



**Educational Guide
Villanova Theatre
November 2018**

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Welcome to the Villanova Theatre Education Guide for our production of *She Loves Me*. This resource is intended to help individuals, educators, and students gain additional insight into the production. It includes discussion questions to consider before seeing the show as well as after, and suggested activities to help you engage with the show on a more intimate level.

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Synopsis

Set in a 1930s European Parfumerie, *She Loves Me* follows Amalia and Georg, two clerks who are constantly butting heads on the job. From the moment that Amalia begins to work at the store, the two cannot seem to find common ground. Little do they know, the anonymous romantic pen pals they have both been falling for are each other. Will the love continue to grow once true identities are revealed?

The Characters

Georg Nowack - An established employee of Maraczek's Parfumerie, he resembles a hopeless romantic. Shy, intelligent, and soft spoken.

Amalia Balash - The eager new employee at Maraczek's Parfumerie. Despite being a skilled saleswoman, she easily becomes intimidated and nervous. Attractive, bright, and a lover of literature.

Mr. Maraczek - Owner of Maraczek's Parfumerie. With a commanding presence, his dedication to the trade is rivaled only by his faithfulness to his wife.

Steven Kodaly - A well respected and liked employee at Maraczek's Parfumerie. Though he is considered dapper and occasionally charming, he is more of a shallow womanizer.

Ilona Ritter - Employed at Maraczek's Parfumerie. She is sexy and learned in the ways of romance, but longing for something more from the game of love.

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Questions About The Characters

Pre-Show:

1. Based on the character descriptions, find the character that you feel most similar to. Write briefly about why you feel connected to this character.

During The Show:

1. Other than Amalia & Georg, what conflicts and relationships do you see arising between various characters?

2. Choose a character to follow during the show. How do they convey their emotions through song? Are there any emotions that are only conveyed through song?

Post-Show Discussion Questions:

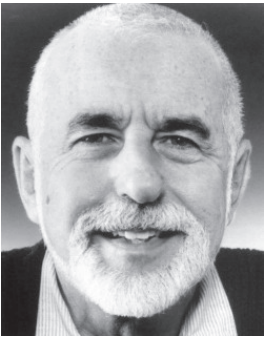
1. Love is shown throughout the musical in various forms. What are two different forms of love you see during the show?

2. The main form of communication between Amalia & Georg is through letters. How do Amalia and Georg's personas differ between their letters and reality?

3. The parfumerie is full of all types of cosmetic products. What are some products you heard the characters talking about that you had never heard of before? What modern day products do you think these relate to?



The Creators



Joe Masteroff (Book) - Born in 1919 in Philadelphia, he had only one dream from infancy: to write for the theatre. After the essential lonely childhood and four-year stint in the Air Force, he came to New York to face his future: book writer or book seller? Luckily, luck intervened. Before long he had three shows on Broadway bearing his name: *The Warm Peninsula* starring Julie Harris, and two musicals, *She Loves Me* and *Cabaret*, for which he was the book writer.



Sheldon Harnick (Lyrics) - Sheldon Harnick's career began in the 1950s with songs in revues (e.g., "The Boston Beguine," "The Merry Little Minuet"). With Jerry Bock he created a number of memorable musicals, including *Fiorello!* (Tony Award, Pulitzer Prize), *Tenderloin*, *She Loves Me* (Grammy), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Tony), *The Apple Tree* and *The Rothschilds*. Other collaborations: *Rex* (Richard Rodgers), *A Christmas Carol* (Michel Legrand), *A Wonderful Life* (Joe Raposo), *The Phantom Toll-booth* (Arnold Black, Norton Juster) and *The Audition* (Marvin Hamlisch). He has written three musicals himself: *Dragons*, *A Doctor in Spite of Himself* and *Malpractice Makes Perfect*.



Jerry Bock (Music) - Born in New Haven; attended the Univ. of Wisconsin, LHD (hon.). He wrote the score for the college musical *Big as Life*, and songs for the documentary *Wonders of Manhattan* (honorable mention, Cannes Film Festival). As a composer: *Catch a Star*, *Mr. Wonderful*, and with lyricist Sheldon Harnick: *The Body Beautiful*, *Fiorello!*, (Pulitzer Prize, Drama Critics Award, Antoinette Perry Award), *Tenderloin*, *She Loves Me*, *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964 nine Tonys, and Best Musical of the Year), *The Apple Tree*, *The Rothschilds*. He was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame, 1990; named to the Theater Hall of Fame, 1990. He composed the score for the film *A Stranger Among Us* and received a 2010 Emmy Award for Best Original Song.



Lonely Hearts

These were advertisements that individuals seeking romance put into the newspapers in hopes of finding love. In the 1930s, it was expected that men would take the initiative in courtship by approaching women in social situations. In *She Loves Me*, Amalia answers an advertisement in the newspaper with the hopes of finding a gentleman to sweep her off her feet. In a way, she takes the initiative and puts herself out there and all Georg has to do is answer her call.

Though it may seem surprising at first, the concept of the 1930s Lonely Hearts advertisement is not unlike 2018's online dating applications, such as Tinder, Bumble, or Match.com. In both instances, individuals are putting themselves on a platform which showcases who they are, as well as what they are looking for in a romantic (or casual) partner, often putting the best version of themselves forward. While yesterday's advertisements were more focused on finding a spouse, and today's apps seem more geared towards casual relationships, the overall goal for both the 1930s advertisements and the 2018 apps is essentially the same: to find love.

Once two individuals connected via a Lonely Hearts advertisement, a correspondence would often begin. In the early 20th Century, many individuals considered Lonely Hearts advertisements to be something to do for fun, and not necessarily as a means to find a life long romantic partner.

