

**Cynthia Onrubia** (Born January 1962, New York City) – American Film, Television, Broadway Theater; Choreographer, Director, Performer

### **Awards**

Received a 2003 American Choreography Award for her work with Rob Marshall on the Oscar winning film *Chicago*. She received a 2003 Sir Robert Helpmann Award for Best Choreography (the Australian version of the Tony Award) for her work in the Sam Mendes\Rob Marshall Tony Award winning musical *Cabaret* and she also received a 2000 American Theater League of Producers Award nomination for her choreography for *Dame Edna; The Royal Tour*. As a performer, she received a 1996 FANY Award for her performance in the Broadway musical *Victor/Victoria* and a 1994 American Theater Roundtable's "Outstanding Performer Award" for outstanding career performances.

### **Biography**

A native New Yorker, her parents are Anthony Onrubia and Cely Carrillo Onrubia. Her mother Cely, who was the first Filipino graduate from the Julliard School of Music and was the understudy for the lead role of Mei Li in the original Broadway production of Rogers and Hammerstein's *Flower Drum Song*, took over that role on Broadway and also performed it in the Broadway National Tour. Cely was also in the film *Rampage* with Robert Mitchum and Sabu, and acted in numerous commercials and television series which included; *The Virginian, The Enforcers, The U.S. Steel Hour, Target; The Corruptors* and *Coronet Blue*.

### **Early Career**

Cynthia Onrubia made her performing debut at the age of four alongside her mother in a *Lux Soap* commercial. She landed the job when at her interview she precociously informed the director that she could "...count to ten in five languages". Other commercials include; *Skipsee Doodle Toys* (1967), *Cross At The Green* (1967), *Lestoil* (1967), *Betty Crocker's French Toastwiches*.

She was in the television shows; *Big Blue Marble* (voice over), *Search For Tomorrow* (1972), *Kid Power* (animation voice over 1973) and *Today Is Ours* (1972) with Harry Belafonte, Ruby Dee, Ossie Davis and directed by Sidney Poitier. She was also in a made-for-television film; *Night Passage* w/Laura Nyro and an unfinished motion picture that was called *The Jade Man* starring Eli Wallach.

On the stage she performed on tour as Ngana in *South Pacific* (1969) starring Paul Ukena and Sandra Deel. She was Princess Ying in *The King And I* at Jones Beach (1972) starring John Cullum and Constance Towers and she sang and danced as a "Milli-kiddie" in the illustrious and star-studded *Milliken Breakfast Show* at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City for five seasons (1972, 73', 74', 75', 78'). Regular and guest performers included; Arthur Rubin, Nancy Walker, Cyd Charisse, Phyllis Diller, Ann Miller, Jack Weston, Dom De Luise, Juliet Prowse, John Lithgow, Gwen Verdon, Lou Jacobi, Madeline Kahn, Dorothy Loudon, Billy de Wolfe, Robert Morse, Chita Rivera, Fred Travalena, Donna McKechnie, Tommy Tune, Mary McCarty, and Directors; Arthur Storch, Robert Moore, Burt Shevelove and Choreographers; Alan Johnson, Peter Gennaro, Graciela Daniele.

Cynthia also sang with her mother in numerous concerts and with the Philippine Symphony Orchestra (1976).

## **Education & Training**

Cynthia attended the schools; Mother Cabrini Elementary, Marymount High School and Professional Children's School in New York City. She took her high school final exams in her dressing room at the Shubert Theater in Chicago while on tour with Bob Fosse's *Dancin'* (1979).

A young ballet prodigy, Ms. Onrubia trained at the New York School of Ballet under Richard Thomas, Barbara Fallis and Nicholas Magallanes. She was coached in the classics by Maestro Vincenzo Celli and she trained in Jazz and Tap dance under the tutelage of Phil Black.

In 1977, at the age of fifteen, while preparing to compete in the Juniors Division of the International Ballet Competition in Varna, Bulgaria, she went to an audition for a Broadway show. Though still technically a "minor", much to the surprise of Director/Choreographer Michael Bennett, he hired her and she became the youngest dancer ever cast in the Broadway musical; *A Chorus Line*.

