

Village Theatre

KIDSTAGE

Performance Preview Guide for *Ragtime (School Edition)*

Performances: July 31 August-8, 2009 at Francis J. Gaudette Theatre, 303 Front Street North, Issaquah.

Patrons have different ideas of what material or themes are appropriate for them and their families. For this reason, we provide the following information:

The Production

- *Ragtime (School Edition)* may not be suitable for children ages 8 and under.
- *Ragtime (School Edition)* is based on E.L Doctorow's *Ragtime*.

Versions available to preview: A script is available at the Francis J. Gaudette Theatre Box Office in Issaquah for you to read.

Production length: The show will run approximately 2 hours with a 15 minute intermission.

Synopsis: A powerful portrait of life in turn-of- the-century America, *Ragtime School Edition* is written by the award-winning composer/lyricist team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens, noted playwright Terrence McNally, and based on E.L. Doctorow's distinguished novel. This relevant musical for today intertwines the stories of three extraordinary families, as they confront history's timeless contradictions: wealth and poverty, freedom and prejudice, hope and despair, as well as what it means to live in America. Featured are such show-stopping songs as "Your Daddy's Son," "Wheels of a Dream," and "Make Them Hear You." This thrilling musical is sure to inspire!

Educational Content: *Ragtime* is a two-act musical with book by Terrence McNally music by Stephen Flaherty and lyrics by Lynn Ahrens. It is based on the book, *Ragtime* by E.L. Doctorow. The production provides an accurate account of historical and social events during turn-of-the-century America.

Script Content Details

Please note: the following contains plot spoilers.

Violence: Willie Conklin and the firemen destroy Coalhouse's car. Sarah buries her new born son in Mothers backyard. Tateh attacks a man for asking if he can buy his daughter. There is description of an arsonist setting the firehouse on fire, which injured several fireman when the boiler exploded and three people died in a shooting. The song *What a Game!* has violent tones. Willie Conklin is chased out of town by Coalhouse's gang. Coalhouse and Younger Brother plot to blow up J.P. Morgan's library.

Death: The character of Sarah is killed by policemen. There is a description of Henry K. Thaw shooting Stanford White out of jealousy. Coalhouse is shot to death.

Sexual Content: The character of Evelyn Nesbit has a tendency to carry herself in a sexual nature, her song *Crime of the Century* contains sexual undertones. Coalhouse and Sarah have a baby out of wedlock; this is not depicted in any way but is stated on stage. Younger Brothers fascination with Evelyn Nesbit is inappropriate at times. Emma Goldman accuses him of "fawning over a vaudeville tart."

Racism: There are three distinct worlds in *Ragtime (School Edition)* the New Rochelle, the African American Lower Class and then the Immigrant Lower class. There are often instances where one class acts or speaks rudely to the other. Some examples include the destruction of Coalhouse's car, Father refusing to shake Admiral Peary's hand and men on the street being rude to Tateh. Racial slurs including niggers, yid, and cracker are used. These have not been omitted for historical accuracy.

Sexism: The characters of Father's views are very traditional. Little boy tells Mother "Father says a woman's place is in the home".

Language: There is some swearing such as "shit", and "sons of bitches" A fan heckles a baseball player.