

*Always...
Patmy Cline*



Created and originally directed by Ted Swindley
Directed by Victoria Bussert

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Spring 2024

Dear Educator,

Thank you for your student matinee ticket order to Great Lakes Theater's production of *Always...Patsy Cline*. This production will be performed in the beautiful Hanna Theatre at Playhouse Square from April 26—May 19, 2024.

Enjoy the touching true story of Patsy Cline's friendship with a fan, Louise Seger, which started in 1961 and continued until the premature death of the renowned country star. Told through Cline's music, this humorous and heartfelt tribute features 27 songs and many of her unforgettable hits such as "Crazy," "I Fall to Pieces," "Sweet Dreams" and "Walking After Midnight."

This guide is designed – through essays, discussion questions and classroom activities – to give students both an introduction to, and a point of entry for, a personal exploration of *Always...Patsy Cline*.

Great Lakes Theater is proud to provide you with the finest in classic theater and the necessary educational resources to support your work in the classroom. We are thrilled that you will be coming to see us and we welcome your input on how best to support your classroom preparation for our work. Please let us know what you think!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Kelly Schaffer Florian".

Kelly Schaffer Florian
Director of Educational Services
Kflorian@greatlakestheater.org

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "David Hansen".

David Hansen
Education Outreach Associate
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A Note to Students: What to Expect at the Theater

You may or may not have attended a live theater performance before. To increase your enjoyment, it might be helpful to look at the unique qualities of this art form — because it is so different from movies or video.

The live theatrical performance not only involves the actors on the stage; it is meant to involve you, the audience, in ways that film and television cannot. In truth, although you are sitting in an auditorium and the actors are on stage, there is very little separating the audience from the performers. How you react to the play *deeply affects* the actors. Something as seemingly trivial as whispering or unwrapping a candy bar can distract them and disrupt the mood and tone of their performance. Due to the important relationship between actors and audience members, there are certain, perhaps obvious, provisions of live theater we wish to call to your attention.

In the Hanna Theatre, it is important to know that the taking of pictures, either with or without a flash, is strictly prohibited. Also, it is essential that all electronic equipment, including cell phones, music players (even with headphones), alarm watches, etc., be completely powered off once you have entered the theatre. Even the glow from a watch or a silent cell phone (used for checking the time, text messaging, or posting social network updates, for example) can be very distracting to fellow audience members, even if you try to mask it under your hand or an article of clothing. Our goal is to provide every person in the audience with the best possible theatrical experience, so we appreciate your respectful cooperation during the performance.

Other differences live theater provides: in film or video, the camera and editing define what we will see. In the theater, however, each of us works as our own camera and editor, choosing our own personal points of focus. And in the Hanna Theatre, you should know that often we do not use microphones. As audience members you'll need to actively listen and "tune in" to the sound of the unamplified human voice.

As for our lighting and scenery, it might surprise you to know that these are not necessarily meant to be realistic. In this production, for example, there may be design elements that are abstract or metaphorical.

The theater's ability to focus on human experience — distilled through the dialogue and behavior of people on stage and enhanced by the scenery, costumes, lighting, music and dance — is a centuries-old tradition. Being part of the communal magic when performer and audience connect — whether at a baseball game, music concert or theater performance — cannot be duplicated.

The performance you will see at Great Lakes Theater will happen only once. It is unique and personal. Though this play will be performed more than a dozen times, the performance you see belongs only to you.

We hope you enjoy it, and we'd like you to share your response with us.



FROM THE DIRECTOR *Victoria Bussert*

Last summer, when I began working on my research for *Always...Patsy Cline*, America was right in the middle of the Taylor Swift Eras Tour craziness — fans screaming, crying, spending thousands of dollars on tickets (not to mention bracelets) to experience this phenomenon in person. Though I am not personally a “Swiftie,” I was fascinated to watch and listen to the devotion of her fans, each person feeling a special, highly personal connection to Ms. Swift. Her incredible musical appeal spans multiple generations of devoted followers, each connecting specific songs to intimate moments of their lives — these fans feel they absolutely “know” Taylor.

When Louise Seger first heard Patsy Cline on the Arthur Godfrey television show singing “Walkin’ After Midnight,” she, too, felt understood on a very deep level, saying she could never forget the way that voice made her feel. Louise ultimately became a Patsy Cline “super fan.” It was not unusual for

her to call her local radio station four or five times a day to ask that they play her favorite song, “I Fall to Pieces” — and they did!

Both artists have had deep connections with their fans. Obviously, the nature of their relationships with their audiences differ due to the eras in which they rose to fame and the actual evolution of fan engagement over time.

Taylor Swift has leveraged social media and modern technology to establish a highly interactive and seemingly personal relationship with her fans. She frequently uses X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and Tumblr, sharing select insights into her life, her music-making process — and, even occasionally, interacts with fans individually.

Patsy had a more traditional fan-artist relationship during her celebrity status in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Her interactions with fans were primarily through live performances, radio appearances and, of course, fan mail. Although Patsy’s public access was far more limited than Taylor’s, her letters reveal a depth of humanity in the most simple day-to-day exchanges that allowed for an ongoing connection with her fans and fostered a sense of community and loyalty that has transcended traditional boundaries. Even today, Patsy’s fan base continues to grow. Her albums continue to show up on the charts through re-releases, tributes or compilations that introduce her to a new generation of listeners.

At its heart, *Always...Patsy Cline* is a unique kind of love story between two women — a star and a fan — which became a special kind of bond built through the power of music. Both Patsy Cline and Taylor Swift are known for infusing their personal experiences into their songs, ultimately creating a sense of authenticity and relatability for all of us who listen.

It is a legacy of love.

