

Wonderful Town



Book by
**Joseph Fields and
Jerome Chodorov**
(Based upon the play
My Sister Eileen by
Joseph Fields and Jerome
Chodorov and the
stories by Ruth
McKenney)

Music by
**Leonard
Bernstein**

Lyrics by
**Betty Comden
Adolph Green**
Sketches for
What A Waste by
Betty Comden and
Adolph Green

CONNECTIONS Shaw Festival Study Guide

The Shaw Story	2
The Players	3
The Story	4
Who's Who	5
The Writers	6-9
Director's Notes	10
Designer's Notes	11
Production History	12
World of the Play	13-17
Did You Know?	18-19
Sources	20
Activities	21-37
Response Sheet	38

Shaw08
FESTIVAL

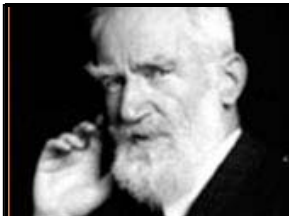
Presented By
HSBC
The world's local bank

Great-West Life
ASSURANCE COMPANY

**London
Life**

Canada Life

STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER™



WHAT MAKES THE SHAW SPECIAL



Festival Theatre



Court House Theatre



Royal George Theatre

THE SHAW STORY

MANDATE

The Shaw Festival is the only theatre in the world which exclusively focuses on plays by Bernard Shaw and his contemporaries, including plays written during or about the period of Shaw's lifetime (1856 – 1950).

The Shaw Festival's mandate also includes:

- Uncovered Gems – digging up undiscovered theatrical treasures, or plays which were considered major works when they were written but which have since been unjustly neglected
- American Classics – we continue to celebrate the best of American theatre
- Musicals – rarely-performed musicals from the period of our mandate are rediscovered and returned to the stage
- Canadian Works – to allow us to hear and promote our own stories, our own points of view about the mandate period.

MEET THE COMPANY – OUR ENSEMBLE

- *Our Actors:* All Shaw performers contribute to the sense of ensemble, much like the players in an orchestra. Often, smaller parts are played by actors who are leading performers in their own right, but in our “orchestra,” they support the central action helping to create a density of experiences that are both subtle and informative.
- *Our Designers:* Every production that graces the Shaw Festival stages is built “from scratch,” from an original design. Professional designers lead teams who collaborate with each production's director to create sets, costumes, and lighting designs that complement the play's text.
- *Our Music:* Music played an important role in Bernard Shaw's life – in fact, he wrote music criticism for several years under the pseudonym Corno di Bassetto. Just as the reach of musical theatre is vast and manifold, so is the Shaw's approach - presenting Brecht, Weill, Rodgers and Hart, and everything in between.
- *Our Play Development:* The Shaw's play development programme goals include: 1) to develop new adaptations and translations that will tell classic stories in a contemporary way; 2) to produce new plays alongside those of Shaw and his contemporaries.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

As Artistic Director Jackie Maxwell says, “We all know the man can talk, but Bernard Shaw is also one of the most prescient, provocative, sparkingly articulate writers in the English language. His words and ideas, expressed in plays that are well-known, such as this season's *Mrs Warren's Profession*, or in plays that are not so familiar but no less interesting, have extraordinary relevance today. It is a joy to draw attention to those ideas and bring them to life on our stages.”

OUR THEATRES

The Shaw Festival presents plays in three distinctive theatres. The Festival Theatre with 856 seats is The Shaw's flagship theatre; the historic Court House where The Shaw first began performing seats 327; and the Royal George Theatre, modeled after an Edwardian opera house, holds 328.

THE SHAW'S COAT OF ARMS

In 1987, on the occasion of our 25th Anniversary, the Shaw Festival became the second theatre company in the world to be granted a Coat of Arms by the College of Heralds. A large painted sculpture of our Coat of Arms adorns the lobby of the Festival Theatre.



CONNECTIONS Study Guide

A practical, hands-on resource for the classroom which contains background information for the play, suggested themes for discussion, and Ontario curriculum-based activities. Designed by educators and theatre professionals, the activities and themes for discussion are organized in modules that can be used independently or interdependently according to the class level and time availability.

Wonderful Town is recommended for students in grades 5 and higher.

This guide was written and compiled by Rod Christensen and Suzanne Merriam. Additional materials were provided by Judith Bowden, Christie Evangelisto, Joanna Falck, Jim Mezon, and William Schmuck

Cover: Catherine Braund and Melanie Phillipson
Photo by Shin Sugino

Running Time: 2:30
One intermission
Previews April 1
Opens May 24
Closes October 5

The Players

(Characters listed in alphabetical order)

Mr Appopolous.....	NEIL BARCLAY
Robert Baker.....	JAY TURVEY
Chick Clark.....	THOM ALLISON
Frank Lippencott.....	JEFF MADDEN
Lonigan.....	WILLIAM VICKERS
Wreck Loomis.....	THOM MARRIOTT
Eileen Sherwood.....	CHILINA KENNEDY
Ruth Sherwood.....	LISA HORNER
Speedy Valenti.....	LORNE KENNEDY
Swing.....	MELANIE JANZEN
Swing.....	MICHEAL QUERIN
Tour Guide/Policeman/Sailor	MARK UHRE
Villager.....	MELANIE PHILLIPSON
Villager.....	KIERA SANGSTER
Villager.....	JACQUELINE THAIR
Villager/Policeman/Sailor.....	KAWA ADA
Villager/Policeman/Sailor.....	BILLY LAKE
Villager/Policeman/Sailor.....	ALI MOMEN
Villager/Policeman/Sailor.....	MIKE NADAJEWSKI
Villager/Policeman/Sailor.....	JUSTIN STADNYK
Villager/Policeman/Sailor.....	KEN JAMES STEWART
Violet.....	DEBORAH HAY
Mrs Wade.....	GABRIELLE JONES
Helen Wade.....	GLYNIS RANNEY

The Artistic Team

Director.....	ROGER HODGMAN
Musical Director.....	PAUL SPORTELLI
Choreographer.....	JANE JOHANSON
Set Designer.....	WILLIAM SCHMUCK
Costume Designer.....	JUDITH BOWDEN
Lighting Designer.....	LOUISE GUINAND
Sound Designer.....	JOHN LOTT

Synopsis

A musical adventure about being young and pursuing a dream, based on the delightful play *My Sister Eileen* and the stories by Ruth McKenney. Two sisters arrive in New York in 1935 to find fame and fortune. With the help of some colourful characters from Greenwich Village, they find even more than they bargained for. — **MUSICAL**

“That’s what I
came to New
York for – to
break into the
theatre –
(Eileen)

And you, young
lady, are you
artistic like your
sister?
(Mr Appopolous)

The Story

Wonderful Town

Book by Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov, music by Leonard Bernstein, lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green

Based on the play *My Sister Eileen* by Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov and the stories by Ruth McKenney

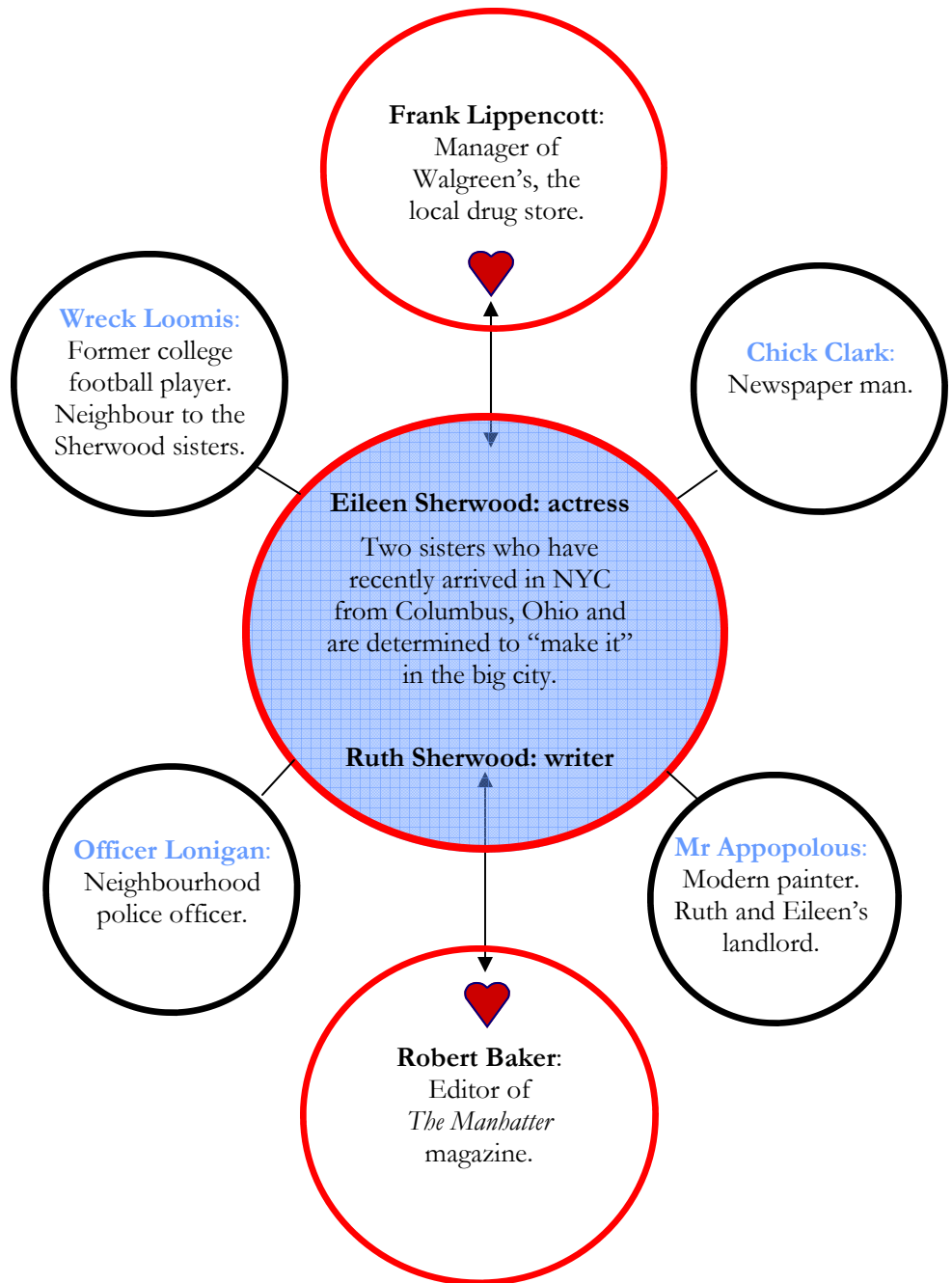
This story of two sisters packing up everything they’ve got and moving from Columbus, Ohio to the bright lights of New York City, has been a long enduring classic. It began life as a series of short stories published in *The New Yorker* in the 1930s. Ruth McKenney, an Ohio journalist, had moved to New York with her sister to be a serious writer. But it was her funny stories about life with her beautiful sister and their adventures in Greenwich Village for which she became famous. They were eventually collected as a book in 1938, *My Sister Eileen*, and it became a best-seller. The popularity of these stories went on to spawn a play, a movie, a television show and, in 1953, the musical *Wonderful Town*.

