Moon Over Buffalo
by Ken Ludwig
directed by Roy Steinberg
notes prepared by Bridget Grace Sheaff
StAGE NOTES
prepared by Bridget Grace Sheaff

Moon Over Buffalo
by Ken Ludwig

Cyrano De Bergerac by Edmond Rostand ................................................................. 3
Private Lives by Noel Coward .................................................................................. 7
Glossary for Moon Over Buffalo ............................................................................... 8
Literary References ...................................................................................................... 14
Miscellaneous ............................................................................................................. 14
Quotes ......................................................................................................................... 15
A Brief History of American Touring (Or: The Indignities of the Road) .................. 18
June 1953 (Or: What Was Happening In The World Outside The Play) .................. 19
About the Play ............................................................................................................. 20
About the Playwright ................................................................................................. 21
Cyrano De Bergerac by Edmond Rostand

Cyrano de Bergerac, a cadet in the French Army, is a brash, strong-willed nobleman of many talents. In addition to being a remarkable duelist, he is a gifted, joyful poet, as well as an accomplished musician. However, he has an extremely large nose—the source of his self-doubt. This doubt prevents him from expressing his love for his distant cousin, the smart and beautiful heiress Roxanne. He believes that his ugliness denies him the "dream of being loved by even an ugly woman."

Act I — A Performance at the Hôtel Burgundy
The play opens in Paris, 1640, in the theatre of the Hôtel Burgundy. Members of the audience slowly arrive, representing a cross-section of Parisian society from pickpockets to nobility. Christian de Neuvillette, a handsome new cadet (a nobleman serving as a soldier), arrives with Lignière, a drunkard who he hopes will identify the young woman with whom he has fallen in love. Lignière recognizes her as Roxanne, and tells Christian about her and the Count De Guiche’s scheme to marry her off to the compliant Viscount Valvert. Meanwhile, Ragueneau and Le Bret are expecting Cyrano de Bergerac, who has banished the actor Montfleury from the stage for a month. After Lignière leaves, Christian intercepts a pickpocket and, in return for his freedom, the pickpocket tells Christian of a plot against Lignière. Christian departs to try to warn him.

The play “Clorise” begins with Montfleury’s entrance, and Cyrano disrupts the play, chases him off stage, and compensates the manager for the loss of admission fees. The crowd is going to disperse when Cyrano lashes out at a pesky busybody, then is confronted by Valvert and duels with him while composing a ballade (a verse form typically consisting of three eight-line stanzas, each with a consistent meter and a particular rhyme scheme), wounding him as he ends the refrain (as promised: he ends each refrain with "When I end the refrain, 'Thrust Home'.") When the crowd has cleared the theater, Cyrano and Le Bret remain behind, and Cyrano confesses his love for Roxanne. Roxanne’s duenna then arrives, and asks where Roxanne may meet Cyrano privately. Lignière is then brought to Cyrano, having learned that one hundred hired thugs are waiting to ambush him on his way home. Cyrano, now emboldened, vows to take on the entire mob single-handed, and he leads a procession of officers, actors and musicians to the Porte de Nesle.

Act II — The Poets’ Cookshop
The next morning, at Ragueneau’s bake shop, Ragueneau supervises various apprentice cooks in their preparations. Cyrano arrives, anxious about his meeting with Roxanne. He is followed by a musketeer, a paramour of Ragueneau’s domineering wife Lise, then the regular gathering
of impoverished poets who take advantage of Ragueneau’s hospitality. Cyrano composes a letter to Roxanne expressing his deep and unconditional love for her, warns Lise about her indiscretion with the musketeer, and when Roxanne arrives he signals Ragueneau to leave them alone. Roxanne and Cyrano talk privately as she bandages his hand (injured from the fracas at the Port de Nesle); she thanks him for defeating Valvert at the theater, and talks about a man whom she has fallen in love with. Cyrano thinks that she is talking about him at first, and is ecstatic, but Roxanne describes her crush as "handsome," and tells him that she is in love with Christian. Roxanne fears for Christian’s safety in the predominantly Gascon company of Cadets, so she asks Cyrano to befriend and protect him. This he agrees to do.

After she leaves, Cyrano’s captain arrives with the cadets to congratulate him on his victory from the night before. They are followed by a huge crowd, including De Guiche and his entourage, but Cyrano soon drives them away. Le Bret takes him aside and chastises him for his behavior, but Cyrano responds haughtily. The Cadets press him to tell the story of the fight, teasing the newcomer Christian. When Cyrano recounts the tale, Christian displays his own form of courage by interjecting several times with references to Cyrano’s nose. Cyrano is angry, but remembering his promise to Roxanne, he holds in his temper. Eventually Cyrano explodes, the shop is evacuated, and Cyrano reveals his identity as Roxanne’s cousin. Christian confesses his love for Roxanne but his inability to woo because of his lack of intellect and wit. When Cyrano tells Christian that Roxanne expects a letter from him, Christian is despondent, having no eloquence in such matters. Cyrano then offers his services, including his own unsigned letter to Roxanne. The Cadets and others return to find the two men embracing, and are flabbergasted. The musketeer from before, thinking it was safe to do so, teases Cyrano about his nose and receives a slap in the face while the Cadets rejoice.

