to her name. A3-C#5 (top note not as solo).

MISS JACOBS/MRS CROWN. A potential double for an actress in her sixties. Miss Jacobs has worked in Goodes her whole life. Nervous and intense, she lives alone and has a sense of tragedy about her. Mrs Crown is Patty's mother. Now widowed, she is a rough diamond who has brought up three daughters and doesn't beat around the bush. E3-C5/A3-A4.

FAY. 29 year old shop assistant at Goodes. Pretty and cheerful, but has had a series of unfortunate relationships with unsuitable men, so she feels insecure about ever getting married and being considered respectable. G3-Eb5

MR MILES/STEFAN. These two roles can be played by one actor. Both are in their 40's. Mr Miles is stiff, conservative and authoritarian. He loves his daughter but firmly believes a woman's place is in the home and is baffled by her intellect and ambition. Stefan is an ebullient Hungarian intellectual and bon vivant. He is a passionate enthusiast for all things literary. G2-D4/D2-C4.

SCENE LIST

ACT ONE

1. THE GOODES JINGLE
(#1) I GOT IT AT GOODES COMPANY
2. THE MILES' HOUSE
(#2) SOON I WILL BE ME LISA
3. THE INTERVIEW
(#3) LADIES IN BLACK MISS CARTWRIGHT, COMPANY
4. LADIES IN BLACK
(#3A) TYGER LISA
(#4) TRY, TRY, TRY AGAIN FAY, PATTY, MISS JACOBS
(#5) SALES TALK FAY, PATTY, MISS JACOBS, COMPANY
5. THE MILES' HOUSE
(#6) DADDY C'MON DAD, LISA
(#6A) SOON I WILL BE ME (REPRISE) LISA
6. PATTY'S MUM'S HOUSE
(#7) THE BASTARD SONG MRS CROWN, PATTY, DAWN, JOY
7. LUNCH BREAK
(#8) THE FOUNTAIN LISA, COMPANY
8. COCKTAIL FROCKS
(#8A) THE VIPER CAVE LISA
9. MODEL GOWNS
(#9) MODEL GOWNS MAGDA
(#10) LISETTE MAGDA, LISA
10. LISA/MAGDA AT HOME
(#10A BALKAN BRAIN)
11. COCKTAIL FROCKS
12. A BAR
(#11) A PROPER FAMILY MAN FRANK
13. THE FERRY
(#12) ALWAYS BE HAPPY LISA, MAGDA, PATTY
(#12A) NEGLIGEE
14. MAGDA'S HOUSE
(#13) A WHOLE OTHER WORLD LISA, COMPANY
(#13A) AWAKENING LISA
(#14) A NICE AUSTRALIAN GIRL MAGDA, STEFAN, RUDI
15. PATTY'S HOUSE
(#15) STRANGE PATTY, FRANK, COMPANY
16. THE MILES' HOUSE
(#?) SOON I WILL BE ME (REPRISE) LISA
17. PHONE CALLS
(#16) THE BASTARD SONG (REPRISE) MRS CROWN, DAWN, JOY, COMPANY
18. COCKTAIL FROCKS CHRISTMAS EVE
(#17) TOMORROW BECOMES TODAY LISA

SCENE LIST

ACT TWO

1. ANNA KARENINA
2. THE BEACH
(#18) ON A SUMMER AFTERNOON RUDI, STEFAN, MAGDA
3. THE MILES' HOUSE
(#19) LESLEY OR LISA MOTHER
4. NEW YEAR'S EVE
(#20) MAGDA'S PARTY RAP MAGDA
5. THE SALE
(#21) PANDEMONIUM STAFF OF F.G. GOODES, COMPANY
6. COCKTAIL FROCKS
(#21A) RUDI AT GOODES
(#22) I JUST KISSED A CONTINENTAL FAY, STAFF OF F.G. GOODES
7. MAGDA/LISA AT HOME
(#22A) SALES CONTINUE
8. COCKTAIL FROCKS
(#23) PANDEMONIUM 2 FAY, MAGDA
9. MODEL GOWNS
(#23A) TRANSFORMATION
(#24) LISETTE (REPRISE) LISA
10. COCKTAIL FROCKS
(#25) YOU DID IT FAY, LISA
11. THE MILES' HOUSE
(#26) MAKE SOMETHING OUT OF THIS MOTHER
12. A CAFE
(#27) FAY'S SOLILOQUY FAY
13. FRANK AND PATTY'S HOME
(#28) I CAN'T BE THE MAN FRANK, PATTY
14. A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
(#29) SOMETHING TO HIDE FAY, RUDI, PATTY, FRANK
15. THE MILES' HOUSE
(#30) RECONCILIATION LISA, MOTHER, DAD
16. MODEL GOWNS
(#31) FINALE
(#32) TOMORROW BECOMES TODAY LISA, COMPANY
(REPRISE)

ACT ONE

SCENE 1: SHOPPING

(#1) I GOT IT AT GOODESVOICES *[AS IF FROM A 1950S RADIO]*

I GOT IT AT GOODES
I GOT IT AT GOODES
YOU CAN TELL EVERYBODY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
I GOT IT AT GOODES

[Music. A WOMAN appears - dressed to the nines and carrying Goodes shopping bags - then ANOTHER - then ANOTHER...]