The play opens on a group of tourists making their way through Greenwich Village, New York. The tour guide describes the area: “Ever since 1870, Greenwich Village has been the Bohemian cradle of painters, writers, actors etc., who’ve gone on to fame and fortune. Today in 1935, who knows what future greats live in these twisting alleys.” We’re introduced to the local artists and general ‘village types’, including the painter and landlord Mr Appopolous, “The Wreck,” an unemployed football player, and various dancers, radicals, and free-spirited characters who exclaim, “Life is mad! Life is sweet!”

And into this chaos run Ruth and Eileen Sherwood – they’re running because a kid has just stolen Ruth’s beloved typewriter and she’s not giving up on it. They meet Mr Appopolous who not only rescues her typewriter, but offers the sisters a place to live – he calls it the apartment of their dreams but the stage directions describe it as “a cross between a cell in solitary confinement and an iron lung”. They reluctantly agree to rent it, only to find out that a new subway line is being blasted out right below them! As they try to sleep under the glare of the street-lamps above and the blasts below, they begin to wonder why, oh why, oh why, oh, why did they ever leave Ohio?

But the next day brings new determination as the girls set out to conquer New York. Ruth is a writer, Eileen is an actress and both struggle to find their way. But to Ruth, things always seem a bit easier for the beautiful and charming Eileen. Men just can’t help themselves around her and seem eager to help her in any way they can, including Frank Lippencott, the manager of the Walgreen drugstore who gives her free lunches. Ruth tries to make a good impression on Robert Baker, the editor of the magazine *The Manbatter*, but he tells her to go back home, she’ll never make it. However, these women are determined to make it – and their determination leads them into a series of adventures, including an encounter with a ship full of Brazilian cadets, a giant Conga line, and a trip to the police station.

Who's Who in Wonderful Town?



The Composer

Leonard Bernstein (1918 – 1990)

**Paul Sportelli, Musical Director
talks about the score:**

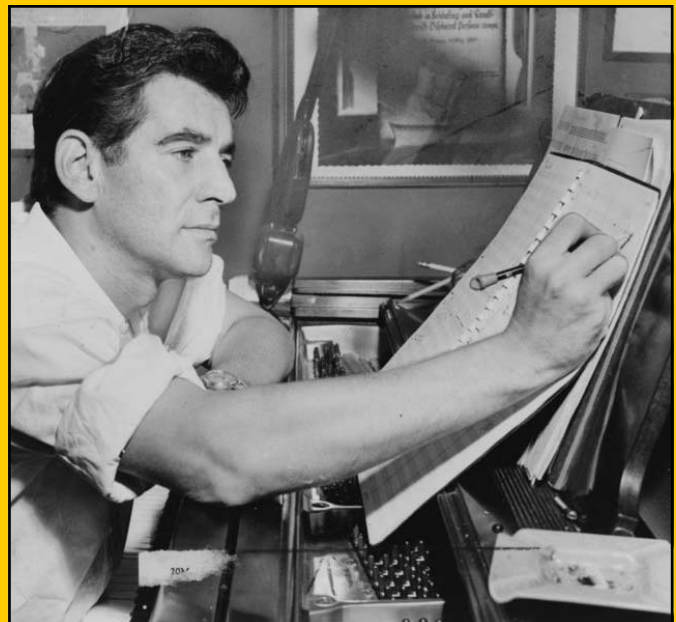
“Wonderful Town has a very tuneful score that is full of life – it perfectly captures the ‘buzz’ of 1930s New York. Composer Leonard Bernstein crafts a score based on dance forms (in numbers like “Conga”, “Swing,” and “The Wrong Note Rag”) that crackle with rhythmic muscularity and kinetic energy. One can also hear hints of what was to come in Bernstein’s next ‘New York’ musical, West Side Story.

The lyricists Betty Comden and Adolph Green are in top form with lyrics that are at times supremely witty and playful (as in “One Hundred Easy Ways to Lose a Man” and “Pass the Football”), at times beautifully and simply heartfelt (as in “A Little Bit in Love” and “A Quiet Girl”). Bernstein complements these heartfelt lyrics with music that is achingly emotional. A song like the familiar and popular duet “Ohio” successfully pulls the listener inside the song through its perfect lyrics and perfectly appropriate tune.

This is a great score full of great lyrics that go so far in telling the story and illuminating the story’s characters through music.”

Leonard Bernstein was perhaps the most influential figure in classical music in the last half of the twentieth century. Composer, conductor, author, lecturer, and media personality, he had a dramatic impact on the popular audience’s acceptance and appreciation of classical music. His own work as a composer, particularly his scores for such Broadway musicals as *West Side Story* and *On the Town*, helped forge a new relationship between classical and popular music.

Born in Lawrence, Massachusetts, Bernstein was appointed to his first permanent conducting post in 1943, as assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic. It was here that Bernstein got his big break. Asked to fill in for an ailing guest conductor, Bernstein (then only twenty-five) conducted a difficult and energetic performance with only an evening’s preparation. Impressing all who came, Bernstein found himself on the cover of the *New York Times*. Within two years he was named the director of the New York City Symphony. He also contributed substantially to the Broadway musical stage. He collaborated with Betty Comden and Adolph Green in *On the Town* and *Wonderful Town*. In collaboration with Richard Wilbur, Lillian Hellman, and others, he wrote *Candide* (1956). In 1957 he again collaborated with Jerome Robbins, Stephen Sondheim, and Arthur Laurents on the landmark musical *West Side Story* (1957), which was also made into the Academy Award-winning film. In 1957, Bernstein returned to the New York Philharmonic, where he presented classical music to a wider audience. While he toured throughout the world, visiting seventeen different countries, he also concentrated on creating accessible performances for the average American.



Leonard Bernstein (1955)

The Writers

Book writers **Joseph Fields** (1895-1966) and **Jerome Chodorov** (1911-2004) were frequent collaborators. During the 1930s and '40s, Fields and Chodorov collaborated on the scripts for several movies, including an adaptation of the hit Broadway musical *Louisiana Purchase* (1941) starring Bob Hope. Their big break came in 1940 on Broadway with the play *My Sister Eileen* which became the classic musical *Wonderful Town* (1953). They also wrote the screenplay for *My Sister Eileen*, produced in 1942. That show and the comedy *Junior Miss*, established the pair and they went on to write *The French Touch* (1945), *The Girl in Pink Tights* (1954), *Anniversary Waltz* (1954), and *The Ponder Heart* (1956). Chodorov then returned to Hollywood, where his film scripts included a successful drama, *Those Endearing Young Charms* (1945). Film work dried up in the early Fifties, however, when he was blacklisted by the House Un-American Activities Committee after being named by colleagues as a Communist. One of those who named him was the choreographer Jerome Robbins, who, after helping stage *Wonderful Town*, went to the committee to denounce his former colleagues, including Jerome Chodorov and his writer brother Edward Chodorov. Joseph Fields, son of vaudevillian Lew Fields and brother of writers Herbert and Dorothy Fields, began by writing for magazines and musical revues, moving up the ladder to The Ziegfeld Follies in the late '20s. His first screenplay was for the 1931 film *The Big Shot* and it was in Hollywood where Chodorov and Fields first met. Other collaborators included Anita Loos with whom he worked on *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1949) and Oscar Hammerstein II for *Flower Drum Song* (1958). His last screen credit was the 1961 movie, *Flower Drum Song*, which he co-produced.



Jerome Chodorov

Lyricists **Betty Comden** (1919-2006) and **Adolph Green** (1915-2002) comprise one of the most successful writing teams in the history of the American musical, both on Broadway and on film. Their sixty year collaboration resulted in more than twenty stage musicals and a dozen movies. Both native New Yorkers, they started out as revue performers and first teamed up in 1938 in a night-club act called *The Revuers*, which also featured Leonard Bernstein as a regular accompanist. This connection with Bernstein led to Comden and Green writing the book and

lyrics to *On the Town* (1944), in which they also performed, and later *Wonderful Town* (1953). The success of *On the Town* took them to Hollywood and their first screenplay was a remake of the early film musical *Good News* (1947). In the ensuing decades they wrote some of the most memorable Broadway and film musicals ever produced. Their Broadway hits included *Bells Are Ringing* (1956), *Do Re Mi* (1960), *Hallelujah Baby* (1967), *Applause* (1970), *Lorelei* (1974), and *On the Twentieth Century* (1978). Their film credits include adaptations of their own scripts *On the Town* (1949) and *Bells Are Ringing* (1960), of other scripts such as *Auntie Mame* (1958), and original screenplays of *Singin' in the Rain* (1952) and *The Band Wagon* (1953).



Betty Comden and Adolph Green

An Interview with Betty Comden and Adolph Green

Interview retrieved from www.leonardbernstein.com/comdenandgreen/interview.asp
Reprinted from the Leonard Bernstein newsletter, *prelude, fugue & riff*, Fall 1994.

In 1953, *Wonderful Town* opened at the Winter Garden Theatre on Broadway to rave reviews. Forty years later, the eve of a new production of *Wonderful Town* at the New York City Opera in 1994, *prelude, fugue & riff* (pf&r) visited the show's lyricists, Betty Comden (BC) and Adolph Green (AG), at Mr Green's record and book-filled library overlooking Central Park.

pf&r: How did Ruth McKenney's stories of bohemian life in the Greenwich Village of the 1930s come to be a musical?

BC: George Abbott got together with Jerome Chodorov and Joseph Fields to write the book of this show to be called *Wonderful Town*, and they were fumbling. Mr Abbott called me one day and said, "Do you think you would come in and do the lyrics?" Adolph was away – but I contacted him and he came back. Mr Abbott asked "Who can you work with?" We said, "Maybe Leonard [Bernstein]." He said, "Go on over and ask him" and by the time we got to the door, Abbott was on the phone.

AG: Shouting, "Yes or no?" And much to our surprise, Leonard said yes.

BC: We were thrilled. Working with Leonard was heaven.

pf&r: Mr Abbott sounded like a director in a hurry. How much time did you have to write the show?

AG: (smiling) Four and a half weeks.

pf&r: Film star Rosalind Russell played Ruth in that first production. How did she enjoy the transition from Hollywood to Broadway?

