



MERYL STREEP PIERCE BROSNAN COLIN FIRTH STELLAN SKARSGÅRD JULIE WALTERS DOMINIC COOPER AMANDA SEYFRIED CHRISTINE BARANSKI

# MAMMA MIA!

THE MOVIE SOUNDTRACK FEATURING THE SONGS OF ABBA®



worldwide phenomenon, the first blockbuster of the new millennium.

The story of the making of the MAMMA MIA! movie begins before that auspicious West End opening.

Global Producer Judy Craymer knew ABBA's Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus from working with them as executive producer on the London premiere of the musical 'Chess' in the early 1980s.

The concept of MAMMA MIA! began with Judy's idea of using ABBA songs to tell a new story. Her inspiration really came from 'The Winner Takes It All', an emotional roller coaster of a song about the break up of a relationship. ('Winner' is sung on the film and soundtrack by Meryl Streep).

Once Benny and Björn had endorsed Judy's concept for the show, playwright Catherine Johnson was chosen to write the book, and

renowned theatre director Phyllida Lloyd was invited to stage the production.

One of the most successful groups of all time, ABBA dominated the pop music charts between 1974 and 1982. The remarkable record sales and the volume of hits – a dozen Top Twenty singles in the US and nine Number Ones in the UK alone – made the Swedish group international stars.

Since the London opening, MAMMA MIA! has been seen on stage around the world by over 30 million people in twenty productions in eight different languages, selling more than two billion dollars worth of tickets at the box office.

With these extraordinary statistics, it was inevitable that MAMMA MIA! would become a motion picture.

What was unusual was that the three women who led the creative team for the stage musical, Judy Craymer (producer), Phyllida Lloyd (director) and Catherine Johnson (writer) would repeat their roles in the making of the MAMMA MIA! film.

Inspired by the story-telling magic of ABBA's timeless songs, MAMMA MIA's romantic tale unfolds on a sun-soaked Greek island. On the eve of her wedding, a daughter's quest to discover the identity of her father brings three men from her mother's past back to

the island they last visited 20 years ago.

With Meryl Streep signed on to play Donna Sheridan, the independent, strong-willed mother, other cast followed, with Julie Walters and Christine Baranski playing Donna's best friends, Rosie and Tanya, respectively. A trio of Hollywood's hottest men, Pierce Brosnan (Sam Carmichael), Colin Firth (Harry Bright) and Stellan Skarsgård (Bill Austin) joined to play the dads. Amanda Seyfried (*Big Love*) and Dominic Cooper (*The History Boys*) were cast as the young romantic couple, Sophie and Sky.

From the outset Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus decided that the classic ABBA sound should be featured on the MAMMA MIA! soundtrack and it was also important that the recording stand alone as a pop music album.

Benny and Björn reunited in Stockholm with the musicians who played on the original ABBA songs to record the soundtrack in February, 2007. This was the first time these musicians had played these songs together since ABBA toured more than 25 years ago.

The fifteen month journey from those first recording sessions to the completion of the sound-editing in New York could have been

a daunting experience, but for Benny every moment was a revelation.

Along with producing the recording, Benny played keyboards. Playing together again in the studio, the music came rushing back. Says Benny, 'We didn't have to think about it. It was in the fingers.'

Setting out to record one or two backing tracks a day, they managed to record all the music beds in less than a week.

The actors joined together for the first time to record their vocals in London in April, 2007, prior to the commencement of filming, which began at Pinewood Studios June, 2007, and continued later that summer on location on the beautiful Greek island paradises of Skiathos and Skopelos, as well as Damouchari on the Pelion Peninsula.

Although none of the actors had much experience in the recording studio, they were undaunted and completely at ease singing the classic ABBA songs. The sessions were a joyous process which you can hear on this recording, that not only brings back that fantastic experience of watching the film, but also perfectly captures the heartwarming, feel-good spirit that is MAMMA MIA!



