



KEALA SETTLE IN
ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER'S



BOOK &
LYRICS BY **DON BLACK & CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON**

CASTING BRIEF



Keala Settle stars as Norma Desmond in Andrew Lloyd Webber’s stirring “masterpiece” (The Wall Street Journal), **SUNSET BOULEVARD**. The 10-time Tony® Award-winning musical now makes its professional premiere in Aotearoa New Zealand as part of the grand reopening of Te Whare Whakarauika Wellington Town Hall from **9 – 11 April, 2027**.

Based on Billy Wilder’s seminal film, *Sunset Boulevard* is a hypnotic and feverish descent into the dark heart of Hollywood. The story follows Norma Desmond, a faded star of the silver screen, and struggling screenwriter Joe Gillis, whose shared hunger for fame draws them into a dangerous and intoxicating dance towards disaster. Haunted by dreams of a Hollywood comeback, Norma sees Joe as her chance to reclaim her place in the spotlight. What begins as a simple favour soon spirals into an increasingly consuming entanglement of ambition, desire and delusion.

Alongside Keala Settle are **Nick Lerew** as Joe Gillis, **Chris Crowe** as Max von Mayerling, **Bailea Twomey** as Betty Schaefer, and a live orchestra bringing this iconic, cinematic score to life. With this ferocious new production, created specifically for the restored Te Whare Whakarauika Wellington Town Hall, **WITCH Music Theatre celebrates its 10th anniversary** in a once-in-a-generation event, bringing one of musical theatre’s most thrilling stories to the capital city.

LISTEN TO THE MUSIC

- Listen to the Sunset BLVD. 2024 Cast Recording on [Spotify](#) or [Apple Music](#).
- Listen to the Original Sunset Boulevard 1994 Cast Recording on [Spotify](#) or [Apple Music](#).

AUDITION REGISTRATION

EMAIL US

CASTING

WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

- **6** supporting characters, who will also form part of the onstage ensemble.
- **14** onstage ensemble performers in total, including the six supporting characters, with a mix of actor/singer and dance-focused tracks.
- **4** principal covers, with most expected to be cast from within the onstage ensemble, with the exception of the Norma Desmond standby.
- Up to **8** backing vocalists, who may also cover swing tracks for ensemble and supporting-character roles.

CASTING FAQ

- All character breakdowns are **open to interpretation**. We welcome performers of all ethnicities, gender identities, body types, and abilities.
- We strongly encourage performers **newer to musical theatre**, but experienced in other artistic disciplines (Kapa Haka, choir, contemporary dance, opera, etc.) to audition.
- Playing ages are a guide rather than an actor's actual age.
- Script genders reflect the written roles, but we welcome performers of all gender identities to audition. Please note that some vocal material may not be able to be transposed.
- Performers must be **18+** to audition and are subject to background checks.
- All performers will receive a set fee or koha, which will be established before contracting. Eligible performers may also receive a share of the box office profit. (More details can be found on page 9.)
- All onstage performers should be **comfortable with moderate movement**.
- Performers must be able to be located in **Pōneke Wellington** for the duration of the rehearsal process, tech and production dates.



CASTING OVERVIEW

ROUND 1 — INITIAL AUDITION

Friday 9 Oct 5:30pm–10:00pm

Saturday 10 Oct 9:00am–10:00pm

Sunday 11 Oct (Dance Workshop) 10:00am–5:00pm

ROUND 2 — CALLBACKS

Wednesday 14 Oct 5:30pm–10:00pm

Thursday 15 Oct 5:30pm–10:00pm

All auditions/callbacks are by appointment and/or invitation only and will take place at **Te Whaea, 11 Hutchinson Road, Newtown.**

CREATIVE TEAM

DIRECTOR
MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Ben Tucker-Emerson
Hayden Taylor

Ngai Tahu

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Emily McDermott
Jthan Morgan

Ngāi Tāmanuhiri, Rongowhakaata,
Magiagi, Sapapāli'i, Lotofaga

VOCAL DIRECTOR
CONDUCTOR
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Maya Handa Naff
Kate Marshall
Josh Tucker-Emerson
Maeve O'Connell

HOW TO SIGN UP?

Register for an audition slot on our website today before the closing date of 4 Oct 2026 at 11:59pm.

Once you have successfully registered online, you will receive an email from our casting team in the coming weeks to confirm your in-person audition appointment date and time.

