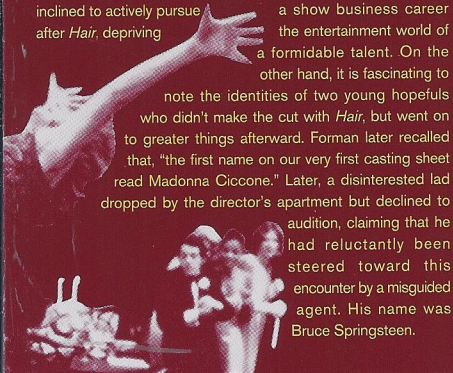


The casting choices Forman made for the major roles in *Hair* were uniformly impeccable. Jerome Ragni had let it be known that he was very much interested in reprising his portrayal of Berger for the movie, but by 1977 he was simply too old for the part, and the role went instead to the charismatic Treat Williams, whose work Forman had recently admired in a Broadway production of *Grease*. Williams dominates virtually every scene in which he appears, and transforms the raucous "I Got Life" number into a show-stopping star turn. Another crucial and perfectly nuanced performance is given by John Savage as the naive Army inductee Claude Bukowski. Savage was on a career roll at the time, and had made a lasting impression with his earlier film work in *The Deer Hunter* (1978). Also commendable was Beverly D'Angelo as Sheila, the addled young debutante who captures Claude's heart. Forman later recalled that "the most impressive audition for *Hair* was done by Cheryl Barnes," an unknown who was working as a motel maid when she turned up at an open audition and stunned everyone with her beautiful voice and commanding presence. She was promptly cast as the jilted fiancée of a tribe member named Hud, and her powerful rendition of "Easy To Be Hard" struck many critics as the musical highlight of the entire film. Regrettably, Barnes wasn't inclined to actively pursue a show business career after *Hair*, depriving the entertainment world of a formidable talent. On the other hand, it is fascinating to note the identities of two young hopefuls who didn't make the cut with *Hair*, but went on to greater things afterward. Forman later recalled that, "the first name on our very first casting sheet read Madonna Ciccone." Later, a disinterested lad dropped by the director's apartment but declined to audition, claiming that he had reluctantly been steered toward this encounter by a misguided agent. His name was Bruce Springsteen.

To briefly summarize the plot, the film version of *Hair* begins with the character of Claude leaving his farm home in Oklahoma to take a bus to New York City, where he plans to enlist in the Army and eventually serve in Vietnam. In Central Park, he encounters hippie leader Berger and his tribe, as well as the fair debutante Sheila, who rides by on horseback. Berger introduces Claude to his irreverent world and leads him on a series

of adventures, including the crashing of an upscale Long Island party for Sheila that results in Claude and the hippies being jailed. After their release, the group takes part in a massive "be-in" where Claude's experiment with LSD leads to hallucinatory visions. He leaves his new friends to join the Army and is sent to Nevada for basic training, after which the tribe, along with Sheila, embarks on a cross-country trip to Claude's base in an attempt to persuade him to reconsider before it's too late. The denouement involves a case of mistaken identity (a plot device completely original to the film version) that ends the story on a tragic note. Forman made some controversial decisions while weaving the musical content of the stage work into his film's narrative, such as the bewildering staging of the title number as part of a prison riot sequence, but the end result pleased most critics, and *Variety* singled the movie out for "vibrant and innovative" moments that outshone similar highlights from competing film musicals of the late 1970s.

Unfortunately, the nature of this competition made *Hair* seem an anachronism at the time of its initial release, relegating the film version to the undeserved status of "box office disappointment." In the nearly two years that elapsed between the beginning of principle photography on *Hair* in New York's East Village in October of 1977 and its release in 1979, the public was treated





to a trio of film musicals that each had a major impact: *The Wiz*, a splashy adaptation of *The Wizard Of Oz* with a black cast that was considered by many to constitute an important social breakthrough; *Grease*, an unabashed time capsule homage to the '50s that was widely embraced and celebrated as such; and, most important of all, *Saturday Night Fever*, which provided indelible visual and aural definitions of a disco era that was light years removed from the

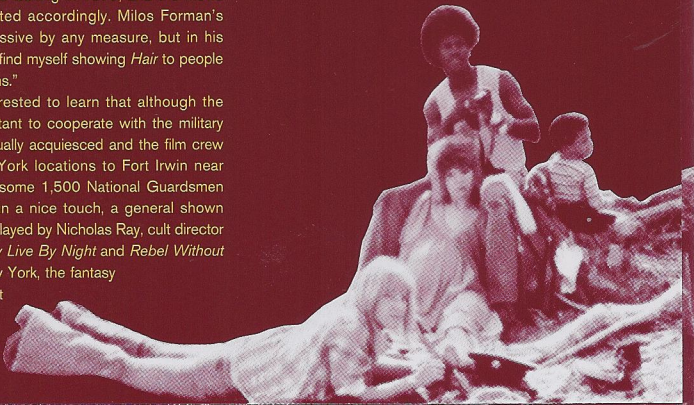
events which transpire in *Hair*. Nonetheless, the film had its early champions, notably *The New York Times*' Vincent Canby, who praised *Hair* as "a good, authentically stylish movie musical." Of course, time has since worked its magic with the passing decades. The '60s now sport the required rosy patina of bemused hindsight that was lacking in 1979, and the movie version of *Hair* has benefited accordingly. Milos Forman's directing credits are impressive by any measure, but in his memoirs he confided that "I find myself showing *Hair* to people more often than my other films."