WOMAN 1

IT'S A MAGICAL PLACE
IT'S A FABULOUS SPACE
YOU'LL BE WALKING ON AIR

WOMAN 2

NO ONE'S CRAMPING YOUR STYLE
AS YOU WANDER THE AISLE
LIKE A MILLIONAIRE

WOMAN 3

IT'S LIKE FALLING IN LOVE
AND YOU CAN'T GET ENOUGH
OF THE ATMOSPHERE

ALL

IT MAKES YOU HAPPY TO DECLARE
I GOT IT AT GOODES
I GOT IT AT GOODES
YOU CAN TELL EVERYBODY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
I GOT IT AT GOODES

WOMAN 4

WHEN YOUR TAFFETA SKIRT
SEEMS TO SWAY WITH A CERTAIN
EXOTIC ALLURE

WOMAN 5

AS YOU EMANATE STYLE
IN THE LATEST BRI-NYLON
OR CLASSIC VELOUR

WOMAN 6

WHEN YOUR GOWN OF FRENCH LACE
CAPTURES ALL OF THE GRACE
OF THE COTE D'AZUR

ALL

THERE'S ONE THING THAT YOU CAN BE SURE
YOU GOT IT AT GOODES
YOU GOT IT AT GOODES

WOMAN 3 & 4

THE ONLY PLACE YOUR DESIRES ARE UNDERSTOOD

WOMAN 5 & 6

SO COME INSIDE WE REALLY THINK YOU SHOULD

WOMAN 1 & 2

AND TELL EVERYBODY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

ALL

I GOT IT
I GOT IT
I GOT IT
AT GOODES

SCENE 2: THE MILES' HOUSE

[LISA is standing on a chair. Her MOTHER is sewing up the hem of her pink frock while LISA (real name Lesley), is intently reading a booklet with Goodes on the front.]

LISA: Diplomacy and politeness, eye contact and a friendly smile.

MOTHER: You sure you don't want me to come? It's a big step, going all the way to the city on your own.

LISA: I'll have to get used to it, if I get the job. Anyway, I can read on the train. Diplomacy and politeness...

MOTHER: Have you sorted your reports?

LISA: And my references. From Mrs Booth and Miss Sutton.

MOTHER: I should write one. Miss Lesley Miles is the tops. Top in English, French, literature, Latin, top in most things.

LISA: *[Still reading]* Mum! Stop exaggerating.

MOTHER: Never seen with her nose out of a book since she was a baby. What does Daddy call you? His busy...

BOTH: ...buzzy bookworm.

LISA: Do you know what a bookworm actually is, Mum? It's a small insect that devours the binding, the glue, the paper and the covers of books.

MOTHER: Exactly. Remember when you came rushing home from the library with that poetry book. What was it?

[Music begins.]

LISA: William Blake.

MOTHER: Something about a tiger...

LISA: Tyger Tyger, burning bright. It's still my favourite poem. Imagine creating something, so scary, and so beautiful...

MOTHER: Scissors, where are you...

#2 "SOON I WILL BE ME"

LISA

TYGER TYGER BURNING BRIGHT
 IN THE FORESTS OF THE NIGHT
 BLAZING DANGEROUS
 STRANGE ADVENTURES, WONDROUS WORLDS
 TREASURE ISLAND, XANADU
 MAGIC PLACES
 FULL OF BRAVE AND BOLD EXPLORERS
 NOT SCAREDY-CATS LIKE ME

MOTHER: Hold still...

LISA

LIZZIE BENNETT, JOAN OF ARC
 LITTLE DORRIT, POLLYANNA
 HEADSTRONG HEROINES

ALL THE PEOPLE I CAN BE
ONE DAY I'LL KNOW WHO I AM
OUT WHERE REAL LIFE BEGINS
NOW I'M TAKING THE TRAIN TO THE CITY
CATCHING THE BUS TO THE STORE
WALKING ALONG ELIZABETH STREET
OPENING THE DOOR...

MOTHER: Turn slowly. I need to check the hem.

LISA

DOO-DOO-DE-DOO-DE-DOO ETC...
WHO KNOWS WHAT I WILL FIND IN THERE
WHO KNOWS THE PERSON I CAN BE
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I FLY OR FALL...

MOTHER: There! I'm very pleased with it. You'd pay at least five pounds for this at Goodes.

LISA: *[Getting off the chair]* Thanks Mum.

MOTHER: *[Handing LISA her bag]* Don't forget to telephone as soon as you get to the store. There are booths in the ladies lounge you can use.

LISA: *[Hugging her]* I promise.