## **Performance and early choreography**

When she was seventeen in 1979, Cynthia was a principal performer in the Broadway National Tour of Bob Fosse's *Dancin'* and by that time she had already choreographed with Troy Garza a number of Cabaret shows, a production of *Anything Goes* and the Off-Broadway show; *Fortune* (1978). She associate choreographed the Broadway show; *Gottu Go Disco* while periodically performing as a vocalist for *Marvin Hamlisch in Concert*. She also began choreographing commercials and television (*All My Children*, *One Life to Live*, etc.).

She briefly returned to the Broadway cast of *A Chorus Line* (79'-80') and successively went back to the National Touring Company of *Dancin'* (80') and then transferred into the Broadway cast of *Dancin'* (1980-82').

In 1981 Cynthia assisted Christopher Chadman in choreographing his theatrical workshop; *In My Wildest Dreams*. As performer, Cynthia was cast in the role of Victoria (the white cat), in the original Broadway production of *Cats*. While performing in *Cats*, she landed a supporting role in the film *Beat Street*. Half way through filming, she was called back to *Cats* and had to be replaced in the film.

In 1984, Cynthia made her last brief return to the Broadway cast of *A Chorus Line* (84-85). She performed in Michael Bennett's industrial show; *Jane Fonda Workouts* as she simultaneously assistant choreographed and performed in his theatrical workshop; *Scandal*.

Cynthia also assisted Choreographer Peter Martins on the Kennedy Center's production of *Carousel* (1986) and assistant choreographed and performed in the original workshop, Broadway and Broadway National Touring productions of *Song and Dance* (85'-86'/87').

Through the mid-eighties she continued directing and choreographing additional Cabarets, Revues (Club Limelight, Club Danceteria w/ Buster Poindexter and his Band), workshops, television commercials (*Roy Rogers*, *Shield Soap*, *I Love New York*, *10-10-987*, *Wheel of Fortune*, etc.) and industrials.

In 1987 Cynthia met her husband Harrison Beal, whom she married in 1989. She also met with Director/Choreographer Jerome Robbins who offered her leading roles in his new “project” that was later to become; *Jerome Robbins’ Broadway*. She turned down the roles to spend the next four and a half years assisting him on the research, re-creation and production of his Broadway and Broadway National Touring productions.

In 1992 she was asked to go to Warsaw to rehearse and supervise the Polish musical import; *Metro* for it’s Broadway run. She teamed-up with Director/Choreographer Thomas J. Walsh on his productions of *Pal Joey* (Boston) and *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* (2000 Tour) starring Ann-Margret.

In 1993, Cynthia started what was to become a long and cherished choreographing partnership with Director/Choreographer Rob Marshall which included the productions of; *Damn Yankees*, *Victor/Victoria*, *Promises, Promises*, *Cabaret*, *Little Me*, two productions of the *Kennedy Center Honors* for television and the films; *The Cradle Will Rock* and *Chicago*.

### **Films**

*Away We Go* (2008) - Choreographer

*Revolutionary Road* (2007) - Choreographer

*Definitely Maybe* (2007) - Choreographer

*Connie and Carla* (2004) - Choreographer

*Big Fish* (2003) - Choreographer

*Analyze That* (2002) - Choreographer

*Chicago* (2002) - Associate Choreographer/ Tap Choreographer for Mr. Gere/ Dancer

*Center Stage* (2001) - Principal Dance Coach (unaccredited)