“Long live the walls we crashed through
How the kingdom lights shined just for me and you
And I was screaming, ‘Long live all the magic we made.’”
— from “Long Live” by Taylor Swift

“Sweet dreams of you
Every night I go through
Why can’t I forget you and start my life anew?
Instead of having sweet dreams about you”
— Don Gibson (covered by Patsy Cline, 1963)

Musical Numbers

"Honky Tonk Merry Go Round"	Frank Simon/Stan Gardner, Sony/ATV Acuff Rose Music
"Back In Baby's Arms"	Bob Montgomery, Cherry Lane Music Publishing Co., Inc. (ASCAP)
	and on behalf of Dimensional Songs of the Knoll (BMI)
"Anytime"	Herbert Happy Lawson, Unichappel Music, Inc. (BMI)
"Walkin' After Midnight"	Don Hecht/Alan Block, Sony/ATV Acuff Rose Music
"I Fall To Pieces"	Hank Cochran/Harlan Howard, Sony/ATV Tree Publishing
"It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels"	JD Miller, International Copyright Group, Inc.
"Come On In And Make Yourself At Home"	V.F. "Pappy" Stewart, Sony/ATV Acuff Rose Music
"Your Cheatin' Heart"	Hank Williams, Sr., Sony/ATV Acuff Rose Music
"Stupid Cupid"	Neil Sedaka/Howard Greenfield, Screen Gems-EMI Music Publishing
"You Belong To Me"	King/Price/Stewart, Ridgeway Music
"San Antonio Rose"	Bob Wills, Bourne Co. (ASCAP)
"Lovesick Blues"	Irving Mills/C. Friend, EMI Music Publishing
"Sweet Dreams"	Don Gibson, Sony/ATV Acuff Rose Music
"She's Got You"	Hank Cochran, Sony/ATV Tree Publishing
"Three Cigarettes In An Ashtray"	Eddie Miller/WS Stevenson, Sony/ATV Acuff Rose Music
"Crazy"	Willie Nelson, Sony/ATV Tree Publishing
"Seven Lonely Days"	Earl Schuman/Walden Schuman/Marshall Brown, Music Sales, Corp.
"If I Could See The World (Through The Eyes Of A Child)" ..	Sammy Masters/Richard Pope, MCA Publishing
"Just A Closer Walk"	(Traditional)
"Blue Moon Of Kentucky"	Bill Monroe, Integrated Copyright Group, Inc.
"Gotta Lotta Rhythm In My Soul"	Barbara Ann Vaughn/WS Stevenson, Sony/ATV Acuff Rose Music
"Shake, Rattle And Roll"	Charles Calhoun, Unichappel Music, Inc (BMI) & MIJAC Music (BMI)
"Faded Love"	John Wills/Bob Wills, Chappell & Co. (ASCAP)
"How Great Thou Art"	(Traditional)
"True Love"	Cole Porter, Chappell & Co. (ASCAP)
"If You've Got Leavin' On Your Mind"	Wayne Walker/Webb Pierce, Polygram International
"Bill Bailey"	(Traditional)

About Patsy Cline

Patsy Cline (born Virginia Patterson Hensley on September 8, 1932, in Winchester, Virginia) was an American country music singer who achieved tremendous success in the late 1950s and early 1960s. She is considered one of the most influential and acclaimed vocalists in the history of country music.

Cline's early life was marked by hardships. She grew up in a financially struggling household with an abusive father. She credits a throat infection that turned into rheumatic fever at age 13 for her "booming voice." Soon after she recovered, Cline and her mother started singing in their church choir and at church events. By age 14, she began performing in local venues and on radio shows in her teens, further developing the sound that became uniquely hers.

In 1954, Patsy Cline signed her first recording contract with Four Star Records, releasing a few singles that garnered modest attention while she endeavored to find her style. However, her breakthrough came in early 1957 with the release of "Walkin' After Midnight," which became her first major hit and established her as a rising star in the country music scene.

Throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s, Cline continued to produce a string of #1 Country hits, including "I Fall to Pieces,"



A young Ginny Hensley (Patsy), on right, with her friend Barbara Jean Simmons.



Publicity photograph, March 1957



Photo of Patsy Cline, circa 1960



"Crazy," and "She's Got You," often crossing over onto the Pop charts as well. These songs showcased her powerful voice, emotive delivery, and ability to convey heartache and longing, resonating with audiences across the country.

Cline was made a member of the Grand Ole Opry in 1960 and in the summer of 1962 became the first female country artist to headline her own show in Las Vegas. Tragically, her life was cut short in a plane crash on March 5, 1963, at the age of 30. The crash also claimed the lives of fellow country music stars Cowboy Copas and Hawkshaw Hawkins.

Patsy Cline's legacy endures long after her untimely death. She is remembered as a trailblazer for women in country music, considered to be one of the best female singing artists of all time with over 14 million records sold. Her influence can be heard in the work of countless artists who followed in her footsteps, and she remains a beloved figure in American music history. Patsy Cline was posthumously inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1973, becoming the first solo female artist to be awarded this honor.

Cast of Characters

Patsy ClineChristina Rose Hall*
Louise Seger.....Harmony France*

*Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

Timeline

1920's

The term Country and Western as a genre of music is created under the term "hillbilly music." This genre becomes an umbrella term for music that comes from the Appalachian Mountain regions (a blend of Celtic and Mediterranean Basin), from the Southwest United States (Mexican, Native American, and cowboy music), Southern United States (Cajun and blues), and Hawaii – or a blend of any of or all these regions.



1925

The Grand Ole Opry has its first radio broadcast from Memphis Tennessee on WSM. Originally known as WSM Barn Dance, the Opry is the longest-running radio broadcast in U.S. history. The show, which also includes live performances and TV specials, is one of the most important places for a country music singer/band to perform. To this day, becoming a member of the Opry is a huge honor. Photo (left) is of John D. Hay announcer and program director.

1947

Fifteen year old Patsy (known as Ginny Hensley) writes a letter to the Grand Ole Opry asking for an audition. She receives an invitation after Opry performer Moon Mullican allows her to audition for him before one of his performances in Winchester. She and her family drive eight hours overnight to Nashville and sleep in a park the next morning. While the audition was well received, she does not get an invitation to perform. Photo (right) of Moon Mullican



1952

Patsy (Ginny) is singing as a member of Bill Peer's Melody Boys and Girls around Maryland when she meets her first husband Gerald Cline. Around that time, Bill Peer encourages



her to create a stage name. Ginny Hensley uses her middle name and becomes Patsy Cline.

April, 1924

"Aunt" Samantha Bumgarner and Eva Davis become the first female musicians to record and release country music songs.

1932

Patsy Cline (born Virginia Patterson Hensley) is born on September 8 in Winchester, VA.



1954

Patsy signs with Four Star Records and record several singles but none of them become a hit, despite having a chance to perform on the Grand Ole Opry.

1930's and 1940's

Hollywood and radio become important disseminators of hillbilly music. During the depression record sales drop but people tune into radio "barn dance" shows from coast to coast. With the rise of Western films, country music stars such as Gene Autry and Hank Williams become household names. Jazz is added to the mix of styles and western swing is born. Boogie,



honky tonk, and gospel become valued forms of hillbilly music. Photo of Gene Autry

1956/57

The "Nashville sound" is created. This subgenre of Country and Western removes the twangy sound of fiddles and banjo and replaces it with the current pop qualities of background vocals, string sections, and crooning lead vocals.