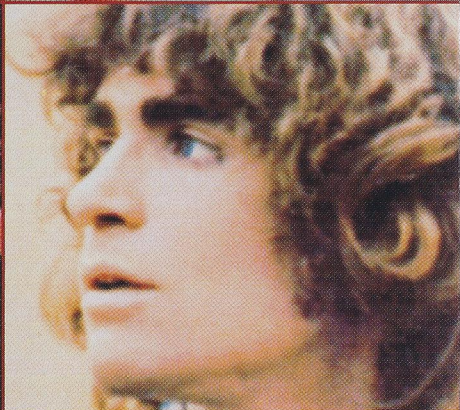
Movie buffs will be interested to learn that although the Pentagon was initially reluctant to cooperate with the military training sequences, it eventually acquiesced and the film crew moved from various New York locations to Fort Irwin near Barstow, California, where some 1,500 National Guardsmen were employed as extras (in a nice touch, a general shown addressing the troops was played by Nicholas Ray, cult director of such film classics as *They Live By Night* and *Rebel Without A Cause*). Returning to New York, the fantasy wedding sequence was shot on a giant sound stage at the Astoria Studios in Queens. A massive "be-in"

was filmed at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., and the final event of the shoot was the sprawling Central Park "be-in," for which small ads in *The Village Voice* and *Soho News* in May of 1978 turned up roughly 5,000 retro-clad extras.

Hair aficionados will insist on noting that two memorable songs from the original score, "What A Piece Of Work Is Man" and "Frank Mills," failed to make the transition to the film. These same devotees, however, should be delighted to learn that this re-issue returns to the fold "Party Music" and "My Conviction," two selections that were deleted from the film soundtrack's first compact disc appearance in 1989 due to timing constraints. Today, on the 20th Anniversary of *Hair*'s cinematic debut, the music on this newly remastered collection sounds better than ever before. It remains an indispensable companion piece to the study and enjoyment of an important chapter in the continuing story of a remarkably potent and enduring cultural phenomenon.

—Joseph F. Laredo





07863 67612 2

The RCA Records Label is a unit of BMG Entertainment • BMG Logo is a trademark of BMG Music • © 1999 BMG Entertainment



- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Aquarius | 16. Hare Krishna |
| 2. Sodomy | 17. Where Do I Go? |
| 3. Donna/Hashish | 18. Black Boys |
| 4. Colored Spade | 19. White Boys |
| 5. Manchester | 20. Walking In Space |
| 6. Abie Baby/Fourscore | 21. Easy To Be Hard |
| 7. I'm Black/Ain't Got No | 22. 3-5-0-0 |
| 8. Air | 23. Good Morning Starshine |
| 9. Party Music | 24. What A Piece Of Work Is Man |
| 10. My Conviction | 25. Somebody To Love |
| 11. I Got Life | 26. Don't Put It Down |
| 12. Frank Mills | 27. The Flesh Failures/
Let The Sunshine In |
| 13. Hair | |
| 14. L.B.J. | |
| 15. Electric Blues/
Old Fashioned Melody | |

Re-Recording Directed by Al Garrison

Executive Producer for
RCA Records: Warren Schatz

Reissue Supervision: Paul Williams for
House of Hits Productions, Ltd.

Project Manager: Simeon Margolis

Essay: Joseph F. Laredo

CD Package Design: JRJ Associates

The first-generation mixed masters were
used for the production of this release.



F: BM720

A LESTER PERSKY and MICHAEL BUTLER production in association with MILES FORMAN
of RAGNI, RABO and MACDONALD & CO.

Starring JOHN SAVAGE · JUDITH ANNE · JAMES CAGNEY · ANNE GOLDEN
DORSEY WRIGHT · DON MARCO · STEVE STANLEY · KATE MOORE

Based on the Broadway show by LESTER PERSKY and MICHAEL BUTLER
Book by MACDONALD · Lyrics by MACDONALD · Music arranged by LESTER PERSKY

Music composed and arranged by MICHAEL BUTLER · Lyrics by MACDONALD · Music arranged by LESTER PERSKY
Executive Producer ROBERT FAYENHUR · Production Photography MURRAY CLOSE

Starring MICHAEL WELLS · Choreography by TWYLA THARP

Produced by LESTER PERSKY and MICHAEL BUTLER Directed by MILES FORMAN

A 16mm Feature "Panavision" Technicolor™

DD DOLBY STEREO™

PG PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED
SOME MATERIAL MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN

Copyright © 1979 United Artists Corporation. All rights reserved.

United Artists
A Transamerica Company

HAIR

ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK RECORDING

© 1999 BMG Entertainment • RCA 07965 67412 2 • BMG/GEMA • Made in the EU • The RCA Records Label is a unit of BMG Entertainment • All Rights Reserved • BMG Logo is a trademark of BMG Music

