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THEATRE

## JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT – 2023 REVIEW

**Broadway's Kelli Rabke and Chris McCarrell shine in this near perfect version of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts, playing through June 25, 2023.**

**What is the Story of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*?**





Loosely based on the Old Testament story of Joseph, who is famously known for his “coat of many colors” (Genesis 37:3), **Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber’s musical** was originally written as a 15-minute “pop cantata” in 1968 for a London all-boys preparatory school. It had its professional debut on the West End in London, England, in 1973, and continues to be one of the duo’s most famous and well-loved musicals often played at local theaters and in schools throughout the United States and United Kingdom.

In Genesis, Joseph is the son of Jacob (“Israel”) by his favorite wife, Rachel, and one of twelve brothers. He was given a coat of many colors by his father (Genesis 37:3), which was symbolic of his favor.

When Joseph was seventeen years old, he shared with his brothers two dreams he had wherein his family bowed down to Joseph himself. These dreams angered his brothers and made the half-brothers (with the exception of Rueben) plot his demise. [In the musical, there is no differentiation between the half-brothers and Joseph’s maternal brother, Benjamin, and Rueben is just as culpable as his brothers, leading the rousing chorus of “One More Angel in Heaven”.]

Ultimately, Joseph was sold to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh’s guard (in the musical he is a millionaire who did well in the stocks), where he rose to the role of Potiphar’s household’s superintendent. Potiphar’s wife unsuccessfully tried to seduce Joseph. Angered by his running away from her, she made a false accusation of rape, and he was thrown in prison.

Two years after interpreting the dreams of Pharaoh’s Cup-Bearer and Baker, the Pharaoh had puzzling dreams that kept him awake. When the Pharaoh’s

advisers failed to interpret the dreams, the cup-bearer remembered Joseph and he was summoned. He interpreted the dream and advised the Pharaoh, being elevated to Vizier of Egypt.

In the second year of famine, Joseph's half brothers were sent to Egypt to buy goods. In the Bible, Joseph's full brother Benjamin was kept at home by a frightened Jacob who was afraid something similar would happen to him. Once Benjamin arrived in Egypt with his brothers, Joseph hid his silver cup in Benjamin's sack and instructed his steward to arrest him. Judah begged the Vizier (Joseph) to let Benjamin return to their father and take him as prisoner instead.

Seeing how his brothers had changed, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers and twenty long years after he last saw his father, he finally was reunited with Jacob (Genesis 46) in the land of Egypt and the Israelites settled in Goshen where many years later the story of Moses would pick up.

**Kelli Rabke is an Absolute Treat in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat***



Thirty years after performing in Los Angeles in the **pre-Broadway production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* opposite Michael Damian and Robert Torti and Gerry McIntyre, Kelli Rabke** is as fresh and fabulous a



Narrator as one could hope for. Her performance live was worth the price of the ticket alone.

Her voice is rich, full of the colors of the rainbow! Even if you don't have a chance to see her live in La Mirada, California, in June 2023, you'll want to keep an eye on her [calendar for upcoming cabarets and performances](#) in Southern California.

### **Chris McCarrell Gives His All as Joseph in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat***



Following in the footsteps of famous Josephs such as [Donny Osmond](#), Jason Donovan, [Lee Mead](#), and [Patrick Cassidy](#). **Chris McCarrell** (Percy in [Broadway's \*The Lightning Thief\*](#)) proves his theatrical prowess with his beautiful "Close Every Door" that suggests how his [Marius](#) might have sounded.

His charisma and charm are appreciated in this fabulous production of [Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat](#) in La Mirada. However, what he lacks is a sexuality and swagger that fans of previous productions might remember. This decision to avoid the sexuality is made abundantly clear with the decision to not have Chris go shirtless in "Close Every Door".

## ***Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* Brings Together the Best of the Best in La Mirada**



The truest highlight of La Mirada Theatre's *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* is the ensemble. The producers did an amazing job bringing together the best of the best of Southern California talent.

Whenever the brothers ensemble comes together in song and dance, especially "Those Canaan Days" (led by **Josh Grisetti**) and "Benjamin Calypso" (led by **Ceron Jones**), the show reached its level best and had the audience at opening night, that included the likes of **La Mirada Mayor Anthony Otero** and Broadway legend **Gregg Edelman**, clapping up a storm so much so that **Kelli Rabke** had fun joking and pretending to quiet down the audience so she could start her next song.

Individually, each of the ensemble members did a good job but when they came together as an ensemble of brothers the show truly shines and I would even argue that this is the best live production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* I have ever had the pleasure of seeing live.

The actors are well matched by a strong ensemble of "wives" with highlights being dancers **Ellie Barrett** whose legs seemed to go on endlessly and *So You Think You Can Dance* alumni **Bridget Whitman** who was outstanding as an

Apache Dancer opposite **Rorey Michelangelo**.

Congratulations to Casting Director **Julia Flores** on a fabulous and noteworthy casting job.

### **The Joy of Live Music at *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat***

Musical Director and Conductor **Jennifer Lin** did an incredible job of making the live orchestra of 13 musicians sound like an orchestra of double that number. The live orchestrations were lush as they filled the auditorium from the Overture through to the end of the Megamix.