BC: She liked the score and we wrote a lot of material for her. But she got us all together one day and said, "Listen, Adolph. Listen, Betty. Listen, Leonard. I've got exactly four notes in my voice and you've got to write for just those four notes."

AG: And as for the structure, she said, "It should be those four notes, made up of da-da-da-da-joke, da-da-da-joke."

BC: We did not have this song when we opened in New Haven. Then Rosalind had a bad throat and was in bed.

pf&r: Was the condition of her throat related to the absence of the opening number?

Betty Comden and Adolph Green (interview continued)

BC: (laughs) No, she was not that kind of woman. Adolph and I and Lenny met and we wrote this new number, “100 Easy Ways to Lose a Man.” Then we wheeled the piano down the hallway in the hotel.

AG: In front of her bedroom.

BC: We could play it for her from the hall, yelling the song into her room. That’s how she first heard it.

pf&r: And of course “100 Easy Ways to Lose a Man” became the show-stopper. *Wonderful Town* was a hit, eventually winning four Tony Awards, including Best Musical. What was opening night like?

BC: After the opening there was this big party at the home of Josh and Nedda Logan. We were all up there and we were nervous, because you’re never sure. You never know what on earth the reviews are going to say.

AG: Then came those triumphant notices. As a matter of fact, it was Marlene Dietrich who ran down to Times Square to bring back the notices.

pf&r: How do you feel *Wonderful Town* has held up over 41 years? Does it still speak to today’s audiences?

AG: You bet!

pf&r: Why did you set the time in the 1930s instead of the 1950s, when the musical was written?

BC: Lenny went to the piano and started to play a vamp used by Eddie Duchin, the great orchestra leader and pianist of the Thirties.

AG: As soon as Lenny started playing that, we felt inspired.

BC: We knew that the show would have a style and be rooted in that period. It would have a conga, there would be swing, there would be jazz. With all kinds of wonderful music to work with, we felt at home. *Wonderful Town’s* overture starts with that vamp.

AG: We think City Opera’s *Wonderful Town* will be a terrific production.

BC: We are just heartbroken that Leonard’s not here!



Roger Hodgman talks about directing *Wonderful Town*

Q: Can you tell us your vision of *Wonderful Town*?

A: I want to bring to life the vivid depiction of Greenwich Village in the mid 30's – a place of tolerance, eccentricity and colour, which was particularly attractive to the creators of the musical while writing it during the midst of the repressed early fifties (and the McCarthy witch hunts).

I'm interested in honouring Bernstein's wonderful and lively score and exploring the humour and warmth of the book's origin – *My Sister Eileen* – a series of stories by the original Ruth, which was a hugely successful play and film. Most of the book's dialogue still comes from these sources.

Q: In your mind, who would you suggest as the ideal audience for this 2008 production?

A: It's definitely for musical lovers... older audiences with memories of the thirties... and people with a love of the films of the thirties and forties!

Also, this musical is suitable for younger audiences and audience members who enjoy comedies.

Q: What do you find most interesting about this musical?

A: I'm especially intrigued by how the vision of Greenwich Village has been filtered through the prism of the fifties. Some of the music, for example, is more forties than fifties. Other parts of the music are an homage to earlier American music.

Q: What do you want audience members to know about your work on *Wonderful Town*?

A: Any musical (and I think this is my fifteenth – plus three operas) is a collaboration – especially with the musical director and the choreographer in charge of the dance sections. And of course, the designers. It's a pretty big operation – more than a play.

Q: What do you want younger audience members to know about *Wonderful Town*?

A: I think the piece is meant first for enjoyment but also suggests the virtues of a world of tolerance and freedom. Ruth and Eileen are affected and liberated by their contact with the Village and its' community of artists and eccentrics.

William Schmuck talks about designing the set for *Wonderful Town*

Q: Can you describe your design concept for *Wonderful Town*?

A: The setting for *Wonderful Town* takes place in Greenwich Village and explores the Bohemian lifestyle of the 1930s. This Bohemian world was full of painters, poets, performers, and literary artists. In my design concept I attempted to echo this artistic world with a painterly design style. For inspiration, I looked to the works of American artists such as Reginald Marsh and Edward Hopper, among others. I found I could employ a colourful cartoon style, which helps create the energy of the wild, madcap world of Greenwich Village. By using somber cooler colours, I could create the cold uptown business reality of Midtown Manhattan. By using very intense colour in the Jazz Club, I am attempting to reflect the jazz music and passionate abandon of the world. The machinery of the design includes swinging truck units, which echo the era's swing music, supports the story's rhythm and energy, while maintaining creative, interesting scene changes.

Q: What other factors have influenced your design concept?

A: The history of how *Wonderful Town* was born has also contributed to my design vision. The original short stories about two sisters coming to New York City from Ohio in the '30s, conjures a time of innocence. The musical *Wonderful Town* was not produced until the 1950s – so we are appreciating this story from the musical and moral perspective of a more conservative era.

Q: What do you find most striking about this musical?

A: The music. I love the energy of musicals and being part of shaping that energy. Designs for musicals have to inform, entertain, and have that “wow” factor that channels that energy. Often in musical comedy, all the elements are condensed into their simplest forms. Dealing with that simple essence is very challenging and exciting. *Wonderful Town* in particular has a very strong book with realistic scenes that contrast with whimsical moments; both in Ruth's stories and during the ‘conquering New York’ sequence.



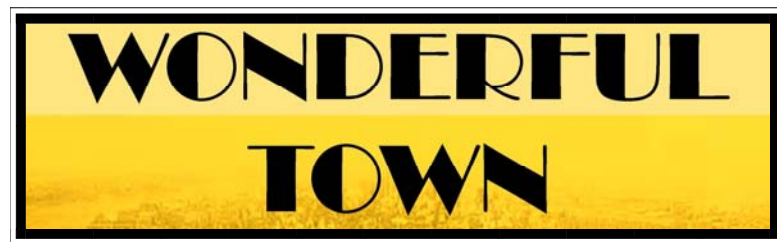
Costume designs for Ruth, Speedy Valenti, and Eileen by Judith Bowden

Production History

Wonderful Town opened on Broadway at the Winter Garden Theatre on February 25, 1953 in a production directed by George Abbott with a cast headed by Rosalind Russell as Ruth. The production ran for 559 performances and won five Tony Awards, including Best Musical. It was another fifty years, however, before there was a Broadway revival. After a successful *Encores!* concert production at New York's City Center in 2000, director and choreographer Kathleen Marshall opened a full production at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre on November 23, 2003. It ran for 497 performances, initially starring Donna Murphy as Ruth, replaced later by Brooke Shields.

The British premiere of *Wonderful Town* was at London's Princess Theatre (which was renamed the Shaftesbury during the run), where it opened on February 23, 1955, directed by Richard Bird, and starring Pat Kirkwood as Ruth. It ran for 205 performances. A 1986 revival at the Queen's Theatre starred Maureen Lipman. The Shaw Festival production is the first full professional production of *Wonderful Town* in Canada.

The only previous Bernstein production at the Shaw Festival, *On the Town*, was directed by Susan Cox at the Royal George Theatre in 1992.



Clockwise: My Sister Eileen movie poster (1955); Revival album (2003); Broadway production poster (2003 revival); Original Broadway production poster (1953).

Musical Theatre of the 20th Century

Musical Theatre began as a combination of many other types of theatre and entertainments at the beginning of the 20th century. Revues, operettas, and sketch comedies of this period were the major foundations for today's musicals. Most early musicals used light stories or intermittent dialogue to lead from one song to the next.

One of the fundamental precepts for the American musical is that the story is the central focus. Some present-day musicals may not have any dialogue at all while others may include very little dance; however, the ultimate goal is to tell the story through the characters' relationships with one another.

Two important early musicals, which influenced the genre and helped establish the musical form were:

- **Showboat** (1927), composed by Jerome Kern, was a musical that broke many barriers. For example, it was the first time that a drama contained both acting and singing. As well, the play dealt with the racial rift and controversy between White and Black America.
- **Of Thee I Sing** (1931) by George and Ira Gershwin, was monumental in that it was a satirical look at the political climate in America at the time. It not only had vivid characters and storyline, but the very crux of the play suggested some substantial thoughts about the current state of the world for its audiences.

Other notable works that have been monumental to the development of the musical include: **Oklahoma!** (1943), **South Pacific** (1949), **West Side Story** (1957), **Hair** (1968), **A Chorus Line** (1975), and **Rent** (1996).



Left and above:
Oklahoma
(1943)



Right and below:
West Side Story
(1957)



1950
1949
1948
1946
1945
1944
1943
1940

South Pacific
(Rodgers & Hammerstein)

Kiss Me, Kate
(Cole Porter)

Annie Get Your Gun
(Irving Berlin)

Carousel
(Rogers & Hammerstein)

Finian's Rainbow
(Lane, Harburg, Sady)

Oklahoma!
(Rogers & Hammerstein)

The Golden Age of Broadway

Wonderful Town (1953) was created in the era known as the *Golden Age* of Broadway. Broadway's *Golden Age* is generally considered to have begun with the musical *Oklahoma!* (1943) and ended with the musical *Hair* (1968). Two works of great importance for this era and the development of the musical form are *Oklahoma!* and *West Side Story*.

Oklahoma! (1943) was the first musical to go through a careful, lengthy period of development and was a milestone for the book musical form. Instead of writing the show quickly, composer Richard Rodgers and lyricist-librettist Oscar Hammerstein II started with weeks of discussion. They spent time deliberating over how to best serve their source material, discussing drama-turgy and tone as well as mapping out their musical plans in story-board fashion. They began at the beginning with the show's famous opening "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning" in which the music, lyrics, and book come together to support the drama by portraying time, mood, and place.

Rodgers and Hammerstein worked for several months until finding a third collaborator, choreographer Agnes de Mille, who was to be a great influence on the development of the musical. De Mille was not well known outside the ballet world but the director, Rouben Mamoulian, ended up pursuing de Mille when he heard that her dances were based in character and often told stories. Although she often fought with the rest of the creative team, and kept her process hidden away in the basement of the studio where they were rehearsing, her work was in keeping with the new serious, narrative-driven kind of musical theatre Rodgers and Hammerstein were creating. Thanks to *Oklahoma!*'s infamous "Dream Ballet" she was quickly embraced as one of the new leaders in American musical theatre.

Up until the 1940s, the composer almost always provided the melody first because most operettas were imported and American lyricists learned to fit their words to these pre-existing scores. Little thought was given to songs arising out of the story as they do today. Instead, the text was shaped to fit the performers' strengths, the comedian's favourite jokes, and the need for chorus girls to come out and dance. Everything was driven by melody. But with *Oklahoma!*, Rodgers reversed the process, setting his music to Hammerstein's lyrics.