1949

Billboard replaces the term "hillbilly" with "folk songs and blues" for the genre in their magazine in 1944 but switches it to "country and western", which it's refer to as for 1950's Rock and Roll marries Country and Western in the 40s to create rockabilly but the 50s sees the rise of stars such as Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Johnny Cash, and Roy Orbison as well as many others. Notably, most stars in the genre are men. During this time and previously, women singers are only a side act or considered just a singer with the band. No solo female country music star has risen yet. The Country Music Association is founded in 1958 in backlash against the movement toward rock and roll.

Timeline



1957

Patsy receives an invitation to perform on the TV show Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts in New York City. Despite planning on singing a Country and Western song in her usual cowboy inspired costumes, Patsy is convinced to sing "Walkin' After Midnight" in a cocktail dress. She wins the talent competition live on television and immediately returns to the studio to record the song. It is her first hit, reaching #2 on the Billboard Hot Country and Western Sides chart and

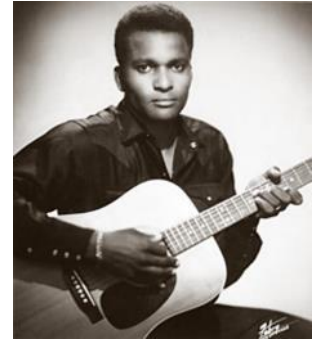
crossing over to the pop music chart at #12 – her first of several cross-over hits. She is the first female solo artist to appear on the Billboard Hot Country and Western charts.

1957-1961

Patsy moves to Nashville and adopts the Nashville sound, becoming one of the immanent voices of the style. She signs with Decca Records as well as becomes a member of the Opry in 1960.

1962

Patsy has her 4th crossover and second #1 country hit with "She's Got You", including a spot on the UK charts. She also becomes the first solo Country and Western female star to headline her own act in Las Vegas. Ray Charles turns his attention to the country genre by topping the charts with the song "I Can't Stop Loving You" and his album Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music.



1964

Charley Pride is the first black performer to become a star in the country music field. His hits crossover between the country, pop, and gospel charts.

1961

Patsy has two more cross-over hits between the Country and Pop charts with "I Fall to Pieces" and "Crazy." She wins "Favorite Female Vocalist" of the year from Billboard Magazine and "Most programmed Female Artist" from Cashbox Magazine.



1963

Patsy Cline (age 30) dies in a plane crash with country stars Cowboy Copas and Hawkshaw Hawkins as well as pilot Randy Hughes. In an unrelated plane crash the same year, fellow Nashville sound singer Jim Reeves also dies. After Patsy and Jim, no one really rises to become the next voice of the Nashville sound. It's popularity wanes as the pop British Invasion happens followed by folk protest music. A new mainstream country genre emerges by the mid-60s called countrypolitan. Traditionalists emerge with a desire for "old values" country and rock and roll creating a new genre of country rock. Photos of Cowboy Copas and Hawkins



1963-1970

Patsy's short but brilliant career paves the way for more female country singers to take the spotlight. Jean Shephard, Skeeter Davis, Dottie West, Connie Smith, Loretta Lynn, Barbara Mandrell, Tammy Wynette, and Dolly Parton rise to stardom, following Patsy's footsteps. Localized genres from the Western U.S start to be featured more heavily on the radio including Red Dirt, New Mexico, Texas Country, and Tejano. These genres eventually come together to become outlaw country in the next decade. Photo of Loretta Lynn



Timeline

1970s and 1980s

These decades see the rise of the genres of outlaw country, Bakersfield sound, country pop, and country/folk-rock. Country becomes more specialized and mainstream at the same time, leading author Paul Hemphill to state "Country music isn't really country anymore; it is a hybrid of nearly every form of popular music in America" in the *Saturday Evening Post* (1975). More pop stars try their hand at the genre and stars such as John Denver, Olivia Newton-John, Linda Ronstadt, and Kenny Rogers all have hits on the country charts. Dolly Parton, however starts her journey to becoming one of the top crossover country artists of all time. Country and western as a genre is now simplified to country music. Photos of Dolly Parton and Olivia Newton-John



1983

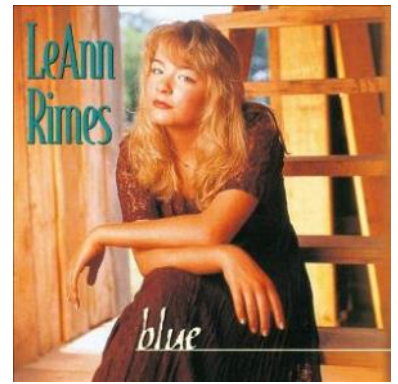
Two cable channels devoted to country music debut: The Nashville Network and Country Music Television (created by MTV).

1988

Always...Patsy Cline premieres at Stages (formally Stages Repertory Theatre) in Houston, Texas.

1990s

The 1990s are a time of neotraditionalists who bring back traditional honky tonk, bluegrass, folk, and western swing genres. Cowpunk and Alt country have a brief time in the limelight. Stadium country acts become popular as country music is made more accessible through an expansion of FM radio by the FCC. Female country artists see a rise in popularity with stars such as Faith Hill, LeAnn Rimes, Reba McEntire, and many others. Shania Twain becomes one of the biggest international country music stars in history. Picture is the cover of LeAnn Rimes debut studio album



1973

Patsy Cline becomes the first solo female singer to be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame. The photo is of Cline's plaque located inside the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

1985

A feature film about Cline's life called *Sweet Dreams* is released, starring Jessica Lange and Ed Harris.



2010s and 2020s

Country diversifies again as hip hop is blended with country to create country rap. Country becomes less about what the music sounds like and more about the songs' cultural references as well as the aesthetics of the performer. Pop/hip hop stars Little Naz X and Beyoncé top the Billboard Hot Country charts, breaking records for their time in the #1 spot, bringing the genre to new generations and populations.



Early 2000s

Country music shifts towards a more patriotic and conservative point of view after the events of 9/11. By the end of the decade, rock music stylings and qualities are added back in and we see a rise of female country music stars crossover between country and pop charts again with artists such as Carrie Underwood, Taylor Swift, and The Chicks.