**The Orchestra:** Elizabeth Johnson (Violin/Concertmaster), Rhea Fowler (Violin), Eric Lea (Viola), Ginger Murphy (Cello), Sean Franz (Flute/Clarinet/Alto Sax), Michele Forrest (Oboe/French Horn), Emily Pesavento (French Horn), Brian LaFontaine (Guitar), Brian Silverman (Guitar), Dana Decker (Bass), Danny Taylor (Drums), Nick Stone (Percussion), Ryan O'Connell (Keyboard).

### **Gerry McIntyre's Direction and Choreography of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat***



**Gerry McIntyre** is triple threat with a multitude of acting, directing and choreography credits to his name. He was a fan favorite as Judah in the **Donny**

Osmond filmed version of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* – a role he originated in the 1993 Broadway revival opposite Kelli Rabke and Michael Damian, and performed on Broadway with Patti Lupone in *Anything Goes*.

Before the launch of *The Joyous Living*, I was delighted to see a local production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at Golden PAC/Madrid Theatre in Canoga Park, California, starring Brandon Wardell in 2003. In the past twenty years, Gerry's talents as a director and choreographer have only become more and more refined and delightful.

Two notable directing differences were the decision to let local "Tale of the Lion King" actor **Ceron Jones** (Judah) truly shine in his version of "Benjamin Calypso" (I can still recall my guest in 2003 commenting that the Judah was subdued in comparison to Gerry's own charismatic performance in Los Angeles 10 years earlier in 1993) and for **Chris McCarrell's** Joseph to not appear as if he was enjoying himself too much during the seduction scene with Mrs. Potiphar (the gorgeous and talented **Ellie Barrett**).

While the cast did not make use of the aisle space at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts, Gerry did a fabulous job of making the best use of the stage space and of creating and showcasing an almost heavenly ensemble of brothers who wowed the audiences at every chance they could.

### **The Cast of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts**

**Joseph:** Chris McCarrell\* (*Broadway's The Lightning Thief*)

**Narrator:** Kelli Rabke\* (*Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, 1993 Broadway Revival*)

**Jacob/Potiphar:** Peter Allen Vogt\* (*The Princess Diaries 2*)

**Levi/Pharaoh:** Daniel Dawson\* (*Peter Pan with Cathy Rigby, Disney Cruise Line*)



**Reuben:** Dino Nicandros\*

**Simeon:** Josh Grisetti\* (Broadway's *It Shoulda Been You*)

**Naphtali/Baker:** Edgar Lopez\*

**Issachar:** James Everts (u/s Simeon)

**Asher:** Brandon Keith Rogers\* (u/s Joseph/Pharaoh/Apache Dancer)

**Dan:** Juan Guillen\* (u/s Jacob/Potiphar) (National Tour of *Mamma Mia!*)

**Zebulun/Apache Dancer:** Rorey Michelangelo

**Gad/Butler:** Kurt Kemper\* (u/s Reuben)

**Benjamin:** Marcus Phillips\* (u/s Judah) (1st National Tour of *The Prom*)

**Judah:** Ceron Jones (Scar in *Disneyland's Tale of the Lion King*)

**Mrs. Potiphar/Wife:** Ellie Barrett

**Ishmaelite/Wife:** Rianny Vasquez (u/s Narrator) (**See Review:** *Shrek Jr.* at *Young Artist Ensemble*)

**Apache Dancer/Wife:** Bridget Whitman\* (*So You Think You Can Dance*, *Broadway's West Side Story*)

**Wife:** Marie Gutierrez\* (u/s Apache Dancer) (1st National Tour of *The Prom*)

**Ishmaelite/Wife:** Ashley Evangeline

**Wife:** Lauren Decierdo\* (u/s Mrs. Potiphar)

**Wives:** Bernadette Bentley, Johnisa Breault, Jasiana Caraballo, Andrea Dobbins, Callula Sawyer

**Children's Choir:** Cameron Avery, Rachel Beard, Lucy Benney, Elena Bertacci,



Blake Brunton, Leila Bustamante, Jayda Concepcion, Grace Ella, Brennan Esguerra, Erica Gonzalez, Ellie Gonzalez, Kallie Graham, Abigail Hernandez, Aria Jocson, Grace Jenkins, Raegan Larson, Harper Larson, Stevie Larson, David Last, Annemarie Last, Becca Last, Catherine Last, Elizabeth Last, Adrienne Morrow, Emilie Ong, Angelina Pendleton-Mendez, Hannah Pawlowicz, Hanna Maksimachkina, Delaney Martinez, Jasmine Melwani, Donovan Monroe, Sydney Sublette, Anna Surdina, Erin Tardibuono, Bailey Varga, Ava Villacorta, Obriella Witron, Leila Woodward, Natalie Yokota

Swings: [Anyssa Navarro](#) ([Disney Cruise Line](#), [Disneyland Resort](#)), [Thomas Whitcomb](#) ([Hulu's Miguel Wants a Fight](#))

## **Where to See Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat**

**Location:** La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts, 14900 La Mirada Blvd, La Mirada, CA 90638

**Parking:** Free Lot

**Performance Dates:** Now through June 25, 2023

**Open-Captioned Performance:** Saturday, June 17, 2023 at 2 p.m.

**Talkbacks with the Cast and Creative Team:** Thursday, June 8 at 7:30 p.m., and Thursday, June 22 at 7:30 p.m.

For Tickets, please call 562-944-9801 or buy online at [LaMiradaTheatre.com](https://www.lamiradatheatre.com).

*Groups and Military Discounts are available.*

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REVIEW

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*w/ Chris McCarrell*



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**FEATURING KELLI RABKE**