When it opened in New York, *Oklahoma!* was a huge hit and broke every record on Broadway. It also launched the craze for cast albums and for the first time in history, people across the country could sit at home, tap into the drama of the music and lyrics, and imagine seeing the show on stage. This was a significant factor in launching Broadway's *Golden Age*.

1960

1959

The Sound of Music
(Rogers & Hammerstein)

1956

My Fair Lady
(Loesser & Burrow)

1953

Wonderful Town
Bernstein, Comden, Green

1951

Paint Your Wagon
(Lerner & Lowe)

1950

The King and I
(Loesser & Burrow)

Guys and Dolls
(Loesser & Burrow)

The World of the Play

The Golden Age of Broadway...continued

The second major chapter for the book musical and its development was *West Side Story* (1957), which mirrored *Oklahoma!*'s integration of book, music, lyrics, and dance in service of a single narrative but with much more fluidity and a greater cumulative effect. As in *Oklahoma!*, dance was an integral part of the production. *West Side Story* transported the story of *Romeo and Juliet* to modern-day New York City and converted the feuding Montague and Capulet families into opposing ethnic gangs: the Sharks and the Jets. For fights, dance became the primary mode of expression; for big emotional moments, it was song. When the adults came onstage, their inability to communicate with the younger generation manifested itself in a reversion back to dialogue. The director and choreographer, Jerome Robbins, can be credited with pushing theatre dance many steps forward. Leaving ballet behind almost completely, he turned to the characters themselves to find the right physical vocabulary for the show; in the case of *West Side Story*, it was the teenage slouch and the pack-like movement of street gangs.

The idea for *West Side Story* came when a friend of Jerome Robbins was cast in *Romeo and Juliet* and asked for advice on how to play the role of Tybalt. Robbins had not read the play since high school, but when he did his first thought was how well the high-stakes romance of the play – the soaring emotions and action-packed plot – would work in a musical. After enlisting his friends Arthur Laurents, Leonard Bernstein, and a young unknown named Stephen Sondheim, they started on their musical “East Side Story,” with a star-crossed Catholic girl and a Jewish boy at its center. They were not ignited by the idea in the way they had hoped, so they put it aside for six years. When they came back to the work, the idea of a Hell’s Kitchen Puerto Rican/White romance felt closer to them; it was more charged and contemporary. As musical theatre’s first author/director/choreographer (and the first to ask for a box around his name in the billing), Robbins not only decided that dance would be an essential component of the show, but he hired two young unknown dancers to play his leads. That choice was important because it began the first major elevation of the role of the actor in the process of musical development. Robbins was seeking to infuse a level of realism in the show that had not been tried before, and so he cast real New York kids with the dancing ‘chops’ to get through it. Their authenticity informed the way the music, dance, and dialogue were conceived. In keeping with the world of the play, Robbins separated the actors playing the Jets and the Sharks during rehearsals, forbidding them to socialize and occasionally would start vicious rumours between the two “gangs”.

The creativity of *Oklahoma!* and *West Side Story* greatly influenced the *Golden Age* of Broadway and were essential to the development of the modern musical.

1970

Cabaret
(Kander & Ebb)

1966

Mame
(Herman, Lawrence, Lee)

1964

Fiddler on the Roof
(Bock, Harnick, Stein)

1962

Hello, Dolly!
(Herman & Stewart)

1960

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum
(Sondheim, Shevelove, Gelbart)

The Fantasticks
(Jones & Schmidt)



Greenwich Village – The Place To Be

For most of the 20th century, Greenwich Village (named after Greenwich, London, England) was a central location for artists and innovators from around the world. The neighbourhood, which had begun as a prosperous residential area during colonial times and had become a tenement district in the 19th century, began to attract artists and bohemians from around the country. Its central location (southwest side of downtown Manhattan) and inexpensive rent made it desirable among those artists who longed to be in New York City.

Throughout the 1920s and '30s, the budding artistic neighbourhood was home to many performing artists. With the continued presence of vaudeville theatres, Greenwich Village provided plenty of opportunities for acts of all kinds. One of the first great venues was the Greenwich Village Follies, where dancers and musicians such as Martha Graham (modern dancer), and Cole Porter (composer/musician) got their starts. For actors, playwrights and anyone in the theatre industry, the Village was a lively, colourful, creative, and progressive environment. By the 1940s, the Village would be an international meeting ground for writers in nearly every genre. It was where writers, like the young James Baldwin were first introduced to a larger writing community, and where Dashiell Hammett and Lillian Hellman became involved in politically driven activities.

The progressive attitudes found in the Village culture have supported the development of new movements and ideas, from avant-garde to alternative artistic, cultural, or political views. The Village has continued to maintain its role as a place where ideas have challenged the wider American culture such as the birth of the gay liberation movement in the 1960s. In the 1950s, the Village became the birthplace of the Beat Movement, which expressed social and literary views that were unconventional. The Beat Generation adopted mannerisms from jazz musicians that were more “loose” and “hip.” The “Beats” advocated personal freedom through an experiential lifestyle, which may have included the use of drugs, enjoyment of jazz music, or the disciplines of Eastern philosophies.

From the 1950s through to the early '70s, many cultural and popular icons began their careers in the Village's coffeehouse, nightclub, and theatre scenes. Some notable figures include: Joan Baez, Jackson Browne, Bob Dylan, Simon and Garfunkel, The Mamas and the Papas, Peter, Paul, and Mary, Tom Paxton, Dave Van Ronk, Nina Simone, Barbara Streisand, and The Velvet Underground. At the height of bohemianism, Greenwich Village became famous for such eccentrics as the poet, novelist Maxwell Bodenheim; homeless writer, Joe Gould; dancer Isadora Duncan; and great playwrights such as Eugene O'Neill.

With the high housing costs of today, the Village neighbourhood has changed; however, residents still remain proud of their neighbourhood's unique history and possess a strong sense of community identity. The neighbourhood has been home to such contemporary artists as Steve Earle, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Julianne Moore, Amy Sedaris, Uma Thurman, and Liv Tyler.



America in the 1930s

Like Ruth and Eileen in *Wonderful Town*, most Americans during the depression era experienced a scarcity of money and a lack of resources. People did what they could to put some happiness back in their lives. Popular antidotes for enhancing the quality of life throughout the '30s included a passion for sports, the arts, and entertainment.

Here are some notable accomplishments and pastimes that made New York and other American towns truly *wonderful* during this era.

- Mystery novels from writers like Agatha Christie, Dashiell Hammett, and Raymond Chandler continued to be popular escapes. Movies, parlor games and board games became the rage – in fact, Parker Brothers introduced the game Monopoly in 1935 and 20,000 sets were sold in just one week!
- Radio reached its peak in popularity and by 1939, 80% of the population owned radio sets. Americans loved to laugh at the antics of such comedians as Jack Benny, Fred Allen, George Burns & Gracie Allen, Amos & Andy, and Fibber McGee & Molly. The daytime airwaves were dominated by the soap opera, and the heroics of the Lone Ranger, the Green Hornet, the Shadow not only thrilled listeners of all ages but sold countless boxes of cereal. People also gathered around radios to listen to the Yankees play ball.
- The younger generation danced to the big bands and fell in love with the energy and vibe of new jazz. Duke Ellington's song, "It Don't Mean a Thing (if it Ain't Got That Swing)" sums up the 'in' music of the time.
- In 1936, the U.S. Department of the Interior hired Woody Guthrie to travel throughout the Northwest to perform his folk songs. During this tour he wrote 26 songs in twenty-six days.
- Kate Smith sang Irving Berlin's "God Bless America" in 1938, and made the song her own.
- It was the beginning of American regionalist art movement.
- The rise and development of important American architecture such as the Rockefeller Center, the Empire State Building, and the Chrysler Building flourished.
- Dr Seuss published his rhyming books and the famous Dick and Jane books that taught millions of children to read were first published in 1931.
- Fashion trends included: different hem lengths for different times of the day; wide and high-waisted men's pants; hats for the well-dressed male; and the use of the zipper – a less costly alternative to buttons and closures.
- Amelia Earhart was an aviation pioneer and the first woman and second person to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.
- Mildred Babe Didrikson was considered by many to be the finest woman athlete of all time. She won medals of distinction in baseball, basketball, track & field, and golf. Jesse Owens, an African American athlete, also won four gold medals in track and field at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin.



Did You Know?

“Big Apple”?

The reference to NYC as *The Big Apple* began in the 1920s at the NY race tracks. Going to the NY horse races was a big treat; the allegorical prize: a Big Apple.

In the ‘30s, jazz musicians began calling the City *The Big Apple* referring to NYC as the jazz capital of the world. In the ‘70s the name was used to revive NY’s tourism.

Today *The Big Apple* symbol and name internationally represents NYC and its cultural and tourist attractions.

➔ Based on real life events of Ruth McKenney and her sister Eileen moving from Ohio to Greenwich Village in the mid ‘30s, Ruth wrote a series of short stories that became a book, a play, a movie, a musical, and a television show. Below is the remarkable chronology of McKenney’s stories:

1935-1937 Series of short stories are first published in *The New Yorker*

1938 Short stories are published as a book entitled *My Sister Eileen*

1940 The last two chapters of the book become the basis for the Broadway play *My Sister Eileen*, which ran on Broadway for 3 years with 864 performances

1942 *My Sister Eileen*, the movie, is made starring Rosalind Russell

1953 Bernstein adapts the play, *My Sister Eileen* into the musical, *Wonderful Town*, which runs one year on Broadway with 559 performances

1955 The musical version of the original movie *My Sister Eileen* is made by Columbia Pictures using original song material (no music from *Wonderful Town* was used nor did *Wonderful Town* reach the screen)

1960 Television show *My Sister Eileen* airs for 26 episodes

➔ The original role of Ruth in *Wonderful Town* was played by Rosalind Russell. Russell told the writers she had a vocal range of only four good notes. Upon this advice the song, “One Hundred Easy Ways to Lose a Man” was created for Russell which became a hit.

➔ Eileen McKenney, the inspiration for the title character of *My Sister Eileen*, and her husband, novelist and screenwriter Nathanael West, were killed in a car accident four days before the Broadway opening.

Bernstein Brilliance

World peace was a particular concern of Bernstein. Speaking at Johns Hopkins University in 1980 and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York in 1983, he described his vision of global harmony. His “Journey for Peace” tour to Athens and Hiroshima with the European Community Orchestra in 1985 commemorated the 40th anniversary of the atomic bomb. In December 1989, Bernstein conducted the historic “Berlin Celebration Concerts” on both sides of the Berlin Wall, as it was being dismantled. The concerts were unprecedented gestures of cooperation, the musicians representing the former East Germany, West Germany, and the four powers that had partitioned Berlin after WWII.