Patsy



Applique



Fringe



Fringe



Yoke
ruching



dress
fabric



collar
cuffs
placket

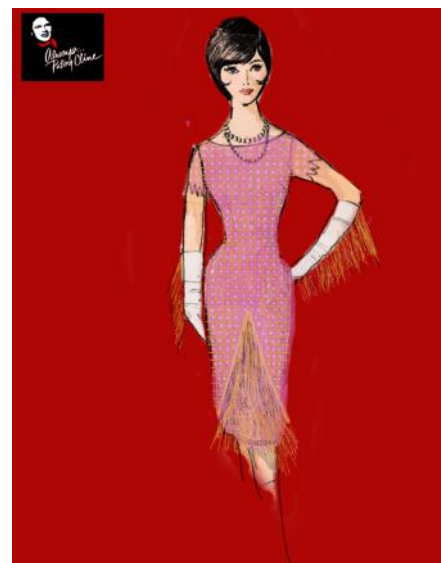


Don

Patsy
Wagon
Wheel



Look 4



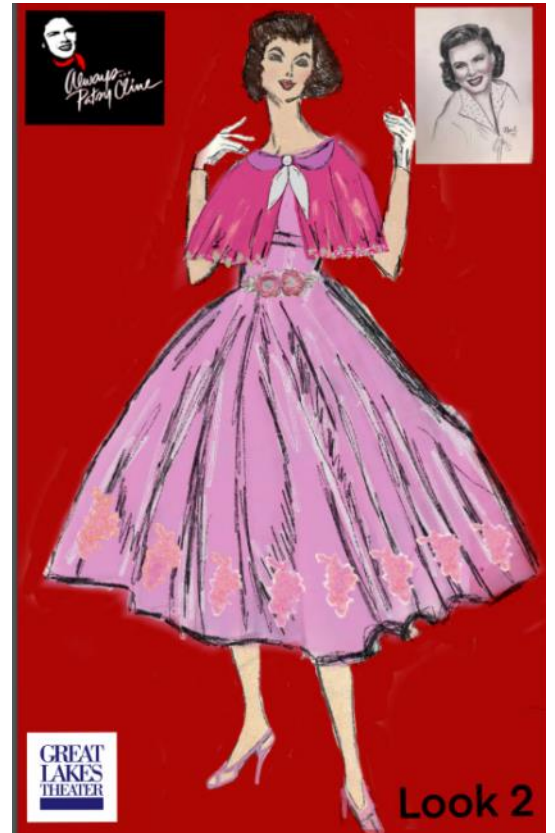
Mood board for Patsy's wagon wheel dress.
Costumes for Patsy Cline were built in the Great Lakes Theater's costume shop.

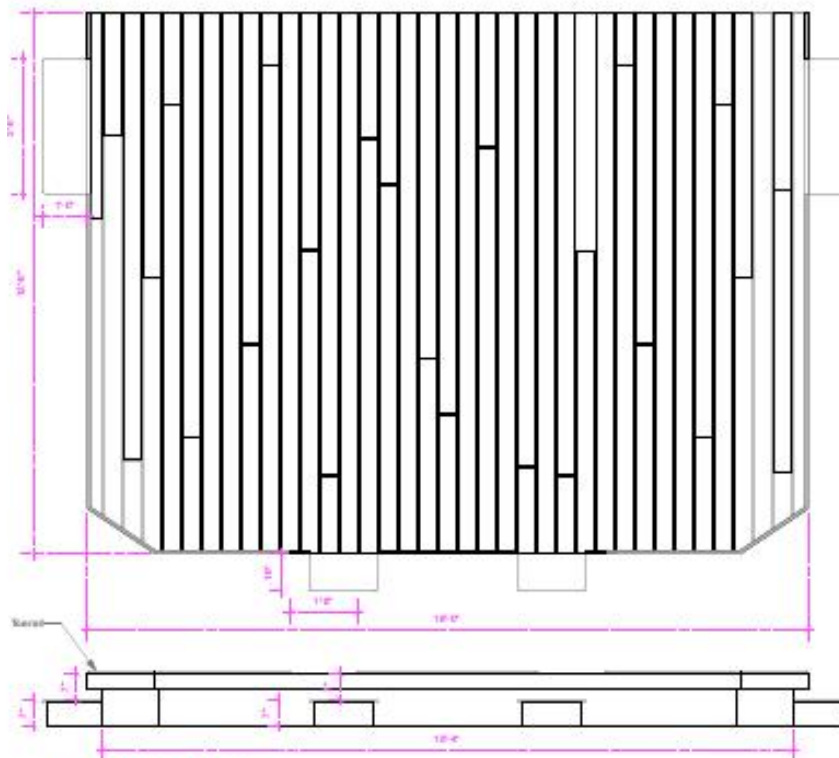
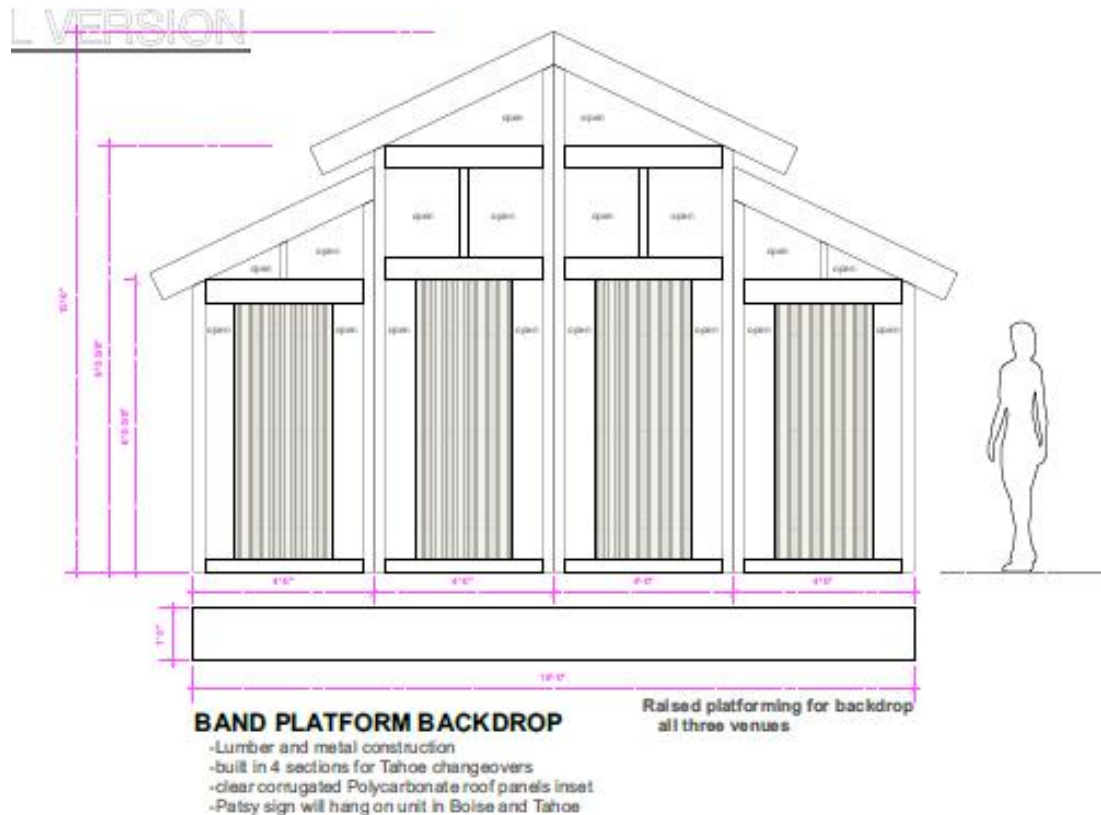
Louise

