Frank Ferrante (Groucho) is an actor, director, and producer described by The New York Times as "the greatest living interpreter of Groucho Marx's material." *Animal Crackers* and *A Night at the Opera* co-author Morrie Ryskind called him "the only actor aside from Groucho who delivered my lines as they were intended." Discovered by Groucho's son Arthur when Frank was a drama student at the University of Southern California, Frank originated the off-Broadway title role in *Groucho: A Life in Revue* (written by Arthur) portraying the comedian from age 15 to 85. For this role, Frank won 1987's New York's Theatre World Award and was nominated for an Outer Critics Circle Award. He reprised the role in London's West End and was nominated for the Laurence Olivier Award for 'Comedy Performance of the Year.' Frank played the Groucho role in the off-Broadway revival of *The Cocoanuts* and has played Captain Spalding in the several productions of *Animal Crackers* winning a Connecticut Critics Circle Award for his portrayal at Goodspeed Opera House and a Helen Hayes nomination in Washington D.C. at Arena Stage. In Boston in 1988, he played the Huntington Theatre in the record-breaking run of *Animal Crackers* that landed Frank on the cover of American Theatre magazine. His other regional roles include Max Prince in Neil Simon's *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* at Philadelphia's Walnut Street Theatre (which Frank also directed); George S. Kaufman in *By George* (a one-man play written by Frank); Tom in the farce *Perfect Wedding*; Oscar in *The Odd Couple* and leads in *The Sunshine Boys, Lady in the Dark,* and *Anything Goes.* Frank directed *M*A*S*H* star Jamie Farr in the Kaufman & Hart comedy *George Washington Slept Here* and revivals of Simon's *The Sunshine Boys, Brighton Beach Memoirs, Biloxi Blues, Broadway Bound* and *Lost in Yonkers.* In 1995, he directed and developed the world premiere of the Pulitzer finalist *Old Wicked Songs.* In 2001, Frank starred in, directed and produced the national PBS television program *Groucho: A Life in Revue*. Frank currently stars as the comic lead in the European cirque *Teatro Zinzanni* in San Francisco and Seattle. In 2007 he became a question on the classic TV program *Jeopardy.* "He took his portrayal of Groucho Marx to New York in 1986." The answer: "Who is Frank Ferrante?"

For more information regarding Frank Ferrante's work please log on to www.eveningwithgroucho.com or www.grouchoworld.com.

Jim Furmston (Musical Director/Piano) enjoys a versatile career as recitalist, accompanist, and composer. He is a native of Canada and graduate of the U.S.C. Thornton School of Performing Arts. His performances have garnered international acclaim in both worlds of classical and popular music. For years, Jim was a studio pianist for many leading artist teachers of our time including Gwendolyn Koldofsky, Janos Starker, Zvi Zeitlin, Peter Pears, Jascha Heifetz, and Brooks Smith. Jim was invited to perform a debut recital at New York's Lincoln Center and also performed on the inaugural program of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute. After college Jim was in demand as a session player for television and film and as a coach for many singers. In Hollywood, Jim accompanies many stars, collaborating over the years with Billy Davis, Marilyn McCoo, Nell Carter, Carol Channing, Debbie Reynolds, Joel Grey, Sally Struthers, Jane

Seymour, Jeff Goldblum, Marni Nixon, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Gene Barry, Ann Margaret, David Hasselhoff, Tony Orlando, John Rubinstein, Gedde Watanabe and Greg Marx (Gummo Marx's grandson) to name a few. Jim's musical interests have always been wide-ranging, with exposure to seemingly every kind of musical style and performance practice from medieval tocattas to electro-jazz. Jim began his collaboration with Frank Ferrante in 1983 and has accompanied Frank in *An Evening with Groucho* since the premiere in 1984. Currently when not on the road, Jim can be found working with celebrity clientele or assisting *Irma*, the *Magic Castle's* resident piano ghost at the legendary Hollywood club. Other recent projects included music for two illustrated children's books - *The Thrift Store Bears* and *Adventures with the Thrift Store Bear*s. Jim composed and produced the CD that comes enclosed with the books. Please go to www.teddytraveler.com for more information. When Jim is not working on musical projects, he can be found on a squash court or in front of his computer tracking the music of the S&P index.

Groucho Marx

The New York Times summed up the comedy genius as "America's most gifted funny man." Born Julius Henry Marx on October 2, 1890, Groucho was the third of five sons born to poor immigrant parents Sam and Minnie Marx. Chico and Harpo preceded him. Gummo and Zeppo followed. Straight from the streets of New York's upper Eastside, Groucho was thrust onstage at age 15 as one third of the singing Leroy Trio. Eventually, brothers Harpo, Chico, Gummo and Zeppo joined the act that began as the singing Four Nightingales and evolved into the world's funniest vaudeville act known as the Marx Brothers. After twenty years of touring their act all over the country, the Marx Brothers finally hit pay dirt with a musical comedy called *I'll Say She Is*. Audiences and critics went ballistic over the brothers' irreverent humor, the expert pantomime, the wisecracks, the physical shtick, the outrageous musical talent. Said one local Philadelphia critic about the show, "It was as if a tornado hit town. We've never seen anything like the Marx Brothers." *I'll Say She Is* moved to Broadway in 1924 and was an instant sensation legitimizing the Marx Brothers as world-class talents. Two more Broadway hits followed - *The Cocoanuts* and *Animal Crackers* introducing audiences to Groucho's most renowned incarnation - Captain Spalding, the African Explorer. In 1930, Groucho and his brothers moved to Hollywood and changed the face of film comedy forever. There they made *Monkey Business*, *Horse Feathers*, *Duck Soup*, *A Night at the Opera*, *A Day at the Races*, *Room Service*, *At the Circus*, *Go West*, *The Big Store*, *A Night in Casablanca* and *Love Happy* between 1931 and 1949. The Four Marx Brothers appeared on the cover of Time Magazine in1932. As a solo, Groucho launched a career on radio and television with his Emmy Award winning work as the host of the comedy quiz show *You Bet Your Life*. The show flourished for fourteen highly rated seasons from 1947 to 1961 on ABC radio then NBC television. Groucho was a major fixture in 1950's television with his "secret woid" and a duck that dropped from the sky to pay wacky contestants "an extra hundred dollars." In the late 1960's, a renewed interest in the anarchic hijinks of the Marx Brothers swept across the nation - particularly among college age students. Fortunately, Groucho Marx survived long enough to experience his renaissance. He made TV appearances, performed at Carnegie Hall at age 82 and received a special Academy Award in 1974 for "the brilliant and unequalled achievements of the Marx Brothers". On August 19, 1977 Groucho Marx died at age 86. His final request? "Bury me next to Marilyn Monroe."