Wonderful Town



“Why, oh why,
oh why, oh,
Why did I ever
leave Ohio?”

Did You Know?

Fun Facts About Ohio

In 1935, when they pack up everything they've got and move from Columbus, Ohio to the bright lights of New York City, Ruth and Eileen's lives would have been very different. Here are some fun facts about the sisters' home state.

- Thomas A. Edison from Milan, Ohio developed the incandescent light bulb, phonograph, and early motion picture camera.
- 1839 – Charles Goodyear of Akron, Ohio developed the process of rubber.
- 1852 – Ohio was the first state to enact laws protecting working women.
- 1869 – W.F. Semple of Mount Vernon, Ohio patented chewing gum.
- 1879 – Cleveland became the world's first city to be lighted electrically.
- 1891 – John Lambert of Ohio City made America's first automobile.
- 1900 – Harry M. Stevens from Ohio created America's first hot dog.
- 1936 – Jesse Owens grew up in Cleveland. He won four gold medals at the Berlin Olympics.
- 1938 – Roy J. Plunkett of New Carlisle invented Teflon.
- Akron, Ohio was the first city to use police cars.
- Cincinnati, Ohio had the first professional city fire department.
- Cincinnati Reds were the first professional baseball team.
- Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon. He was from Wapakoneta, Ohio.
- The Wright Brothers are acknowledged as inventors of the first airplane. They were from Dayton, Ohio.
- Some well-known personalities were born in Ohio. Among them include: Clark Gable, Arsenio Hall, Paul Newman, Annie Oakley, Steven Spielberg, and Grant Wood.
- Seven U.S. States presidents were born in Ohio and include: Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, William H. Taft, and Warren G. Harding.
- 50% of the United States population lives within a 500 mile radius of Columbus.
- Ohio is known as the Buckeye State.

Wonderful
Town



Books

- Brooks, A. (1970). *Broadway*. New York: Macmillan.
- Bowers, D.B., & Henderson, A. (1996). *Red Hot & Blue, A Smithsonian Salute to the American Musical*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Campbell, J. (2001). *This Is the Beat Generation: New York-San Francisco-Paris*. LA: University of California Press.
- Fields, J.A., & Chodorov, J. (1941). *My Sister Eileen*. (Revised 1946 ed.) New York: Dramatists Play Service.
- Fields, A., & Fields, M. (1993). *From the Bowery to Broadway: Lew Fields and the Roots of American Popular Theatre*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fuller, S. (1997). *New York in the 1930s*. New York: Distributed Art.
- Flinn, D.M. (1997). *Musical! A Grand Tour*. New York: Schirmer Books.
- Gottfried, M. (1980). *Broadway Musicals*. (2nd ed.) New York: Harry H. Abrams.
- Mandelbaum, K. (1991). *Not Since Carrie: Forty Years of Broadway Musical Flops*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- McKenney, R. (1938) *My Sister Eileen*. Montreal: Pocket Books of Canada.
- Nicholson, Virginia (2005). *Among the Bohemians: Experiments in Living 1900–1939*. New York: Harper Collins.

Websites

- <http://www.theatrehistory.com/american/musical030.html>
- <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/broadway/about/index.html>
- <http://www.wonderfultownthemusical.com/press.htm>
- <http://www.talkinbroadway.com/world/WTown.html>
- <http://www.gvshp.org/history.htm>
- http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/greenwich_village.html
- http://www.indianchild.com/the_great_depression.htm
- <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/oralhist/ohhome.html>

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRE-PERFORMANCE

Theme 1: Dreams & Aspirations	Page
Exploring Bohemian Lives and Lifestyles	22 - 23
Women's Perspectives in the 1930s	23 - 24
 Theme 2: Interpretations & Adaptations	
Same source - Multiple Interpretations	25
Examine Stock and Stereotype	26
Interpretation and Design	26
Examining Stereotype and Lyrics	28
 Theme 3: Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance!	
Musical Foundations	29

POST-PERFORMANCE

Theme 1: Dreams & Aspirations	
Where Do I Belong?	30
Life Careers	31
Directing and Performing a Dance Pantomime	32
 Theme 2: Interpretations & Adaptations	
Explore the "Beat Movement" Through Soundscape	32-33
Explore the "Beat Movement" Through Improvisation	33
 Theme 3: Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance!	
Write a Review	34
Roles and Responsibilities of Artistic Team	34
Crossword Puzzle – <i>Wonderful Town</i> and Theatre Terms	35
Scene Study	36
Conga!	37
 Study Guide Response Sheet	 38

Pre-performance Classroom Activities

The following pages suggest questions and activities students might explore **BEFORE** attending *Wonderful Town*.



Activities relate to Ministry of Education expectations for the Arts and Character Education at the junior, intermediate, and senior levels. To obtain Ontario Curriculum documents, visit www.edu.gov.on.ca.

See pages 1 - 20 for supplementary information.

Theme 1: Dreams & Aspirations

Greenwich Village, a popular New York City neighbourhood, has attracted artists and innovators from around the world. Since the 1920s, this colourful and creative district has supported dancers, painters, musicians, actors, and writers – all aspiring to fulfill a dream.

RESEARCH

With a partner:

- Use the internet or a literary source to research “bohemian life” in Greenwich Village (1920-1960).

Below is an excerpt from the opening scene of *Wonderful Town*, which describes Greenwich Village in 1935. The lyric indicates several different village types.

*Here you see
Christopher Street
Typical spot in Greenwich Village*

*Life is mad,
Life is sweet
Int'resting people on Christopher Street.*

*Here's a famous village type.
Mr Appopolous, modern painter,
Better known on this beat
As the lovable landlord of Christopher Street.*

*“Down with Wall Street! Down with Wall Street!”
“Love thy neighbor! Love thy neighbor!”
“And one – and two – and three – and four –”*

*Such interesting people live on Christopher Street!
Look! Look!
Poets! Actors! Dancers! Writers!*

*Here we live,
Here we love,
This is a place for self-expression.
Greenwich Village! Wheeee!!*

In groups of 4:

- From your research and the excerpt above, identify various Village stereotypes.
- Each person assumes a Village character and creates an action that represents your occupation or livelihood.
- In your groups, create a tableau that communicates the following:
 - Who lives in the Village?
 - What happens in the Village (i.e., what activities take place in the neighbourhood)?
- Each group presents their tableau to the class.
- Combine various tableaux to represent a bigger picture of life in Greenwich Village.

As a class:

Discuss the following questions: What relationships might exist between the Village characters (e.g., how do they feel about one another)? What are their possible back-ground stories (e.g., what's happened to them in the past)? What does their future hold?

In groups of 8:

- Create a new tableau that incorporates the answers above.
- One by one teacher taps each character's shoulder. When tapped, the character comes alive and speaks a sentence about life in the Village.
- *Optional:* Add music or sound effects to the tableau for added effect (e.g., "Christopher Street" – track 2, from the new Broadway Cast recording of *Wonderful Town*).

DISCUSSION

"But no washing – that's woman's work." (Wreck)

Wonderful Town is about two sisters who have recently arrived in NYC from Columbus, Ohio and are determined to "make it" in the big city. Eileen dreams of becoming an actress, while Ruth is a writer who aspires to become a NYC journalist. As young women in 1935, these aspirations would not have been typical.

Although the Depression is not part of Ruth and Eileen's story, the economic slump in the 1930s had a profound influence on professional and personal lives. Learn more about women's work during 1930-40 by reading the following excerpts from the American Memory Collection, *American Life Histories, 1936-1940*. These excerpts provide historical social perspectives from ordinary working women.

On your own, read the following two excerpts.

Italian Feed (Melicenda Bartoletti, 1940)

... I'm getting a dinner ready for a party of twelve people. All from Montpelier. Not Italians. Italians know how to make their own Italian dinners. These are Americans. In the winter I get about two orders a week for good-sized dinner parties. In the summer, not so many. They like to get out then in their cars and stop at different places to eat.

... After Pietro died I had to figure a way to live. I said to myself: I have the house - small as it is, it's mine and all paid for. I have a little insurance money, but there are four children. I got to make that money stretch. So I began taking orders for dinners. And sometimes if the neighbors were sick - but not sick enough for real nurses - I took care of them.

... I like to work like this - here in the house. I know where every pan is hung, where every spice is kept. Sometimes my customers want me to cook in their own homes. Well, I do not refuse, but I charge them more. I don't bother to fix the table pretty. I figure my customers come here to eat, not to look at my table. Oh, I fix the food fancy so it will look good to the eyes, too. And I give them plenty. That's what they pay for. I charge them \$1.25 each. That isn't too much. First I serve them a big platter of stuffed celery, thin slices of salami and mortadella, ripe olives, and pickles. Then the ravioli with a rich tomato sauce. If they want spaghetti, too... well, I give them the spaghetti as well. The little Italian rolls are good with ravioli. I don't make them myself. I buy them from the Italian baker down the street. Just before it's time to serve the dinner, I sprinkle them with milk and put them in the oven for a few minutes to heat them. Dessert, no. I never serve dessert. The ravioli are so rich that I make them a dish that will cut the richness. I give them a salad of lettuce, endive, tomato, onion, celery, mixed with vinegar and olive oil. I use the wine vinegar. It gives a better taste to the salad. With the dollar and a quarter dinner I serve just one glass of red wine. If they want more they got to pay for it.

Tonight my customers will get here at seven o'clock. They won't leave until eleven....

Well, any time you want a good Italian feed, call me up. My name is in the telephone book. Just call Melicenda Bartoletti.



The Packinghouse (Marge Paca, 1939)

...I worked in the sausage department. In the domestic sausage. We'd have to do the pork sausages in the cooler. Sometimes we wouldn't be told what kind of sausage we'd have to work on and then when we'd come to work they'd say 'pork for you' and we'd have to throw any dirty old rags we could pick up around our shoulders and go to work in that icebox. If they had any sense or consideration for the girls they could let them know ahead of time so that girls could come prepared with enough clothes.

In summer sausage, they stuff very big sausages there. That's very heavy work. A stick of sausage weighs 200 pounds, five or six sausages on a stick. They have women doing that. It's a strong man's job and no woman should be doing that work. The young girls just can't, so they have the older ladies, and it's a crime to see the way they struggle with it. On that job I lost 27 pounds in three months. That was enough for me. It's a strain on your heart, too. Women got ruptured. They pick the strongest women, big husky ones, you should see the muscles on them, but they can't keep it up. It's horses' labor.

In chipped beef the work is much easier. You can make better money, too, but the rate has to be topped, and it's very, very fast work.