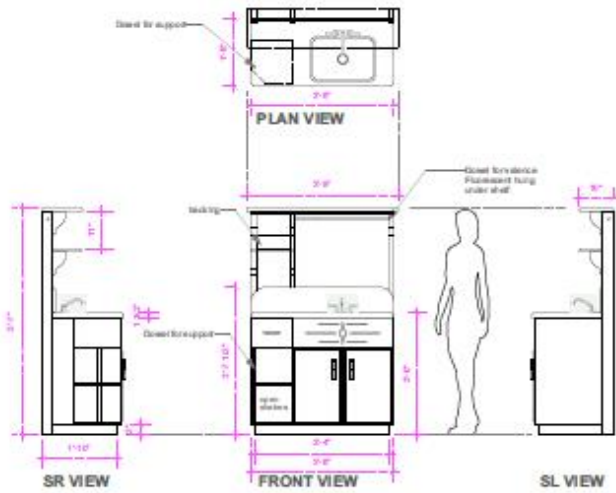
Mood boards for Louise's costumes, which were purchased.



Patsy







LOUISE KITCHEN COUNTER / SINK

- working sink / water pump behind cabinet doors
- faucet in 50's style
- sink ceramic or metal
- drawer left does not open
- cupboard doors do not open
- open shelves lower left
- open shelves upper left with cup hooks, etc.
- decor on front carved out / router
- top shelf for secured set dressing
- hook on SL side for towel
- rod with valence hung above sink
- fluorescent light hung over sink



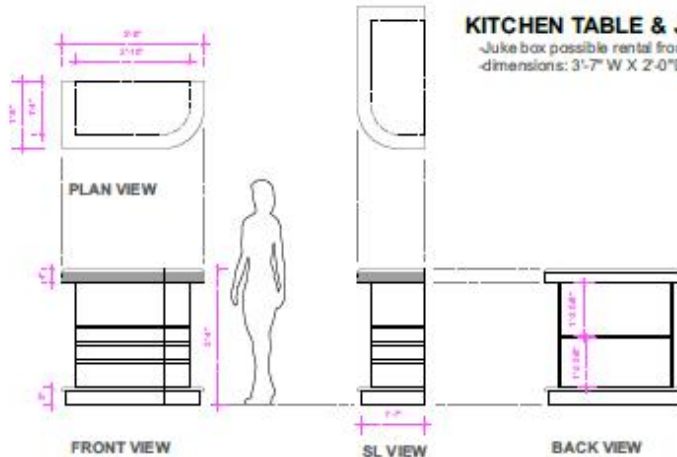
Kitchen Table & 2 chairs
- 30" round / red preference
- base preferred
- table top red speckle



Corrugated Polycarbonate
-to be treated to make it opaque
-lit from behind



RESEARCH PHOTO



KITCHEN TABLE & JUKE BOX

- Juke box possible rental from BW
- dimensions: 3'-7" W X 2'-0" D X 4'-2" H



BAR AND STOOLS

- open back with shelf
- top edging should look like metal
- purchase 2 stools w/ lt. blue or Teal/Green seats
- paint treatment should look glossy/linoeum
- LED tape along underneath of overhang/ warm white

Discussion Questions

Prior to attending the performance

1. Listen to a few of Patsy Cline's most famous songs (e.g., "Crazy," "Walkin' After Midnight," and "I Fall to Pieces"). Pay attention to the lyrics, melody, and how Cline's vocal performance contributes to the emotion of each song. How do these elements work together to tell a story or convey a feeling?
2. The play is set in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a pivotal time in American history and culture. How might the social and cultural climate of this era have influenced Patsy Cline's music and career? Consider factors like gender roles, technological advancements in music recording, and the popularity of country music.
3. *Always...Patsy Cline* is based on the true story of Patsy Cline's friendship with a fan, Louise Seger. Why do you think this particular relationship was significant enough to base a play on? Discuss the importance of friendship and human connection in the context of celebrity and fandom.
4. Louise Seger narrates the story in the play, blending music with storytelling. How does this narrative style affect the audience's understanding and appreciation of Patsy Cline's life and music? What might be the advantages or challenges of telling a real person's story this way?
5. Music can evoke strong emotions and memories. Reflect on a time when a song made you feel a strong emotion or reminded you of a specific event. Why do you think music has this power? How do you think Patsy Cline's songs might evoke feelings or memories for her fans?
6. Patsy Cline left a lasting legacy in the world of country music and beyond. What do you think makes an artist's work timeless? In what ways has Patsy Cline influenced other artists or the music industry as a whole?

Activities & Writing Prompts

ACTIVITIES

1. MUSICAL TIMELINE

Map out the major events in Patsy Cline's career alongside major events in music and world history during the same period. Create a timeline that includes the release of key songs by Patsy Cline, significant personal milestones, and major historical events of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

2. SONG ANALYSIS WORKSHOP

Analyze the lyrics and musical style of Patsy Cline's songs to understand her influence on country music and popular culture. Have students choose one song and present their analysis of the lyrics, discuss the emotions it evokes, and examine how Cline's delivery affects the song's impact.

3. CREATE A 1950S/60S MUSIC PLAYLIST

Explore other music from the era of Patsy Cline to understand the musical landscape of her time. Have students create a playlist featuring popular songs from the 1950s and 1960s across various genres. Each student then explains why they chose each song and its relevance to the era.

4. FASHION OF THE TIMES

Investigate and present on fashion trends during Patsy Cline's lifetime. Have students research 1950s and 1960s fashion, then either draw designs or bring in clothing items that represent these styles. Presentations should include how these fashion trends might have influenced the styling of the play.

5. COUNTRY MUSIC AND ITS ROOTS

To better understand the roots and evolution of country music up to the modern era, have students research the history of country music and create a presentation or poster that traces its development, highlighting key figures like Patsy Cline.