*The Cradle Will Rock* (1999) - Associate Choreographer

*Everyone Says I Love You* (1996) - Groucho Party Dancer

### **Original Broadway Productions**

*Dame Edna; The Royal Tour* (1999) – Choreographer

*Little Me* (1998\1999) - Associate Director/Choreographer/Performer

*Cabaret* (1997\1998) - Associate Choreographer

*Victor/Victoria* (1995\1996\1997) - Assistant Choreographer/Performer

*Damn Yankees* (1993\1994\1995) - Assistant Choreographer/Performer

*The Goodbye Girl* (1992\1993) - Jenna/Dance Captain

*Metro* (1992) - American Dance Supervisor

*Jerome Robbins’ Broadway* (1989\1990) - Assistant to the Choreographer

*Song and Dance* (1985\1986) - Assistant Choreographer/Principal Performer

*Cats* (1982\1983) - Victoria (White Cat), (1994) - Dance Supervisor

*Dancin’* (1980\1981\1982) - Principal

*Gottu Go Disco* (1979) - Assistant Choreographer

*A Chorus Line* (1977\1978\1979) - Tricia/Diana, Maggie, Connie, Bebe Understudies

(1979\1980) - Connie, (1984\1985) - Diana, Maggie, Connie Understudy

## **Broadway National Tours**

*Dame Edna; The Royal Tour* (2000) - Choreographer

*Cabaret* (1998\1999) - Associate Director/Choreographer

*Jerome Robbins' Broadway* (1990\1991) - Assistant to the Choreographer

*Song and Dance* (1987) - Choreographer/Principal Performer

*Dancin'* (1979\1980) - Principal Performer

## **Concerts**

*Love Letters To New York* (w\The New York Pops, Carnegie Hall, 2008) - Choreographer

*Encores' Broadway Bash* ((NY City Center, 2006) - Choreographer

*2006 Roundabout Theatre Anniversary Gala* - Choreographer

*2005 George Abbott Awards* - Choreographer

*2004 Genesis Awards* - Choreographer/Performer

*Singin' In The Rainforest At Carnegie Hall* (The Rainforest Foundation, Carnegie Hall, 2004) - Staging/Choreography

*Deborah Voigt on Broadway* (2001) - Performer

*Wonderful Town* (NY City Center, 2001) - Performer

*Ziegfeld Follies Of 1936* (NY City Center, 1999) - Associate Choreographer

*You're Song; Broadway Sings Elton John Concert* (1998) - Performer

*Lil' Abner* (NY City Center, 1997) - Scarlett

*Promises, Promises* (NY City Center, 1996) - Associate Choreographer/Ginger Wong

*New York City Ballet; West Side Story Suite Premiere* (1996) - Assistant to the Choreographer

## **Original Theatrical Workshops\Showcases**

*Idaho* (2007) - Co-Director

*Pandora's Box* (2005) - Musical Staging

*Sweet Smell Of Success* (2001) - Associate Choreographer

*Nightmare Alley* (1997) - Assistant Director/Choreographer

*Capeman* (1994) - Performer

*Jerome Robbins' West Side Story* (1991) - Assistant to the Choreographer/Performer

*New York Moves* (1991) - Performer

*Jerome Robbins' Project* (Purchase, NY 1988) - Assistant to the Choreographer

*Song and Dance* 1984\1985) - Assistant Choreographer/Principal Performer

*Fast Forward* (Motion Picture 1984) - Performer

*Scandal* (1984) - Assistant Choreographer/Performer

*In My Wildest Dreams* (1981) - Assistant Choreographer/Performer

## **Other Theater**

*Lestat* (Curran Theater, San Francisco, 2005) - Associate Musical Staging

*Chita Rivera and All That Jazz* (1998) - Associate Choreographer

*A Chorus Line* (Fulton Theater, Pittsburgh, 1993) - Cassie

## **Links**

<http://www.ibdb.com>

<http://www.imdb.com>

<http://www.broadwayworld.com>

<http://www.actorsequity.org/AboutEquity/gypsyrobe/gypsyrecipients.asp>

<http://www.nowpublic.com/culture/broadway-kitties-cynthia-onrubia-timothy-scott>

[http://www.carnegiehall.org/article/box\\_office/events/evt\\_10878\\_ma.html?selecteddate=11072008](http://www.carnegiehall.org/article/box_office/events/evt_10878_ma.html?selecteddate=11072008)

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/70697698@N00/>

[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1083/is\\_/ai\\_53501123](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1083/is_/ai_53501123)