1. Discussion Questions

With a partner:

- What might be some advantages of Melicenda working at home? Are there any disadvantages?
- What do you think Melicenda means when she distinguishes between Americans and Italians? Do you think this distinction is significant? Why or why not? Who, if anyone, might make such a distinction today?
- Describe Marge Paca's job? How would you describe her working conditions? How do you think this kind of work has changed since the 1930s?
- What did Marge think about forcing women to work in the summer sausage department? Do you agree with her views? Why or why not?
- Marge says that in the chipped beef department, "the rate has to be topped." This means that workers were paid more money if they could produce more than a certain amount per hour. What would be the advantages of being paid according to what was produced, rather than by the hour? What would be the disadvantages?

DISCUSSION
Cont'd



2. Interviews

With your partner:

- Create a list of six questions to ask Melicenda and Marge about their jobs.
- One person plays the role of Melicenda and one person plays the role of a 1930s news journalist who is gathering information for a human interest story.
- Without breaking character, conduct the interview.
- Using the same set of questions, conduct another interview only this time, the person who played the journalist now plays Marge, and the person who played Melicenda now plays the journalist.
- Time shift from the 1930s to present day.
- What jobs today might women do that are related to the preparing of food?
- Partner 1: Take on the role of a present day _____.
- Partner 2: As a present day journalist, ask applicable questions about this contemporary job (e.g., role, responsibilities, and work conditions).
- Would the 1930s questions differ from the ones asked today? Discuss the similarities and differences?

ACTIVITY

Theme 2: Interpretations & Adaptations

Ruth McKenney's NYC adventures were published as a series of short stories, which were adapted to become a book, a play, a movie, the musical *Wonderful Town*, and a 1960s television show.

Many written works have been adapted and reshaped into other written works, stage, and screen plays. For example, *The Wizard of Oz* by L. F. Baum started life in 1899 as a children's book. In 1939, it was made into the film classic starring Judy Garland. In 1975, *The Wiz*, a rock musical, was adapted from Baum's book. In 1995, Gregory Maguire wrote the book, *Wicked: The Life and Time of the Wicked Witch of the West*, based on Baum's original story. In 2003, Maguire's new book was adapted into *Wicked*, the musical.

DISCUSSION

In groups of 3:

- Identify two additional stories that have been adapted from an original source.
- Share your additional stories and original sources with the class.

ACTIVITY

As a class:

- Create a story wheel. (*Note:* This activity requires a large open space.)
- Students lie on their backs and make a wheel formation with their heads towards the centre.
- The idea is to start with a well-known story/fable and adapt it. Start with the story's original beginning, change the middle, and create a new ending (e.g., tell the story from another character's perspective such as that of the wolf in *The Three Little Pigs*).
- Choose someone to begin a story with one line of dialogue.
- Each person, in turn, adds to the story.
- Story ends once everyone in the circle has contributed a line or word.
- Create another story wheel but this time, create your own original story!

ACTIVITY

A popular short story by Ruth McKenney was adapted for *Wonderful Town*. In the musical, Ruth says, "A Brazilian training ship just came in – like Annapolis – only these fellows are all young coffee millionaires. I'm going aboard to get a human interest story."

In group of 3-4:

- Use the chart below to generate some ideas about Ruth's story. *Note:* Words in this chart have been taken from the original short story.
- As a group, create "Ruth's story" from the ideas you've generated.
- Tell your stories to the class.
- When attending the live performance, make sure to note the musical's adaptation!

American dollar bills	rumba	Brazilian Navy
cops	newspaper reporter	parade
taxicab	rum punch	police station



In groups of 6:

- Place the lyric excerpts below in separate envelopes.
- Randomly choose an envelope so that each person in the group has a lyric.
- Interpret the selected lyric as a monologue by answering the following questions:
→ Who is speaking?
→ What is the character speaking about?
→ How is the character feeling?
- Discuss your answers with the members of your group.
- Rehearse your “monologue” 3-4 times.
- Decide on an order to present the monologues within your group.
- Present to the class.
- After the presentations, identify the stereotypes of characters portrayed.

ACTIVITY

Lyric #1: Don't be square. Rock right out of that rockin' chair. 'Truck on down and let down your hair. Breathe that barrel-house air! The Village Vortex! Swing! Dig the rhythm, dig the message! The jive is jumpin' and the music goes 'round and round. Get full of the solid, groovy, sound of swing!

Lyric #2: A million kids just like you come to town ev'ry day with stars in their eyes. They're gonna conquer the city, they're gonna grab off the Pulitzer Prize. But it's a terrible pity because they're in for a bitter surprise. And their stories all follow one line, like his... like his... like mine!

Lyric #3: When she is near me the world's in repose. We need no words; she sees, she knows. But where is my quiet girl? Where is my gentle girl? Where is the special girl? Who is soft, soft as snow. Somewhere, somewhere, my quiet girl.

Lyric #4: Nice people, nice talk. A balmy summer night. A bottle of wine. Nice feeling. It's friendly, it's nice to sit around this way. What more do you need? Just talk and people – that can suffice. When both the talk and people are so nice. It's nice!

Lyric #5: He takes you to a baseball game, you sit knee to knee. He says, “The next man up at bat will bunt, you'll see.” Don't say, “Oooh, what's a bunt? This game's too hard for little me.” Just say, “Bunt? Are you nuts?! With no outs, two men on base, and a left-handed batter coming up, he'll walk right into a triple play, just like it happened in the fifth game of the Word Series in 1923.”

Lyric #6: Look at me now. Four years of college, famous professors tutoring me, scholarship kid, ev'rything paid for. Food & vacations – all for free! Day that I left, ev'ryone gathered, their cheering still rings in my ears-Rah Wreck ray! Rah Wreck! Wreck rah! W-e-c, R-e-k, R-e-q, Wreck, we love you!



With a partner:

- Read the song lyric at the top of p. 26.
- Based on the lyrics, describe the character's physical and personal attributes, (e.g., outgoing or shy; short or tall; large or medium-built, intelligent, popular, rude, generous, etc.).
- Create a costume design in the form of a costume sketch or a written description that evokes the character's physical features and personal qualities.
- Share sketches or descriptions with class and discuss the similarities and differences.

ACTIVITY

PASS THE FOOTBALL

...Couldn't spell a lick,
Couldn't do arithmetic;
One and one made three,
Thought dog was C-A-T,

But I could pass that football
Like nothin' you have ever seen.

I couldn't even tell red from green,
Get those verbs through my bean,
But I was buddies with the dean
Like nothin' you have ever seen.

Passed without a fuss
English lit. and calculus.
Never had to cram,
Even passed the bar exam,

Because I passed that football
Like nothin' you have ever seen.

In our hall of fame,
There's a statue with my name.
There we stand, by heck,
Lincoln, Washington and Wreck.

'Cause I could pass that football
Like nothin' you have ever seen!

ACTIVITY
cont'd

Create a costume sketch and/or a description of the character in the above song in the space below.



Read the song lyric below.

ONE HUNDRED WAYS TO LOSE A MAN



You've met a charming fellow and you're out for a spin.
The motor fails and he just wears a helpless grin,
Don't bat your eyes and say, "What a romantic spot we're in."

Just get out, crawl under the car,
tell him it's the gasket and fix it in two seconds flat with a bobby pin.

That's a good way to lose a man.

A sure sure sure way to lose a man,
A splendid way to lose a man.

Just throw your knowledge in his face,
He'll never try for a second base.
Ninety-eight ways to go.

You've found your perfect mate and it's been love from the start.
He whispers, "You're the one to who I give my heart."
Don't say, "I love you too, my dear, let's never never part."

Just say, "I'm afraid you've made a grammatical error
it's not 'To who I give my heart,' it's 'To whom I give my heart'
You see, with the use of the preposition 'to,' 'who' becomes the indirect object,
making the use of 'whom' imperative which
I can easily show you by drawing a simple chart."

That's a good way to lose a man.

A fine fine fine way to lose a man,
A dandy way to lose a man.

Just be more well-informed than he,
You'll never hear "O, promise me."
Just show him where his grammar errs,
Then mark your towels "hers" and "hers."
One hundred easy ways to lose a man!

According to the lyrics of "One Hundred Ways to Lose A Man":

- List three mistakes women make around men;
- List three ways to attract and keep a man.

Mistakes on how to lose a man	Suggestions on how to keep a man
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

What stereotypes about men and women does this song promote?

With a partner, improvise three scenes based on the stereotypes above.

- Choose one mistake, one suggestion, and a setting from the song.
- 1. Play out one scene that depicts a mistake; 2. One scene that depicts a suggestion; and 3. One scene that depicts an alternative option (e.g., a scene that reflects our present day sensibilities).
- Present one of the three versions to the class. Compare similarities and differences.

Theme 3: Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance!

RESEARCH

Where do musicals come from? How have musicals developed since the 1930s?

On your own:

- Use the internet or a literary source to research the history and development of musical theatre.

DISCUSSION

In groups of 3-4:

- From your memory, name as many musicals as you can.
- Write the names on a list and share with the class.

Ideas for musicals are generated from various sources.

As a class:

- Fill in the chart below with appropriate titles. (See p. 36 for teacher's answer key.)

Source	Musical
Comic Strip	
Film	
Fairy Tale	
Novel	
Poetry	
Short Story	<i>Wonderful Town</i>
Other?	

ACTIVITY

Before attending the play, explore the following questions on your own or with a partner. Based on your pre-performance research, these questions will help identify your expectations prior to the live show.

Question	Answer
What do you expect the performance to be like, in terms of style and effect?	
What problems might there be in the staging of this musical?	
What will you be looking for in the performance?	
What do you expect to enjoy in this performance?	

Post-performance Classroom Activities

The following pages suggest questions and activities students might explore **AFTER** attending *Wonderful Town*.



Activities relate to Ministry of Education expectations for the Arts and Character Education at the junior, intermediate, and senior levels. To obtain Ontario Curriculum documents, visit www.edu.gov.on.ca. See pages 1 - 20 for supplementary information.

Theme 1: Dreams & Aspirations

ACTIVITY

In 1935, Ruth and Eileen pack up and move from Columbus, Ohio to the bright lights of New York City, where they meet people of various cultures and backgrounds. Following dreams often requires us to travel unknown paths and experience great changes. New people and places can threaten our sense of security and feelings of belonging. Let's explore some ideas about belonging in the next two-level activity.

Level 1: As a class, teacher creates signs for each corner of the classroom that identify students' favourite sports, food, music, and school subjects.

- Students choose a corner according to their favourite: 1. Sport (e.g., hockey, basketball, soccer, or baseball); 2. Food (e.g., pizza, ice cream, BBQ, or seafood); 3. Music (e.g., classical, pop, jazz, or country); and 4. School subject (e.g., English, drama, music, or history).
- How many favourite things did you share with the same person? How unique are your likes?