WRITING PROMPTS

1. Write an essay on the role of music in personal and cultural expression. Use Patsy Cline's music as an example of how an artist can influence and reflect cultural values and emotions. Consider discussing specific songs and their themes, how music can bring people together, and what Cline's music says about the era in which she lived.
2. Imagine you are a friend of Louise Seger attending the concert where she first meets Patsy Cline. Write a first-person narrative describing the evening, the concert, and your interaction with both Louise and Patsy.
3. Students write a letter to Patsy Cline expressing how her music might affect them or their view of American music. They can discuss her influence on other artists and on themselves as listeners. Students can also write a letter to contemporary pop star to express these same emotions and ideas.
4. Analyze how the play *Always...Patsy Cline* uses the relationship between Patsy and Louise to explore themes of friendship, fame, and musical legacy. Discuss the narrative structure, the dialogue, and how specific songs are used to enhance the storytelling.
5. Write an opinion article for the school newspaper on why music biographies are important. Refer to *Always...Patsy Cline* as an example. You might want to discuss how these stories preserve cultural heritage, personalize history, and provide inspiration.

Discussion Questions

After Attending the Performance

1. How does the musical style and lyricism of the musical *Always...Patsy Cline* contribute to the narrative of Patsy's life story? In what ways do the songs chosen for the play enhance the understanding of her character?
2. How do you interpret the character of Patsy Cline as portrayed in the play? What specific moments in the performance highlight her strengths and vulnerabilities?
3. Discuss the evolution of the friendship between Patsy Cline and Louise Seger throughout the play. How does their relationship impact the emotional tone of the story? What does the friendship between Patsy and Louise reveal about the nature of true friendship? How do their interactions shed light on their personalities?
4. What does the play suggest about the nature of fame and its effects on personal relationships? Are there any positive or negative consequences of fame that are particularly striking in Patsy's story? How does Patsy's fame impact her relationship with Louise and others? Discuss the complexities that fame brings into her personal relationships.
5. How is the theme of resilience portrayed in the play? Discuss moments of resilience and vulnerability as depicted in the play. What can we learn from Patsy's responses to personal and professional challenges?
7. How does the play demonstrate the idea that music is a universal language that transcends personal differences? Give examples from the play where music bridges gaps between people.
8. How does music serve as a narrative tool in the play? Discuss how specific songs contribute to the storytelling and character development. How the music in the play affects the emotional tone and pace of the story. How does it help in developing the characters and advancing the plot?
9. How does the setting in time and place influence the events and themes in the play? Consider the social and cultural norms of the era during which Patsy Cline lived and performed. How does the play address the role and representation of women in the 1950s and 1960s in the music industry and broader society? What challenges does Patsy face as a professional woman in her era?
10. How does the play address issues of gender and societal expectations? Are there particular scenes or dialogues that highlight these themes? What might be the play's main message or critique about the entertainment industry as reflected through Patsy's life?
11. How does the play address the theme of legacy? What do you think Patsy Cline's legacy is, both in the play and in real life?

How to Write A Review

MORE HOW AND LESS WHAT

A theater review is not a book review, you do not need to summarize what happens. Provide the necessary background so the reader knows the name of the play and the basics of what kind of play it is, and then move into your commentary. You do not need to explain WHAT the play is, instead write about HOW successfully it was presented.

THE ACTOR NOT THE CHARACTER

You can disapprove of the decisions a character makes, but how well did the ACTOR perform the role? Was their behavior appropriate to the part as written? Feel free to share your opinions, comparing or contrasting their work with other actors with whom you are familiar.

WHAT IS DIRECTION?

Maybe you have heard of a “director” in theater or film, but do you know what they do? It is not a director’s job to tell the actors how to say every line, but they are the person responsible for creating the general mood and concept for the production. What was your impression of the production as a whole? Was it too funny for a serious play? Or not amusing enough for a comic play? Use words to reflect back to the director how successful the production is as a whole.

DON’T FORGET THE DESIGN

The set you see and the sounds you hear are also unique to this one production of this play. Describe what you see and hear, but also be sure to make clear how successful these designs are in telling the story of the play.

IN CONCLUSION ...

While it is not necessary to give a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” your concluding sentence should summarize your impression of the production as a whole.

THEATER REVIEWS IN THE NEW MEDIA

Reviews in news websites may be 1000 words, they may be as brief as 300 words. Can you write a one-page review? Can you write a 100 word review, to post on Facebook? Do you think you could create a 140-character review that sums up the production for posting on Twitter?

A sample review written by a student follows this page.

A Sample Review Written by a Student

"Gambit": More Poetry Than History — Mark Wood

If Aristotle was correct when he said that poetry "is a higher thing than history," then "Royal Gambit," which opened Friday night at Pentacle Theater, is, I suppose, on the right track.

For those who were expecting a representational treatment of the life of England's Henry VIII, "Royal Gambit" was a shock, if not a disappointment. Those who sought poetry got it, although of a very dogmatic and simplistic sort.

This unusual, highly presentational play by Hermann Gressieker, directed by Ed Classen, is an indictment of modern man as a ruthless opportunist. The Tudor king is a representative of a rationalizing, shiftily society which has become "superior to the highest" while "wallowing in the depths."

As Henry uses the banners of "reason" and "humanism" to obtain then dispose of his six wives, so modern man uses them for his own pleasure and glorification, uses them to wage war in the name of peace, to hate in the name of love.

Such is the grim theme pleasingly presented by a company of seven actors, who performed their roles energetically, if unevenly. The presentational acting style employed here is difficult to perfect. It should be theatrical, yet believable; aimed at the head, yet acceptable to the heart.

Louise Larsen was a standout as Catherine of Aragon, Largely because she utilized this presentational approach and was not afraid of open theatricality. Her flamboyant stage presence, which needed to be toned down in her recent role in "Last of the Red Hot Lovers," found full vent here.

Henry's fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, was portrayed by Gale Rieder, who quickly became an audience favorite. Her thick accent was letter-perfect and her direct humor was a welcome contrast to the bitter satire of the rest of the play.

The other four actresses—Kathy Stratton, Marcia Engblom, Polly Bond and Patricia Sloan—each had their exceptional moments. However, they generally seemed tied to more conventional, representational acting styles.

Ron Fox was superb in the role of Henry. Tuxedoed, leering with the look of a demonic marionette, the vacant stare of a deranged orator, Fox dominated the stage fully, commanding both in voice and stage presence.

The technical elements of the play were more than adequate. Musical accompaniment was appropriately sparse and simple.

