



ILENE GRAFF

Bio in Brief



Ilene Graff is a Grammy nominated recording artist best known to audiences as Marsha Owens, the mom on the long running ABC comedy Mr. Belvedere. She made her professional Broadway debut years earlier on the musical stage in Promises Promises, the Neil Simon, Bacharach/David hit, where she understudied the leading lady and sang backups from the orchestra pit. She performed the role of Fran Kubelik in New York a dozen times before starring in the National Tour.

Ilene went on to play Sandy for two years in the Broadway production of Grease, but her biggest Broadway triumph was creating the role of Cleo in the Cy Coleman, Michael Stewart musical comedy hit I Love My Wife, directed by Tony Award winner Gene Saks. She can be heard on the show's Original Cast Album. Other theatre credits include: Charley's Aunt with Charles Grodin, Cabaret as Sally Bowles, Annie Get Your Gun as Annie Oakley, and Over Here directed by Mr. Belvedere himself, Christopher Hewett. Ilene created the role of Donna in the world premiere of composer/arranger/producer husband Ben Lanzarone's musical, You and Me, with book and lyrics by Lloyd J. Schwartz; she won the Artistic Directors' Award of the Valley Theatre League for her performance. She had the thrill of performing the role of Mama Rose in a Los Angeles revival of Gypsy as well as entertaining Jerry Herman himself at a performance of Jerry's Girls. L.A. theatre goers also enjoyed Ilene in 3 productions of Neil Simon's I Ought To Be In Pictures; one with Richard Kline and most recently with Greg Mullavye and Amy Davidson.



In addition to playing the role of Bob Uecker's wife on Mr. Belvedere, Ilene starred in two other series, several pilots, and guest starred on many episodic TV shows, MOWs and mini-series. She currently co-stars in the feature film Loving Annabelle, directed by Katherine Brooks which is playing to rave reviews and sold-out houses on the festival circuit, and recently finished shooting My Father, a Korean/American film directed by the young award-winning director, Dong Hyeuk. Ilene shared the screen with Rodney Dangerfield in the feature film Ladybugs, and is very proud to have co-starred in a Disney/ABC film, South Pacific, working with Academy Award nominee and Tony Award winner Glenn Close and Grammy Award winner Harry Connick, Jr.

Ilene co-hosts Variety Club Children's Charities Telethons in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Iowa and Buffalo and has been proud to perform at fund raising events for many worthwhile causes including The AMC Cancer Research Center and The South Coast Repertory Theatre. Ilene has also sung The National Anthem for The Los Angeles Dodgers, The Angels, The Clippers and The Los Angeles Kings. She's performed her act throughout south Florida and on the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line as well as performing in concert for The Actors' Fund in programs saluting Kander and Ebb, Cy Coleman, Harold Arlen, and Jule Styne.

The latest exciting development for Ilene is the publication of her book, What The Other Mothers Know, co-authored with Michele Gendelman and Donna Rosenstein. Published by HarperCollins, it is a funny and practical guide to parenting in the 21st Century from three witty mothers who have seen it all.

Ilene is a native New Yorker who graduated from Ithaca College with a degree in Drama. She and husband Ben Lanzarone met while working in the Broadway production of Grease, where Ben was Musical Director. Ben serves as Ilene's Musical Director, arranger, co-producer and accompanist. Their 2003 Grammy-nominated CD, Baby's Broadway Lullabies is a collection of beautiful theatre songs arranged especially for sleepytime and is available at www.ilenegraff.com. Their daughter Nikka Graff Lanzarone, a Musical Theater graduate of the Boston Conservatory, is currently performing in the New York metropolitan area.