Level 2: Equally divide class into 5 social clubs: 1. **Eastern philosophies** (e.g., yoga, tai chi); 2. **Greek**; 3. **Irish**; 4. **Artists** (e.g., actors, dancers, actors, musicians, painters, poets); and 5. **Hippies**. (Note: Above cultures are represented in *Wonderful Town*.)

- Groups create a pamphlet that depicts the club's best features (e.g., club name, mission statement, club logo, activities, etc.). Features should attempt to *sell* the club to potential members.
- Using the Jigsaw-Puzzle Method, mix up students so that each group has all 5 clubs represented.
 - In newly formed groups, members ask reps from original groupings about his or her club.
 - As a potential club member, *shop* for a new club within your new group. (Pretend you're a person interested in: the arts and/or political activism and/or multiculturalism.)
 - In-role, introduce yourself to members of your group (e.g., your name; your profession/hobbies; you recently moved to NYC and want to belong to a club; etc.).
 - Ask each rep. questions about his/her club. (Note: create or photocopy multiple club pamphlets so that each club rep. has one to refer to during his/her presentation).
- Based on club information and your interests, choose a club.
- New club registrants move together to form the five clubs.

Once everyone has joined a club, the teacher facilitates a discussion that reflects students' reason(s) for joining a particular group. List reasons on a poster board under the five club names. During the discussion, ask the following questions:

1. Why do you think members join a particular club?
2. How does belonging to a group affect how a member feels?
3. Is one club better than another?
4. Could all five groups join together to create one club? If so, what would be the benefit(s)?

As in *Wonderful Town*, many young people, like Ruth and Eileen, decide to move to other cities and explore uncharted territories. Eileen dreams of becoming a stage actress while Ruth aspires to become a New York journalist. What are your personal and professional dreams and aspirations? After graduating from high school, what new adventures await you? Do you have your heart and mind set on a particular profession? If so, what?

On your own:

- List your top three *dream* jobs: _____

- Choose to explore a future plan or a short-term goal such as: pursuing a post-secondary education; a future profession; full-time work; part-time work *and* school; independent living; etc.
- Use the chart below to examine your plan's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (S.W.O.T.). E.g., finances, transportation, social life, career goals, security, independence.
- Assign a positive or negative score to each point (+ or - 1, 2, or 3; 3 being the highest score).
- A strongly positive score indicates affirmative action; a strongly negative score indicates that action should be reconsidered.

In groups of 3-4:

- Discuss the results of your S.W.O.T. analysis with your group.
- Do your score results surprise you? Does your group share any similar pros and cons? What are the individual differences within your group?

As a class:

- Discuss the similarities and differences of each group.
- Explore possibilities, considerations, and applicable questions with your teacher.

Goal:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Advantages? (assign: + 1, 2 or 3)	Disadvantages? (assign: - 1, 2 or 3)
•	•
•	•
What strengths can I contribute? (assign: + 1, 2 or 3)	What weaknesses do I bring? (assign: - 1, 2 or 3)
•	•
•	•
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
What opportunities exist? (assign: + 1, 2 or 3)	What obstacles do I face? (assign: - 1, 2 or 3)
•	•
•	•

Score results:

ACTIVITY

Mime activity:

Using the stage directions below, create a sequence of actions using mime and creative movement (dance pantomime).

Divide class into two large groups:

- Assign one person in each group the role of director.
- Assign the following roles: 1) Passers-by; 2) Ruth; 3) secretary; 4) writer #1; 5) writer #2; 6) men on subway; 7) Eileen; 8) producer; 9) line up of female actresses; 10) producer's assistant.
- *Note:* Group members can play more than one role.
- The beginning of the pantomime should start with determined optimism as Ruth and Eileen struggle to get ahead in the "Big City."
- The middle of the pantomime should communicate a sense of confusion as the sisters encounter multiple characters and situations.
- The end of the pantomime should conclude with utter exhaustion and defeat.
- When all elements are in place, rehearse the beginning, middle, and end three times.
- Group 1 performs dance pantomime for group 2.
- Group 2 performs dance pantomime for group 1.
- *Optional:* Add music or sound effects during the presentations for added effect (e.g., "Conquering New York"—track 4, from the new Broadway Cast recording of *Wonderful Town*).

Through numerous PASSERS-BY, RUTH appears, approaching a SECRETARY seated at a typewriter. The SECRETARY turns RUTH down. A WRITER arrives and the SECRETARY allows him to pass through. RUTH tries again and is denied entrance. ANOTHER WRITER appears, kisses the SECRETARY, and is passed through. RUTH tries once more, but to no avail. WRITER carries SECRETARY off in his arms. More PASSERS-BY appear, turning the scene into a subway. MEN grab all the seats in the subway car. RUTH and other WOMEN are left standing. EILEEN arrives and enters subway as RUTH departs. They wave. MEN fight to give EILEEN their seats. The subway halts, EILEEN gets out, followed by MEN. More PASSERS-BY through which EILEEN arrives at a PRODUCER'S office. EILEEN takes her place in a line-up of girls. The PRODUCER looks over the girls' legs, picks EILEEN from group, and ushers her into HIS office. EILEEN auditions lines as the PRODUCER makes passes. He chases her around his desk. A PRODUCER'S ASSISTANT joins in the chase. EILEEN escapes; the PRODUCER leaps into his ASSISTANT'S arms by mistake. More PASSERS-BY. RUTH and EILEEN enter separately and meet facing the CROWD. Wave after wave of PEOPLE march toward them, shouting "NO!" As the number comes to a finish, the TWO SISTERS join each other sadly, collapsing glumly on each other's shoulders amidst the hostile city crowds.

Theme 2: Interpretations & Adaptations

Although *Wonderful Town* is set in 1935, it was written in the mid-1950s. In the '50s, Greenwich Village became the birthplace of the "Beat Movement," which expressed social and literary views that were unconventional. The Beat Generation adopted mannerisms from jazz musicians that were more "loose," and "hip."

With a partner:

- Use the internet or a literary source to research the "Beat Movement."

RESEARCH

As a class:

- From *Wonderful Town*, listen to the song “Swing” (track 13 on the new Broadway Cast recording).
- As a group, create a soundscape that emulates the rhythms/sounds of “Swing” (e.g., identify a variety of syncopated sounds that mirror the 1940-50s world of jazz such as percussion or double bass sounds or scat singing).
- Each person is assigned one short, descriptive sound that, when started, continues to repeat until the end of the soundscape.
- Determine which sounds will start and finish the soundscape.
- In a circle, practice the soundscape by adding (one at a time) each layer of sound.
- Experiment with the sounds, volume, and tempo (e.g., gradual crescendo – decrescendo – silence).
- Put the entire soundscape together.
- For added effect, play underneath the soundscape “Swing” from the *Wonderful Town* recording.
- *Optional:* Divide class into four groups. Each group creates different soundscapes that echo: 1) Ohio: rural setting, 1930s; 2) Ohio: present day; 3) NYC: 1930s; 4) NYC: present day.

Wonderful Town includes some idioms that became popular during the “Beat Movement.”
Listed below are examples found in the musical.

With a partner:

- Match each saying in column A (Beatnik terms) with the correct definition in column B.
- Translate column A definitions into as many contemporary sayings as possible.
- Write the contemporary sayings in column C.

In groups of 3-4:

- Level 1 – Improvise a conversation incorporating as many column A sayings as possible.
- Level 2 – Hold a competition to see which group can fit into their conversation the most terms. (Time limit: 2 min.; terms must match definitions and make sense within the conversation.)
- Level 3 – create an improvised scene based on the Greenwich Village types (tableaux work on p. 21). Incorporate into the scene as many column A sayings as possible. Terms can also be used as repeated sounds/stylized words (e.g., choral speaking form).
- Rehearse 3 times and present scenes to class.
- *Optional:* Play “Swing” underneath the scene for added effect. (Start at 3:05 – instrumental break).

A – Beatnik Sayings	B – Definitions	C – Contemporary Sayings
1. Skeet-skat-skattle-ee-o-do ...	a. Clarinet	
2. it’s the absolute nuts!	b. Sing or play an instrument!	
3. soda jerk	c. It’s wild and hip!	
4. [jazz] licorice stick	d. Don’t be dull and conventional!	
5. I gotta square myself with you.	e. Make great, swinging, rhythmic music!	
6. Sing or blow!	f. Nonsense syllables used in place of lyrics	
7. Rock out of that rockin’ chair	g. A person who makes ice cream sodas	
8. Hey Cats and Gates... get hep!	h. I need to set things right with you.	
9. Don’t be square.	i. Move with rhythm.	
10. Make it solid...make it groovy!	j. Jazz lovers and musicians, get this music!	

Theme 3: Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance!

Answer key to Beatnik terms (p. 32) are as follows: 1:f; 2:c; 3:g; 4:a; 5:h; 6:b; 7:i; 8;j; 9:d; 10:e.

On your own:

Write a review of *Wonderful Town* using the following topics and questions.

ACTIVITY

Topic	Related Questions
Images retained	When you close your eyes and think back to the performance, how many moments can you clearly visualize in your head? Why are these images the ones you have retained?
Strongest moment	What for you was the strongest moment in the performance (e.g., a moment of tension, sadness, anger, beauty, truth, or ?)? Describe an image or a particular scene which affected you the most.
Weakest moment	Which moment was the weakest for you? How might that moment have been strengthened?
Inconsistencies	Were there any problems with the production's logic or coherence (e.g., anything that jarred or seemed out of place with the rest of the performance)?
Didn't understand	Were there any points in the performance that confused you, or where you couldn't work out the intentions?
Stronger point overall	Did the performance have a particular strength (e.g., the acting, the design)?
Weaker point overall	Did the performance have a particular weakness?
Personal response	List three discussion points to bring up in class.