At one point the play, King Henry roared, "In my realm I decide what constitutes tragedy!" Ironically, Gressieker strips modern man not only of his possibilities as a tragic figure worthy of any sympathies at all. In the final moments of the play, Catherine of Aragon announces the death of modern man and the birth of a new era. It is a scene of great hope, but it is not as profound as her earlier pronouncement to her husband that "the ways of the world are not so cut and dried!"

For my own part, I wish that "Royal Gambit's" statement were not so cut and dried. By making man out to be such a simple monster the play defeats its own purposes and turns poetry into scathing dogma, which is probably even less interesting than, say, history.

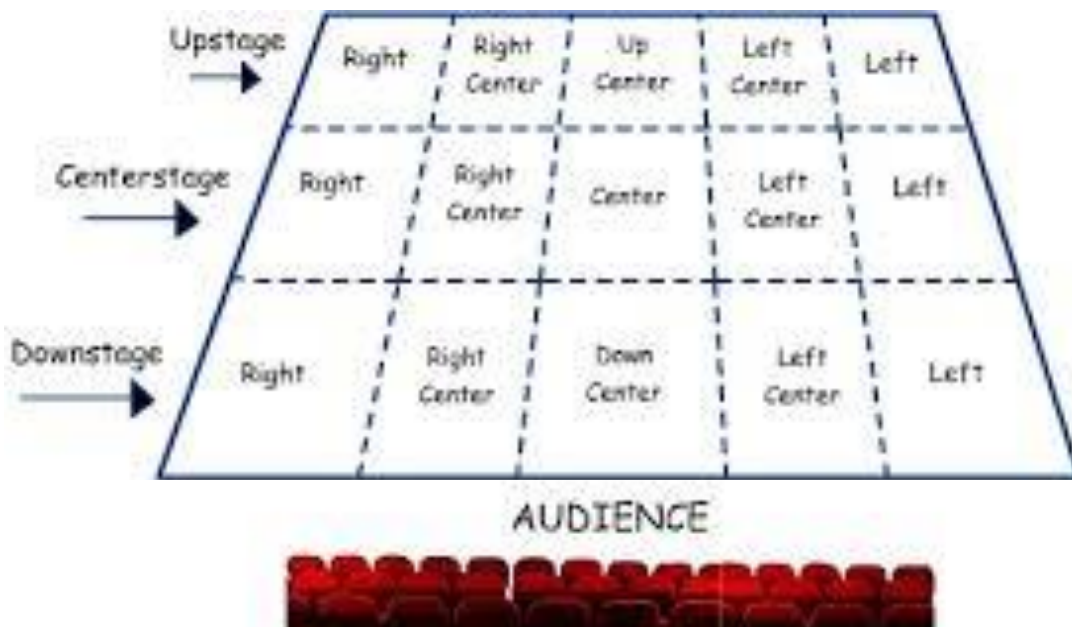
<http://faculty.chemeketa.edu/jrupert3/eng105/Annrev.html>

A Brief Glossary of Theater Terms

Apron	The part of the stage in front of the curtain
Auditorium or House	Where the audience sits
Beam Spread	The area a single light covers
Blackout	Turning off all the lights in the theatre at once
Board	The control center for lights, sound, or both
Book (The)	A copy of the script containing all notes and blocking
Box Office	Where the audience buys tickets
Box Set	A set in a proscenium with three walls
Call	The time certain members of the production need to be at the theatre
Cheat	When an actor takes a realistic action and modifies it for the audience to see
Cloth	Scenery painted on fabric
Cue	A line or action that immediately leads to another action by the actor (for them to speak) designer or stage manager (to change the lights or sound)
Curtain Call	The bows at the end of the show
Dimmer	Equipment that controls the brightness of a light
Director	The creative head of a production. They create a vision for the show and work with actors, designers, and crew to bring that vision to life
Flat	A frame covered with canvas, cardboard, or some other light material which is then painted as part of the set
Floodlight	A light that has a wide unfocused beam covering most of the stage
Fly	A system used to raise set backgrounds, set pieces, or potentially actors
Follow-spot	A spotlight that can follow an actor as they move across around the stage
Footlights	Floodlights on the floor at the front of the stage.
Gel	A piece of plastic placed over the light to change its color
Greenroom	A room where the company can relax, eat, or potentially watch the show if a TV and a camera has been rigged
Notes	The director's notes on the performance or rehearsal
Pit	An area between the stage and the audience where an orchestra can sit (typically below audience level)
Producer	The person responsible for all logistical and financial aspects of a production (as opposed to the creative head, the director).
Properties or Props	Items used by actors in a show (such as swords, plates, watches, etc.)

Proscenium	A type of stage defined by a proscenium arch. Proscenium theatres typically distinctly separate the audience and stage by a window (defined by the proscenium arch). The stage typically will not go far past the proscenium arch (the Ohio Theatre, for example).
Raked Stage	A stage that is angled (upstage is the top of the hill and downstage the bottom) so that the audience can see the action more clearly
Set	The scenery used in a scene or throughout the play
Set Dressing	Parts of the set that don't serve a practical function but make the set look realistic.
Spotlight	A type of light that is focused so that it can light a very specific area
Strike	Taking apart and removing a set from the theatre
Thrust	A stage that goes beyond the proscenium arch so that the audience is sitting on three sides of the set - in front, and on either side (the Hanna Theatre, for example).
Tracks	The rails on which curtains (tabs) run.
Trap	A hole in the stage covered by a door where actors or set pieces can exit or enter
Understudy	An actor who learns all of the lines and blocking of another actor (typically one of the actors in a lead role) who can perform in case the main actor cannot go on
Upstage	The rear of the stage
Wings	The sides of the stage typically blocked off by curtains where actors and crew can stand and wait for their cues

STAGE DIRECTIONS



Learning Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.7

Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5.A

Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.1.A

Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5.A

Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5.B

Analyze nuances in the meaning of words

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2

Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.6

Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).