- **All auditionees should prepare the material requested on page 8.**

SELF-TAPE SUBMISSIONS

Self-tapes are available for performers who are unable to attend an in-person audition, or if in-person appointments are fully booked.

To submit a self-tape, select the self-tape option when registering and submit your video via the registration form or to

info@witchmusictheatre.co.nz before 6 Oct 2026 at 11:59pm.

- Please perform the requested material on page 8 and upload your self-tape to a streaming service like YouTube or Vimeo.
- Videos should be filmed horizontally, and well-lit. Download-only or access-restricted videos will not be considered.
- If you are selected for a callback, you may be asked to submit additional self-tape material following the initial submission deadline. This may include dance material, sides and vocal excerpts from the show. Assets will be provided.

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

ARTIE GREEN

Playing age: **20s-30s**

Script gender: **Male Identifying**

Vocal range: **Tenor** (A2 to A4)

Joe's warm-hearted best friend and an aspiring filmmaker, optimistic, genuine and grounded in a world of Hollywood ambition.

MANFRED

Playing age: **30s-60s**

Script gender: **Male Identifying***

Vocal range: **High Baritone** (A2 to G4)

Stylist to the stars. A larger-than-life fashion force with impeccable taste, wit and presence. We are seeking a bold performer with a strong characterization inspired by the likes of: Christian Siriano, Tim Gunn, Miss J or Tabatha Coffey. *Open to all gender.s

CECIL B. DEMILLE

Playing age: **50s-70s**

Script gender: **Male Identifying**

Vocal range: **Baritone** (Ab2 to D4)

The legendary Hollywood director. Has an authoritative, kind and charismatic energy, with a natural gravitas.

SHELDRAKE

Playing age: **30s-50s**

Script gender: **Male Identifying**

Vocal range: **Baritone** (C3 to E4)

A wisecracking Paramount producer. Confident and commercially savvy. He represents the ruthless Hollywood studio system.

NORMA'S PSYCHIATRIST

Playing age: **30s-60s**

Script gender: **Female Identifying**

Vocal range: **Mezzo/Soprano** (G3 to A5, with a belt to C5)

A heightened character role. Norma's psychiatrist and hypnotist, indulging her delusions while employing sensational methods to explore her psyche.

NORMA'S DOCTOR

Playing age: **30s-60s**

Script gender: **Female Identifying**

Vocal range: **Mezzo/Soprano** (G3 to A5, with a belt to C5)

A heightened character role. Norma's enthusiastic cosmetic surgeon, confidently prescribing increasingly unconventional treatments.

All supporting roles above will be part of the ensemble and will be expected to be comfortable with basic movement and light choreography.

PRINCIPAL COVERS

NORMA DESMOND Standby

Playing age: **40s-50s**

Script gender: **Female Identifying**

Vocal range: **Soprano** (F3 to E5, alto lyric belter)

A faded silent-film star. Glamorous, magnetic and deeply delusional, Norma commands every room she enters while desperately clinging to a world that has moved on without her.

This role will rehearse alongside the principal cast and be involved in the production's development. While there is no guaranteed onstage performance during the season, the standby will be fully rehearsed in the role and receive dedicated rehearsal time with the principal cast.

Māori performers are encouraged to apply.

JOE GILLIS understudy

Playing age: **20s-30s**

Script gender: **Male Identifying**

Vocal range: **Baritone/Tenor** (Ab2 to G4 with a strong F#4)

A sharp, ambitious Hollywood screenwriter down on his luck.

Charming and opportunistic, Joe is seduced by Norma's world of wealth and glamour, but finds himself trapped between ambition, desire and his growing feelings for Betty.

BETTY SCHAEFER understudy

Playing age: **20s**

Script gender: **Female Identifying**

Vocal range: **Mezzo/Soprano** (G3 to A5, with a belt to C5)

An ambitious, idealistic young screenwriter determined to make her mark in Hollywood. Intelligent, driven and strong, Betty is eventually drawn into Norma's world while developing a complicated relationship with Joe.

MAX VON MAYERLING understudy

Playing age: **40s-60s**

Script gender: **Male Identifying**

Vocal range: **Baritone/Tenor** (B2 to G4)

Norma's fiercely loyal butler, chauffeur and former director.

A mysterious, deeply devoted presence who protects Norma and sustains her fantasy world, masking his own complicated history and love beneath an impeccable exterior.

Understudies will be part of the ensemble and should be comfortable with basic movement and light choreography.

A standby will be fully rehearsed and ready to perform if required, but will not normally appear onstage. They will remain offstage/on call but may perform as part of the backing vocalist group if desired.