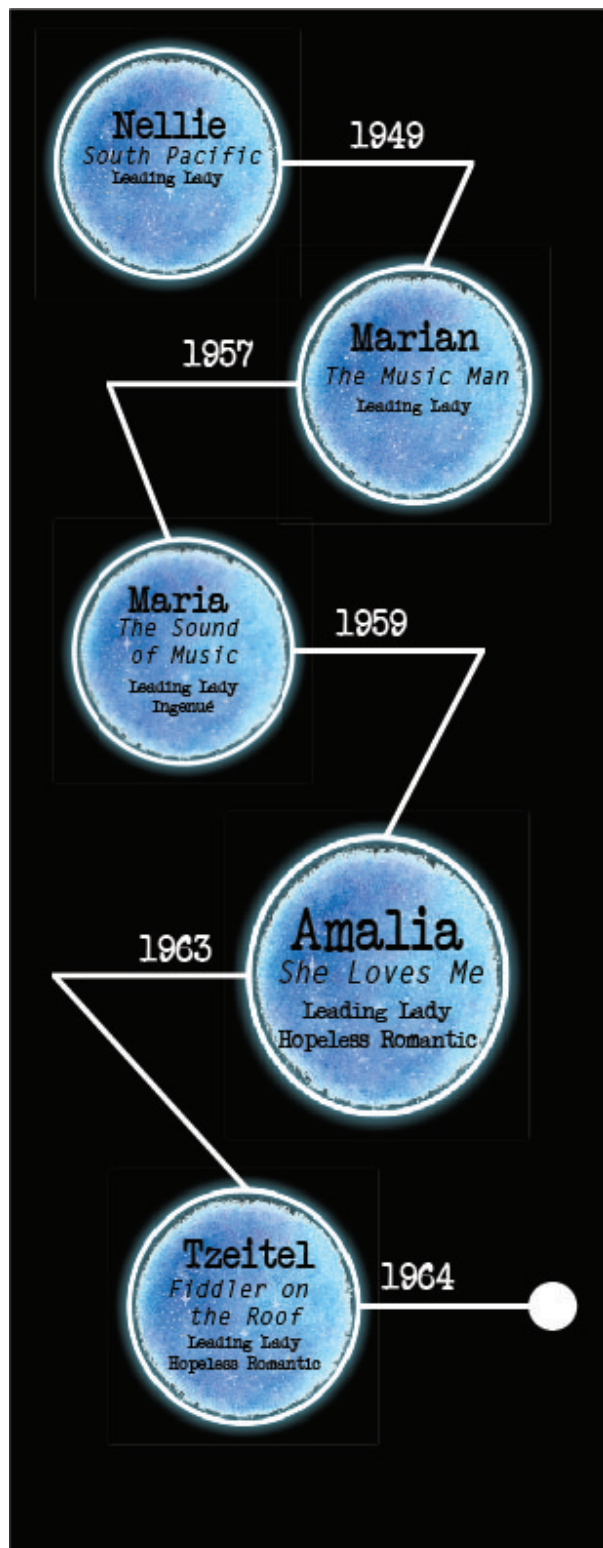
A VERY NEAT, Good Natured, Refined
gentleman past middle age would very much like to correspond and form the acquaintance of a neat, good-natured, refined, fairly good looking well-to-do single lady of means; object marriage and to live happy; answer to this advertisement will be held strictly confidential; this is a clean advertisement not a fake one; (hence) triflers need not answer. Address (Refined) care Elmira Telegram, Elmira, N. Y.

Discussion Question:

What would your lonely hearts advertisement look like? Using the example above, try your hand at crafting your own lonely hearts advertisement.



Feminism in the Golden Age



When Bock and Harnick's *She Loves Me* premiered in 1963, the world also saw another push forward in the feminist movement. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* was published that same year. Throughout this so-called "Golden Age" of musical theatre, from 1943 to the early 1960s, there were also quite a number of strong female characters who took initiative in regards to their romantic and professional lives. They knew to follow the social etiquette of their respective eras to a degree, but also understood that the status quo had to be pushed over the edge a bit in order to find the romantic partner that would best suit their dreams.

On the left:

A constellation of female characters in the Golden Age of musical theatre, whose character traits are similar to Amalia's.

Discussion Question:

What are some other female characters from musical theatre that you believe are similar to Amalia and Ilona? Create a list of their similarities and differences.



Seeing The Show

Villanova Theatre is excited to have you join us for *She Loves Me*. We want to offer a few reminders concerning theatre etiquette so that you will experience the best from the actors and production team who have worked hard to create the show for you.

1. Remember to silence or turn off your phone. Please do not place phones on vibrate because this, too, often makes a noise that can be distracting to those around you as well as the performers.
2. Do not send or receive texts during the production. Taking out your phone during the performance to check a text or to send one is distracting to those in the surrounding seats due to the light coming from your phone.
3. Do not take photographs during the performance. This is for the safety of our performers as well as laws surrounding intellectual property. Best to sit back and enjoy the show, taking a mental image for your memory.
4. Refrain from opening candy wrappers or anything that is going to make a noise. This is distracting for those around you who are trying to listen to the performance as well as the actors who are working to create a world on the stage. Please open any candy wrappers or tissue containers or other items that could potentially make a noise before the show begins.
5. Refrain from talking. Again, this is distracting to those around you as well as the actors on stage. When on stage, it is often thought the actors are too far from the audience to hear what is happening. This is far from the truth. More often, actors can hear every movement, laugh, and spoken word.
6. Finally, please refrain from touching actors during the performance. Because Vasey Theatre is a thrust stage, actors often cross in front of audience members. Unless you are invited to do so, you should not touch them.

Thank you so much for making your Villanova Theatre experience the best for all involved.



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