

DIRECTED BY
JUDE HANSEN

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ON STAGE
APRIL 7-29

TICKETS &
INFORMATION:
LIVEARTS.ORG

An outrageously funny solo show

BUYER & CELLAR

by **Jonathan Tolins**



Inspired by
Barbra Streisand's coffee-table book,
My Passion for Design



STUDY GUIDE

BUYER & CELLAR
by Jonathan Tolins
April 7-29, 2023 in the Founders Theater
Directed by Jude Hansen

The play runs for approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes with a 15-minute intermission.

“BUYER & CELLAR is ... notable for its heart. It doesn’t exploit Ms. Streisand’s imagined shopping mall only for its weirdness and grandiosity. Anyone who has ever whiled away a rainy afternoon playing with dolls, toy soldiers or model trains will understand the primal appeal of creating and presiding over a make-believe universe.”
— *The New York Times*

“BUYER & CELLAR is an outrageous comedy about the price of fame, the cost of things, and the oddest of odd jobs.” — *Playbill*

“Unabashed, confident in its broadness of brush ... and with an unerring command of its comic effects, BUYER & CELLAR is the sort of heartwarminglly savage show the whole family can enjoy.” — *The Hollywood Reporter*

Study Guide compiled for Live Arts by Education Director Ti Ames



Promotional photo by Will Kerner featuring Jack Clifford.

Study Guide | Table of Contents (Links)

[Time & Setting](#)

[Characters](#)

[About the Playwright](#)

[Performance History](#)

[About the Director](#)

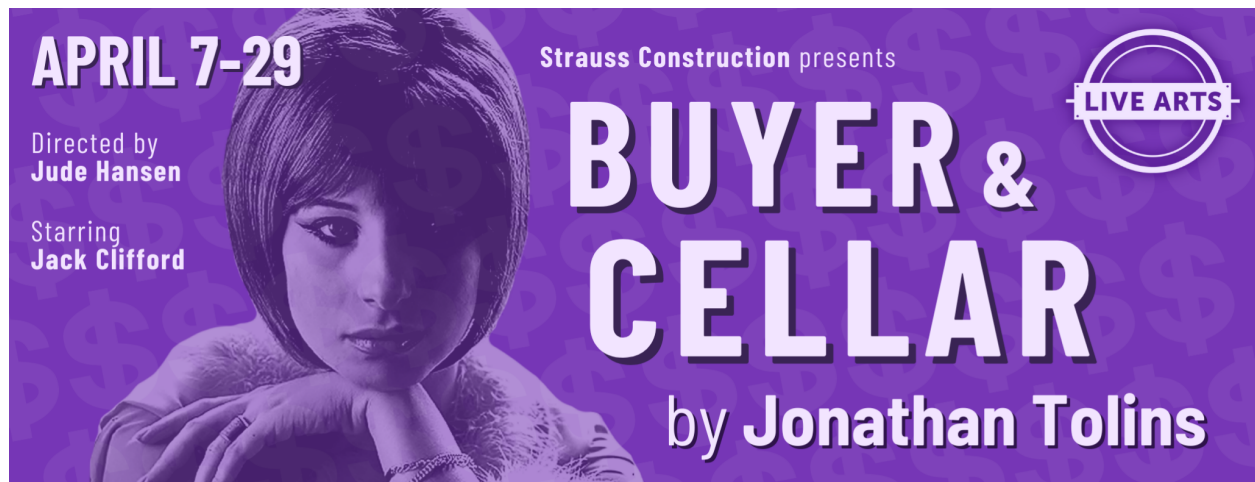
[All Things Barbra: Biography, Timeline, & Fun Facts](#)

[*My Passion for Design: An Inside Look at the Inspiration for BUYER & CELLAR*](#)

[Talkback Information](#)

[Additional Resources](#)

[Works Cited](#)



Plot Summary

Alex More has hit a career road block, when he catches a break and is hired for a mysterious job at an undisclosed location. That location? None other than the home of one of the greatest living legends, Barbra Streisand! What would happen if an out-of-work, aspiring actor was hired to staff the private basement mall in Barbra Streisand's house? That was playwright Jonathan Tolins' question after reading Barbra Streisand's architectural book, detailing the setup of her own private mall, complete with a dress shop, doll shop, and working yogurt machine. BUYER & CELLAR is a hilarious comedic answer. As Alex starts his job, he falls deeper into the rabbit hole of fame and celebrity as he meets and befriends the great Babs herself. But are they really friends, or is it simply a nice camaraderie between a boss and her employee? BUYER & CELLAR is an extremely funny one-man show in which one supremely talented actor plays multiple roles, while striving to examine life on the other side of the red carpet.