ENSEMBLE

ACTOR / SINGER ENSEMBLE

Playing age: **20s-40s**

Script gender: **All**

Vocal range: **All**

Dance Skill: **Basic**

Strong actor/singers who can create distinct characters and shine in featured moments throughout the production.

DANCE ENSEMBLE

Playing age: **20s-40s**

Script gender: **All**

Vocal range: **All**

Dance Skill: **Experienced**

Triple-threat performers with excellent musicality and a strong ability to tell stories through movement.

Ensemble performers will portray a wide range of featured characters throughout the production, including studio employees, actors, journalists, salespeople, thugs, producers, guards, medical professionals and Hollywood personalities.

Individual tracks will be assigned following casting.

BACKING VOCALISTS

We are seeking strong singers with excellent musicality, blend and vocal characterisation to join our backing vocalist group within the orchestra.

- Backing vocalists have a **reduced rehearsal commitment**, primarily attending music calls, with increased commitment from mid-March for final rehearsals.
- Must be 18+ to apply. We particularly encourage performers aged 30–50+ to audition.
- Applicants must register for an in-person audition and indicate their interest in the backing vocalist role. The standard Round One material applies.
- The Dance Workshop is not required for backing vocalists, unless you also wish to be considered for an ensemble or supporting-character swing.

AUDITION MATERIAL

VOCAL AUDITION

ALL AUDITIONEES MUST PREPARE:

A short cut (16-32 bars / 60-90 seconds) from a song in a similar style to *Sunset Boulevard*.

Selections from the 1950s to 2000s are encouraged. Modern pop songs are discouraged, however a contemporary singing style is welcomed.

- A pianist will be provided for all in-person auditions.
- Please ensure that you provide printed sheet music for the pianist in a suitable loose-leaf folder, or have taped the music together.
- If submitting a self-tape, please ensure you sing alongside a backing track with no backing vocals or supporting melody line.

MOVEMENT WORKSHOP

- All performers auditioning for onstage roles or swing tracks must attend a movement workshop on Sunday 11 October (times TBC).
- No dance preparation is required. Material will be taught in the room.
- Performers of all skill levels are encouraged to attend and will be assessed alongside performers with similar experience.
- Those invited to a further dance recall directly following the workshop will learn additional material at an accelerated pace with the Movement Director.

OTHER NOTES

- We encourage performers to sing in a Standard American English accent.
- Callback material, including scene sides and sheet music excerpts, will be sent to all registered auditionees once registrations have closed.
- For any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at info@witchmusictheatre.co.nz.

KEY INFO

TECH SCHEDULE

Monday 5 Apr, 2027 5:00pm – 10:30pm

Friday 9 Apr, 2027 12:00pm – 5:00pm (prior to Show 1)

- All principal and supporting cast members must be available for the full call on Monday, 5 Apr.
- All cast members must be available from 12:00pm on Friday, 9 Apr through the evening performance.

SHOW SCHEDULE

Friday 9 Apr, 2027 at 7:30pm

Saturday Apr 10, 2027 at 2:00 pm

Saturday Apr 10, 2027 at 7:30 pm

Sunday Apr 11, 2027 at 6:00 pm

IMPORTANT — EXTENSION HOLD

- All performers must currently hold the evenings from **12–16 Apr, 2027** for potential additional performances.
- These dates are currently unconfirmed and will be released or confirmed no later than Mar 2027.

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Rehearsals commence Jan 2027, generally across three weekday evenings and one weekend daytime call per week.

- Not every performer will be required at every rehearsal. However calls will increase during the final production period in Mar/Apr, and performers must attend all rehearsals to which they are called.
- Any scheduling conflicts must be declared and agreed in advance. Performers should endeavour to have no conflicts during March, with the exception of Good Friday and Easter Monday.
- Following casting, the full cast and backing vocalists will take part in a short vocal and movement workshop in Nov 2026 with formal dates still to be confirmed.

PAYMENT & PROFIT SHARE KAUPAPA

All performers will receive a set fee and/or koha, the structure of which will be established before contracting. Koha amounts will scale based on box-office performance.

- Principal, Ensemble and Standby Roles will receive a flat fee for their roles, in addition to a scaling koha profit share payment.
- Understudies and Standbys will receive an additional performance payment if they are called upon during the run of the production.
- Backing vocalists will receive a scaling koha profit share only.

ARE YOU READY FOR
YOUR CLOSE-UP?