RESEARCH

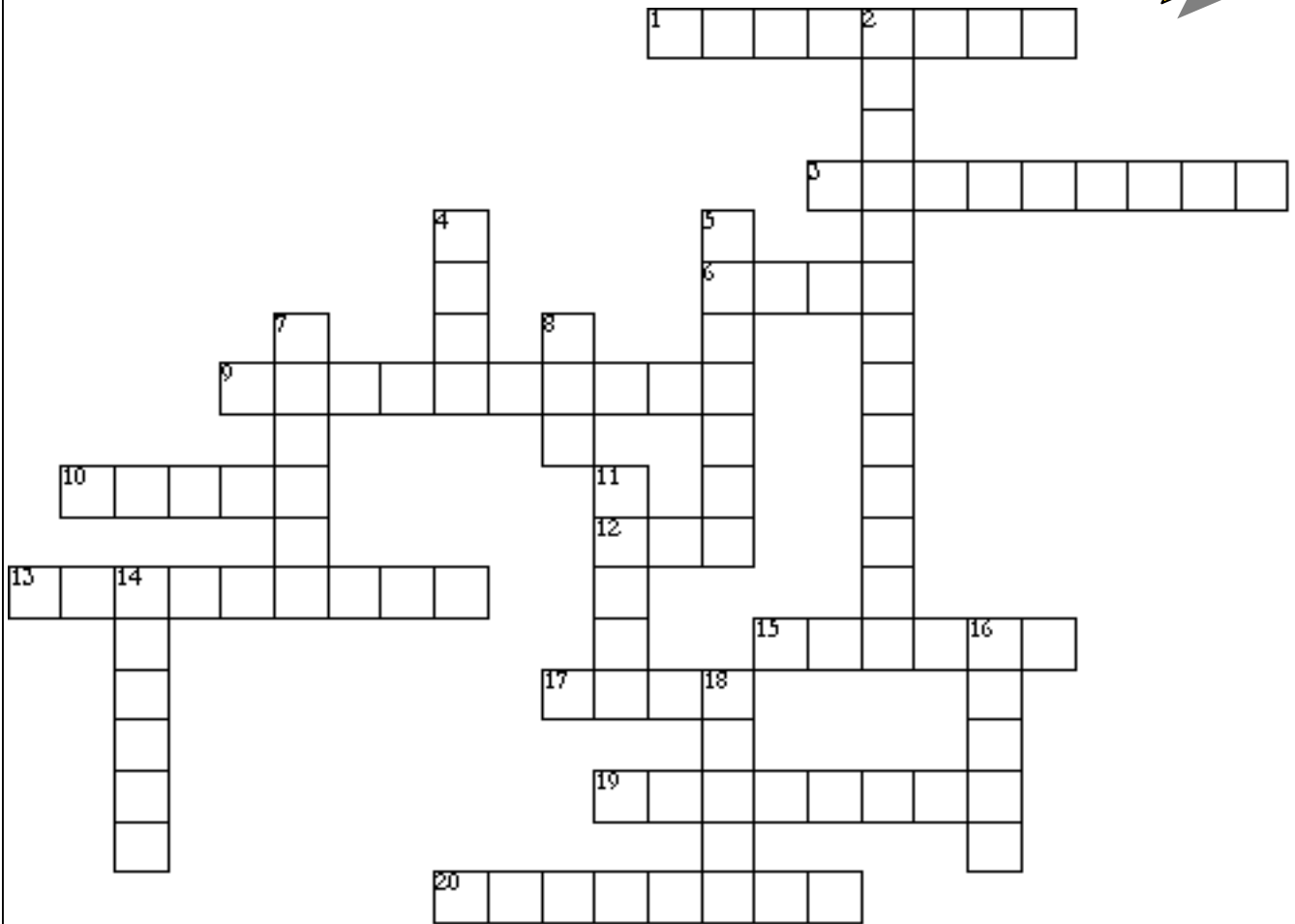
Mounting a musical is a huge *and* exciting undertaking! It requires the collaboration of many team players. The three main elements of a musical are acting, dancing, and music; however, there are many other aspects of the musical which require an expert's time and talents.

With a partner:

- Use the internet or *Wonderful Town* program to research *who's who* on the musical's artistic team.
- Complete the puzzle on the following page. Q&As relate to *Wonderful Town* and roles/responsibilities of the artistic team.

With a partner, complete the crossword puzzle.
See p. 36 for crossword puzzle answers.

ACTIVITY



Across

1. Person who guides actors towards a final production
3. Village where Eileen and Ruth live
6. Eileen and Ruth's home state
9. The person who writes plays
10. Painted gauze used as part of the scenery
12. A signal to a performer to begin speaking/singing
13. People who work with the director to decide what the production will look like
15. The words to songs
17. Painted canvas that is part of the scenery
19. Actors' movements on stage
20. Person who creates music for a musical

Down

2. Person who creates and directs dance sequences
4. Wonderful Town is performing at this festival in 2008
5. Anything an actor wears on stage
7. Person responsible for flying scenery onto the stage
8. The orchestra can be found in the orchestra _____
11. Person who performs a role for an audience
14. A form of underground transportation
16. Dance performed by Ruth and Portuguese sailors
18. Items on stage that are not costumes or attached to the set

The culminating elements of acting, dance, and music make musicals unique and special. The following activity uses a scene from *Wonderful Town*, which blends music, dialogue, and lyrics together to portray an atmosphere of embarrassed absence of conversation.

In groups of 4, read the scene below.

EILEEN (*spoken, over-brightly*)

Mm-mm... nice talk, nice people - it's so nice to sit around (*to FRANK*) and chat. It's friendly, it's gay. Nice people, nice talk (*CHICK wipes his face*) to sit around this way. A balmy summer night - what more do you need? A bottle of wine, just talk, and people, nice talk, nice people, for that can suffice.... Nice feeling... nice talk... the combination's right. (*EILEEN sits. FRANK sits*). And everything's fine. When both the talk and people are so nice. (*EILEEN rises. FRANK rises in response, politely*).

EILEEN finishes lamely as a dreaded musical phrase is played. Music stops.

FRANK. (*settling back in his chair with a hollow, unconvincing laugh, he speaks*)

Ha ha. Funny thing happened at the counter today. Man comes in, sort of tall like. Nice looking refined type. Red bow tie – and all. Well, sir, he orders a banana split. That's our jumbo special. Twenty-eight cents – three scoops – chocolate, strawberry, vanilla – choice of cherry or caramel sauce – chopped nuts – whipped cream. Well, sir, he eats the whole thing! I look at his plate and I'll be hornswaggled if he doesn't leave the whole banana! Doesn't touch it – not a bit. (*pause*) Don't you see? If he doesn't like bananas, what does he order a banana split for? He coulda had a sundae – nineteen cents – three scoops – chocolate, strawberry,... vanilla...

Music continues as FRANK dwindles off. Music stops again.

RUTH. (*making a noble attempt to save the day*)

I was re-reading Moby Dick the other day and – Oh, I haven't read it since – I'm sure none of us has – It's worth picking up again – It's about this whale...

Music continues. RUTH's futile attempt hangs heavy on the air. Music stops.

CHICK. (*even he is driven by desperation to attempt sociability*)

Boy, it's hot! Reminds me of that time in Panama – I was down there on a story – I was in this, well, dive – And there was this broad there. (*EILEEN throws RUTH a look.*) What was her name? Marquita? Maroota? (*warming to his subject*) Ahh, what's the difference what her name was – that dame was built like a brick...

RUTH. Let's have a drink, shall we?

- Assume the roles of Eileen, Ruth, Chick, Frank and reenact the scene above.
- Think of a past social situation where the atmosphere, energy, and social graces became awkward.
- With your assigned part, re-write or adapt the dialogue by incorporating this experience.
- Reenact the scene again using the newly written/adapted lines.
- Present the group's adaptation or the original lines to the class.
- *Optional:* In the musical, the orchestra repeats a motif (a recurring musical theme) that effectively expresses the awkward, desperate, failing conversation. From the *Wonderful Town* new Broadway Cast recording (track 9) incorporates "Conversation Piece" into the scene for added expression.

RESEARCH

Act 1 finale for *Wonderful Town* includes a hilarious scene involving the Sherwood sisters doing an energetic conga with Brazilian Cadets.

With a partner:

- Use the internet or a literary source to research the origins, rhythms, and style of conga music and dance.

ACTIVITY

In groups of 6:

- Identify the steps of the conga (i.e., 1–2–3–KICK)
- Level 1: Identify the format and style of the conga (e.g., form a line; in four counts, step in rhythm, and on count 4 – KICK!). When group is comfortable with the basic conga steps move to level 2.
- Level 2: The entire line does an interpretive conga line in the:
 1. World of honey (e.g., slow, legato, thick, and sticky);
 2. World of helium (e.g., fast, light, frivolous, and funny);
 3. World of poison ivy (e.g., quick, staccato, agitated, and itchy).
- Level 3: Do the conga in the manner of a:
 1. Team of football players;
 2. Troupe of modern dancers;
 3. Mob of reporters.
- Level 4: Each group creates their own conga with each person portraying his/her own character. For each “kick,” freeze (as if getting your picture taken) with different in-character moments (i.e., representative character actions).
- Add conga music (e.g., from *Wonderful Town*, “Conga!”– track 11 of new Broadway Cast recording) and/or rhythmic percussion sounds.
- Present the character congas to the class.

Teacher’s Answer Key (p. 28):

1. Comic Strips: *Annie*
2. Films: *Fame*, *Hairspray*, *The Lion King*, *Little Shop of Horrors*
3. Fairy Tales: *Beauty and the Beast*
4. Novels: *Phantom of the Opera*, *Wicked*, *Wizard of Oz*
5. Operas: *Rent*
6. Original ideas: *Avenue Q*
7. Poetry: *CATS*
8. Real people: *Gypsy*, *The Boy From Oz*
9. Short Stories: *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Wonderful Town*
10. Straight Plays: *Cabaret*, *Chicago*
11. True stories: *The King and I*

Answers to crossword puzzle (p. 34):

Across

1. director
3. Greenwich
6. Ohio
9. playwright
10. scrim
12. cue
13. designers
15. lyrics
17. drop
19. blocking
20. composer

Down

2. choreographer
4. Shaw
5. costume
7. flyman
8. pit
11. actor
14. subway
16. conga
18. props

Wonderful Town

STUDY GUIDE RESPONSE SHEET

To help us understand the needs and expectations of teachers regarding study guides, please complete this response sheet and mail to: *Shaw Festival, Education Dept. P.O. Box 774, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0* or email to: *education@shawfest.com*.

Part I:

Have you ever used a Shaw Study Guide? YES _____ NO _____

If no, please indicate below the reason(s) for not using a Shaw study guide.

Lack of time _____

Lack of interest _____

Not applicable or appropriate _____

Did not receive a study guide _____

Did not know that guides were available online or sent to school groups who book a play _____

Other _____

If yes, did The Shaw study guide help you and your students? YES _____ NO _____

Please indicate which component(s) of The Shaw study guide you found most and/or least useful.

☒ Most useful

☒ Least useful

The Synopsis & Story _____

Who's Who in the Play _____

The Playwright _____

Director's & Designer's Notes _____

Production History _____

The World of the Play (historical background, articles) _____

Did You Know?/Theatre Terms (trivia & definitions) _____

Additional Sources _____

Classroom Activities _____

Part II:

The study guide is helpful to me as a teacher.

Strongly agree ____ Agree ____ Neutral ____ Disagree ____ Strongly disagree ____

The content of the study guide is well-balanced.

Strongly agree ____ Agree ____ Neutral ____ Disagree ____ Strongly disagree ____

The format for the study guide is engaging.

Strongly agree ____ Agree ____ Neutral ____ Disagree ____ Strongly disagree ____

Part III:

Please include suggestions for improving the Shaw Festival study guides.