**GREAT
LAKES
THEATER**

Student Matinee Series 2024-2025 Season

Into the Woods by Stephen Sondheim & James Lapine

A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare in a modern translation by Jeff Whitty

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

Peter and the Starcatcher by Rick Elice

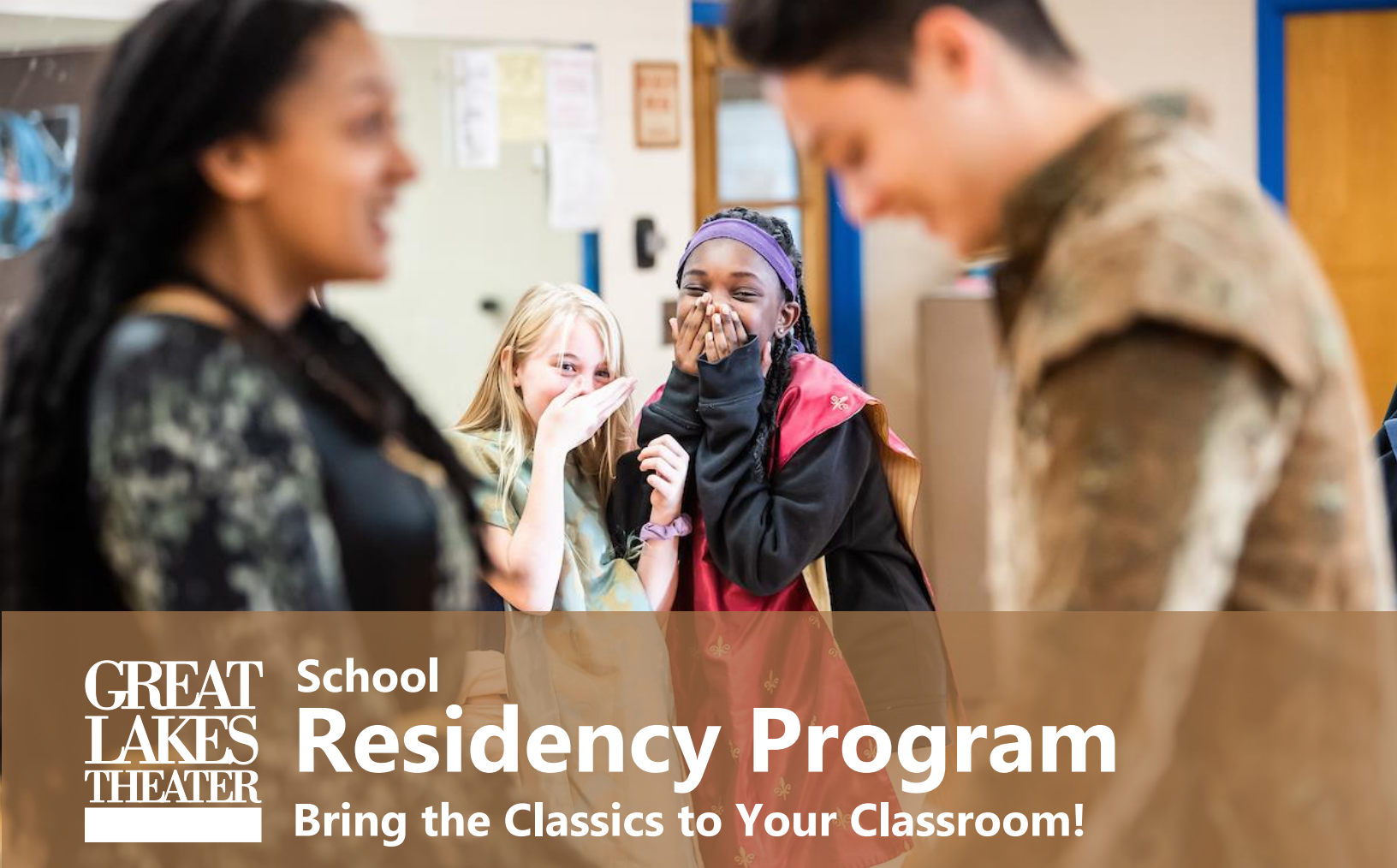
Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare

Noises Off by Michael Frayn

Make Classic Theater Come Alive for Your Students!

Since 1962, students have enjoyed the thrill of experiencing classic plays, professionally produced by Great Lakes Theater. Our student audiences experience the same top-quality productions offered in our public performances, but at a fraction of the cost. The state-of-the-art classical thrust stage configuration in the gorgeously renovated Hanna Theater affords students a dynamic audience experience unequaled in our region.

[Greatlakestheater.org/education](https://greatlakestheater.org/education)



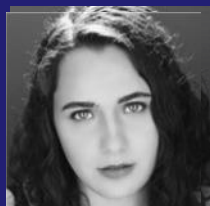
School Residency Program

Bring the Classics to Your Classroom!

Launched in 1981, Great Lakes Theater's in-school residency program is now one of the most successful artist-in-residence programs in the country. Each year over 16,000 students in over 100 schools experience the pleasure, power and relevance of classic literature brought to life in their own classrooms.



From *The Sneetches* to *Romeo and Juliet* (and so many more in between!) each week-long residency uses an



interactive, hands-on approach, and is designed to meet the common core education standards. We visit your school with scripts, props, costumes—and for high schools, swords, daggers and stage blood—to explore classic literature in an unforgettable way!

For more information contact Lisa Ortenzi at 216.453.4446
Greatlakes theater.org/education

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Great Comet is part of the Kulas Musical Theatre Series at Great Lakes Theater





Charles Fee, Producing Artistic Director

The mission of Great Lakes Theater, through its main stage productions and its education programs, is to bring the pleasure, power and relevance of classic theater to the widest possible audience.

Since the company's inception in 1962, programming has been rooted in Shakespeare, but the company's commitment to great plays spans the breadth of all cultures, forms of theater and time periods including the 20th century, and provides for the occasional mounting of new works that complement the classical repertoire.

Classic theater holds the capacity to illuminate truth and enduring values, celebrate and challenge human nature and actions, revel in eloquent language, preserve the traditions of diverse cultures and generate communal spirit. On its mainstage and through its education program, the company seeks to create visceral, immediate experiences for participants, asserting theater's historic role as a vehicle for advancing the common good, and helping people make the most joyful and meaningful connections between classic plays and their own lives. This Cleveland theater company wishes to share such vibrant experiences with people across all age groups, creeds, racial and ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

The company's commitment to classic theater is magnified in the educational programs (for both adults and students) that surround its productions. Great Lakes Theater has a strong presence in area schools, bringing students to the theater for matinee performances and sending specially trained actor-teachers to the schools for weeklong residencies developed to explore classic drama from a theatrical point of view. GLT is equally dedicated to enhancing the theater experience for adult audiences. To this end, GLT regularly serves as the catalyst for community events and programs in the arts and humanities that illuminate the plays on its stage.

Great Lakes Theater is one of only a handful of American theaters that have stayed the course as a classic theater. As GLT celebrates over a decade in its permanent home at the Hanna Theatre, the company reaffirms its belief in the power of partnership, its determination to make this community a better place in which to live, and its commitment to ensure the legacy of classic theater in Cleveland.

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greatlakestheater.org