LISA

IT'S TIME FOR A BRAND NEW CHAPTER
WRITTEN ON A FRESH NEW PAGE
STAY WITH ME MY TYGER
AS WE STEP OUT ON THE STAGE

MOTHER: Good luck, Lesley!

LISA

DOO-DOO-DE-DOO-DE-DOO ETC...
WHO KNOWS WHAT I WILL FIND IN THERE
WHO KNOWS THE PERSON I CAN BE
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I FLY OR FALL
SOON I WILL BE ME
SOON I WILL BE ME
SOON I WILL BE ME

SCENE 3: THE INTERVIEW

MISS CARTWRIGHT: Well I must say, Lisa, you filled out the forms beautifully.

LISA: Thank you, Miss Cartwright.

MISS CARTWRIGHT: Do you have your school references?

LISA: Oh, yes... [*Anxious, handing them over*] Um, you might notice it says Lesley Miles at the top but I much prefer Lisa, that's what my parents call me, is that all right?

MISS CARTWRIGHT: I see. [*Slight pause*] Have you read our booklet on staff etiquette?

LISA: Yes, Miss Cartwright.

MISS CARTWRIGHT: And what qualities are most looked for in an F.G. Goodes sales assistant?

LISA: Service. Friendly service. Diplomacy and politeness, eye contact and a friendly smile.

MISS CARTWRIGHT: Well done. So what are you thinking of doing after you leave school?

LISA: I'm going to wait and see what my leaving results are.

MISS CARTWRIGHT: I don't suppose you mean to make a career in the retail trade?

LISA: Oh no! - oh, sorry...

MISS CARTWRIGHT: [*Smiling*] It's quite all right Lisa, it doesn't suit everyone. But as long as you are working for our department store, you will be expected to work hard, as if it were your permanent job. Do you understand that?

LISA: Oh, of course, I do understand. I'll work very hard.

MISS CARTWRIGHT: You start on the first Monday in December, then.

LISA: Oh, thank you, Miss Cartwright.

MISS CARTWRIGHT: You must clock on by twenty to nine, that gives you time to change, we finish weekdays at 5.30, and 12.30 on Saturdays. You'll have 45 minutes for lunch and your wages will be paid fortnightly, on Thursdays. We expect to employ you for the full six weeks, until the sales finish in January.

LISA: Yes, Miss Cartwright.

MISS CARTWRIGHT: Not for the faint-hearted, our January sales. I think Cocktail Frocks.

LISA: Pardon?

MISS CARTWRIGHT: Miss Baines and Mrs. Williams. Two of our most capable sales ladies. We must go and see about your uniform. Have you ever worn black before?

[Music begins.]

LISA: Black? No.

MISS CARTWRIGHT: It's a colour that is both sensible and chic. Designed to flatter even the fuller figure. Not that that will be a problem for you. Size XSSW I think.

#3 "LADIES IN BLACK"

MISS CARTWRIGHT

THE COLOUR BLACK GOES WAY BACK TO THE CAVE WALLS OF BC
AND STILL LOOKS GOOD TODAY ON YOU AND ME
COCO CHANEL IN '26 WITH HER CLASSIC LBD
AUDREY HEPBURN DRESSED BY GIVENCHY

[The set opens up to reveal the full glory of Goodes. PATTY, FAY, MISS JACOBS, MAGDA, and other members of staff join MISS CARTWRIGHT in their black sales outfits.]

ALL

LADIES IN BLACK
 IT'S NOT COMING BACK
 COS IT NEVER WENT AWAY
 YES WE KNEW IT WAS HERE TO STAY
 LADIES IN BLACK

MISS CARTWRIGHT

IT'S NEVER OUT OF FASHION
 DRESS IT UP OR DRESS IT DOWN
 IT ALWAYS LOOKS LIKE
 YOU COULD OWN THIS TOWN

ALL

AND HERE AT GOODES IT'S UNDERSTOOD
 WE WON'T BE PUSHED AROUND
 FROM LADIES COCKTAIL
 UP TO MODEL GOWNS
 LADIES IN BLACK
 WE GET DRESSED OUT THE BACK
 WHEN WE COME THROUGH THAT DOOR
 WE'VE BECOME SOMETHING MORE
 LADIES IN BLACK

WE'RE ON THE FLOOR
 WAITING FOR
 THE CUSTOMER TO MAKE UP HER MIND
 DRESSED IN BLACK
 WE TAKE THE FLAK
 STILL MANAGING TO LOOK REFINED
 KNOWING HISTORY STANDS BEHIND
 A LADY IN BLACK

[Dance break, at the end of which, LISA appears her black frock.]

LADIES IN BLACK
 IT'S NOT COMING BACK
 COS IT NEVER WENT AWAY
 YES WE KNEW IT WAS HERE TO STAY
 IT'S AN OBVIOUS FACT
 WE LOOK BETTER IN BLACK
 WHEN WE COME THROUGH THAT DOOR
 WE'VE BECOME SOMETHING MORE
 LADIES IN BLACK
 LADIES IN BLACK
 LADIES IN BLACK
 LADIES IN BLACK