Time & Setting

Location: LA and Malibu*

Time: 2013

* 6838 Zumirez Dr, Malibu to be exact.

Characters

ALEX MORE



Rehearsal photo by Jude Hansen featuring Jack Clifford.

About the Playwright

Jonathan Tolins is a playwright and screenwriter. After premiering at the Pasadena Playhouse, his play *The Twilight of the Golds* opened on Broadway in 1993. His Off-Broadway credits include *If Memory Serves*, *The Last Sunday in June*, and *Secrets of the Trade*. His film work, with screenwriting partner Seth Bass, includes *The Twilight of the Golds* starring Brendan Fraser and Faye Dunaway, and *Martian Child* starring John Cusack and Amanda Peet. Television work includes *Night Rap* on HBO, *Queer As Folk* on Showtime, the 2000 and 2002 Academy Awards, and the 2003 Tony Awards. Tolins co-wrote *The Divine Millennium Tour* and *The Showgirl Must Go On*, both for Bette Midler. He has written articles for *Opera News*, *TheaterWeek*, and *Time Magazine*, and is a contributor to *Huffington Post*.



Performance History

BUYER & CELLAR was first presented by Rattlestick Playwrights Theater in New York in April 2013. The show premiered Off-Broadway in June 2013 at the Barrow Street Theatre. Both productions starred Michael Urie as Alex More.



Photo by Sandra Coudert of Michael Urie in BUYER & CELLAR at the Rattlestick Playwrights Theater.

About the Director

Jude Hansen was most recently seen on stage at Live Arts as both Jason and Remy in *THE LEGEND OF GEORGIA MCBRIDE* (2022). In Chicago, career highlights include producing (and starring in) *Angry Fags* at the Steppenwolf Garage Rep Series and directing the award-winning production of *The Submission*. As a company member, Jude performed in numerous productions and readings for Pride, Films and Plays. Jude was also a company member with Shapeshifters Theatre who produced monthly evenings of theater at the Irish American Heritage Center. Other Chicago companies Jude has worked with include The House Theatre, Kinematics, Piccolo, Halcyon, and Redmoon. Jude is a prior recipient of the Australian National Young Playwrights award.



Promo photo by Will Kerner featuring (L-R): Director Jude Hansen and Jack Clifford.

All Things Barbra: Biography, Timeline, & Fun Facts



[Barbra Streisand](#), original name Barbara Joan Streisand, (born April 24, 1942 in Brooklyn) is an American singer, composer, actress, director, and producer who is considered by many to be the greatest popular singer of her generation. The first major female star to command roles as a Jewish actress, Streisand redefined female stardom in the 1960s and '70s with her sensitive portrayal of ethnic urban characters.

Her immense popularity, matched only by her outspokenness, propelled her into becoming one of the most powerful women in show business, noted for her liberal politics and her philanthropy.

Timeline

1962 - Makes her Broadway debut in *I Can Get It For You Wholesale*.

1962 - Signs a contract with Columbia Records.

1963 - Her debut album, "The Barbra Streisand Album," wins her two Grammy Awards.

1964 - The Broadway musical *Funny Girl*, in which Streisand plays Fanny Brice, debuts.

1965 - Her television special, *My Name Is Barbra*, airs. It earns Streisand an Emmy Award and a Grammy Award for the accompanying album.

April 14, 1969 - Wins the Academy Award for Best Actress for her role in the film *Funny Girl*.

1970 - Receives a special Tony Award.



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1973 - The film *The Way We Were* opens.

March 28, 1977 - Receives the Academy Award for Best Original Song, “Evergreen,” from the movie *A Star Is Born*.

1983 - Streisand’s directorial debut, *Yentl*, opens, making her the first woman to write, produce and direct a major studio film. She went on to be the first and only female director to win a Golden Globe, until Chloe Zhao in 2020.

1986 - The Streisand Foundation is established.



1991 - *The Prince of Tides* opens, a film in which Streisand produces, directs, and acts.

1995 - Receives a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

2008 - Receives the Kennedy Center Honors.

September 2014 - Streisand’s new album, “Partners,” is released and goes to the top of

the Billboard 200 album chart. This makes her the first artist to have a No. 1 album in each of the past six decades.

November 2, 2018 - Streisand’s album, “Walls,” is released. Streisand says the album embodies her feelings about Donald Trump and his presidency.

July 7, 2019 - Streisand reunites with her *A Star Is Born* co-star Kris Kristofferson on stage at London’s Hyde Park for a sold-out crowd of 65,000—the biggest audience she’s performed for since a Central Park performance for 150,000 in 1968, according to *Variety*.

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October 18, 2021 - Streisand funds The Barbra Streisand Institute at UCLA. With the lofty goal of “solving societal challenges,” the Institute focuses on four areas the artist and activist is most passionate about.

Below you will find a list of fun facts about Streisand, her work, and her community—both in theater and beyond!

- She was born “Barbara,” but changed her name ... sort of. “Well, I was 18 and I wanted to be unique, but I didn't want to change my name because that was too false. Let's see, if I take out the 'a,' it's still 'Barbara,' but it's unique.”
- She attended Erasmus Hall High School in New York City with Neil Diamond, where they both sang in the choir. She graduated early at age 16.
- She was the first woman to receive an Oscar for composing music, she won the Best Original Song category for “Evergreen” from *A Star Is Born*.
- Streisand is the only artist to have a No. 1 album in six consecutive decades: 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s and 2010s.
- In 2015, Streisand was honored by President Barack Obama with the Presidential Medal of Freedom.
- In February of 2018, *Variety* magazine released an interview in which Streisand reveals that two of her dogs are clones of her deceased dog Samantha, who died in 2017.
- More than just an E.G.O.T. winner (an artist awarded an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony), Barbra is the only artist who has received the Directors Guild of America, Golden Globe, National Medal of Arts, and Peabody awards, as well as France’s Légion d’Honneur and the American Film Institute’s Lifetime Achievement Award.
- She was almost Canada’s First Lady. Barbra was dating Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (father of current Prime Minister Justin Trudeau) in 1969, but turned down his marriage proposal.



[My Passion for Design: An Inside Look at the Inspiration for BUYER & CELLAR](#)

Playwright Jonathan Tolins got the idea for BUYER & CELLAR from Barbra Streisand's coffee-table book *My Passion for Design*, which showed off her subterranean emporium. "The performance should feel like spending time with a friend who has a great story to tell," says Tolins.

Rachel Handler, a feature writer at *Vulture* in New York, muses about [My Passion for Design](#) in a 2022 review:

"Published in 2010 but emanating a distinctly '90s energy, *My Passion for Design* is an exercise in Streisand-ish goofiness and grandeur, unapologetic excess, and near-nuclear attention to detail. The title refers, of course, to Barbra's account of creating her home's design—her self-proclaimed 'intense relationships with furniture' and the meticulous construction of her main home and its detached barn, millhouse, and 'Grandma's house'— but it is just as fascinating to read the book as Barbra's account of her brain's design. To reduce it to a mere vanity project misses the point; it is also a project investigating the point of vanity."



Promo photo by Will Kerner featuring (L-R): Jack Clifford and Director Jude Hansen, holding *My Passion for Design*, by Barbra Streisand.

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“*My Passion for Design* is about a Jewess building a paean to goyish Americana (complete with a “Federal Lounge,” a 4,000-pound waterwheel, and a fictional backstory about post-Colonial settlers) in a conscious effort to distance herself from the plastic-sheathed couches of her mother’s Pulaski Street apartment. It is a rags-to-riches fable that begins with Barbra eating chicken soup on the streets of New York while hunting for knockoff antiques and ends with her eating spelt pancakes on the California coast, trading stocks from her custom-size bed ... to support her Tiffany-lamp habit. It is about the uniquely American optimism that if you never stop buying things, you can cheat death.”

Talkback Information

The audience talkback with members of the cast and crew of **BUYER & CELLAR** is scheduled for 9pm on Thursday, April 20, 2023, in Founders Theater (123 E. Water Street, 3rd floor), facilitated by Education Director Ti Ames. You do not need to purchase a ticket to the April 20 show to attend the talkback. This program is provided free of charge to the Charlottesville community. Please email ti@livearts.org with questions about the event.

Additional Resources

[Barbra Streisand Carpool Karaoke](#)

Works Cited

[Barbra Streisand | Biography, Music, Films, & Facts | Britannica](#)

[Barbra Streisand Attended High School With Neil Diamond! 12 Fun Facts You Might Not Know About the Singing Superstar\)](#)

[Barbra Streisand Fast Facts | CNN](#)

[10 Things to Know About Barbra Streisand](#)

[Barbra Streisand's My Passion for Design: Review](#)



Promotional photo by Will Kerner featuring Jack Clifford.