**Act III — Roxanne’s Kiss**

A few days later, outside Roxanne’s house. Ragueneau, having been driven bankrupt, is now Roxanne’s steward, and is talking with the duenna. His wife, Lise, has left him for the musketeer, and he was committing suicide when Cyrano stopped him and got him the job with Roxanne. Cyrano arrives, with theorbo-playing pages (as the result of winning a bet). Roxanne then emerges, praising Christian’s supposed eloquence. De Guiche then meets with her alone, trying to arrange a rendezvous before he goes off to war; she refuses, but
contrives to have the Cadets remain in Paris. De Guiche leaves, Cyrano returns, Roxanne and
the duenna then leave, and Cyrano remains to meet Christian and coach him. When Christian
does arrive, he refuses Cyrano’s assistance, believing that he can woo Roxanne on his own.
Roxanne soon returns, and Cyrano retreats, leaving a nervously tongue-tied Christian to
flounder. Roxanne leaves him outside, thoroughly disgusted with his loss of eloquence, and
Cyrano re-emerges. Christian begs for his help, and they contrive to have Christian repeat
Cyrano’s words to Roxanne while she is on her balcony; this changes with Cyrano taking
Christian’s place to make it easier. In the course of this, a monk arrives looking for Roxanne,
and Cyrano sends him in another direction. Cyrano then resumes his wooing of Roxanne for
Christian, winning Christian a kiss from her. The monk returns, with a note from De Guiche still
trying to meet with her; she makes up a new message, that the monk should marry Roxanne
and Christian. While the marriage is being performed in Roxanne’s house, Cyrano delays De
Guiche by pretending to be a stranger with a fantastic tale of seven ways of traveling to the
moon. When Roxanne and Christian emerge as husband and wife, De Guiche then releases the
orders to send the Cadet company to battle. Roxanne has Cyrano promise to watch over
Christian, and make sure that he writes to her.

Act IV — The Gascon Cadets
The siege of Arras. The Gascon Cadets are among many French forces now cut off by the
Spanish, and they are starving. Cyrano, meanwhile, has been writing in Christian’s name twice a
day, smuggling letters across the enemy lines. De Guiche, whom the Cadets despise, arrives and
chastises them; Cyrano responds with his usual bravura, and De Guiche then signals a spy to tell
the Spanish to attack on the Cadets, informing them that they must hold the line while relief
comes in. Then a coach arrives, and Roxanne emerges from it. She tells how she was able to flirt
her way through the Spanish lines. Cyrano tells Christian about the letters, and provides him a
farewell letter to give to Roxanne if he dies.

After De Guiche departs, Roxanne provides plenty of food and drink with the assistance of the coach’s
driver, Ragueneau. She also tells Christian that, because of the letters, she has grown to love him for
his soul alone, and would still love him even if he were ugly. Christian tells this to Cyrano, and then
persuades Cyrano to tell Roxanne the truth about the letters, saying he has to be loved for "the fool that he
is" to be truly loved at all. Cyrano disbelieves what

Christian claims Roxanne has said, until she tells him so as well. But, before Cyrano can tell her
the truth, Christian is brought back to the camp, having been fatally shot. Cyrano realizes that,
in order to preserve Roxanne’s image of an eloquent Christian, he cannot tell her the truth. The
battle ensues, a distraught Roxanne collapses and is carried off by De Guiche and Ragueneau,
and Cyrano rallies the Cadets to hold back the Spanish until relief arrives.
Act V — Cyrano’s Gazette
Fifteen years later, at a convent outside Paris. Roxanne now resides here, eternally mourning her beloved Christian. She is visited by De Guiche, Le Bret and Raguenneau, and she expects Cyrano to come by as he always has with news of the outside world. On this day, however, he has been mortally wounded by someone who dropped a huge log on his head from a tall building. While he arrives to deliver his “gazette” to Roxanne, it will be his last. Knowing this, he asks Roxanne if he can read "Christian's" farewell letter. She gives it to him, and he reads it aloud as it grows dark. Listening to his voice, she realizes that it is Cyrano who was the author of all the letters, but Cyrano denies this to his death. Raguenneau and Le Bret return, telling Roxanne of Cyrano’s injury. While Cyrano grows delirious, his friends weep and Roxanne tells him that she loves him. He combats various foes, half imaginary and half symbolic, conceding that he has lost all but one important thing – his panache – as he dies in Roxanne’s arms.

Jose Ferrer as Cyrano
**Private Lives by Noel Coward**

*Private Lives* is a 1930 comedy of manners in three acts by Noël Coward. It focuses on a divorced couple, Elyot and Amanda, who discover that they are honeymooning with their new spouses in neighboring rooms at the same hotel. Despite a perpetually stormy relationship, the once married couple realizes that they still have feelings for each other.

**Act 1**
Following a brief courtship, Elyot and Sybil are honeymooning at a hotel in Deauville, although her curiosity about his first marriage is not helping his romantic mood. In the adjoining suite, Amanda and Victor are starting their new life together, although he cannot stop thinking of the cruelty Amanda's ex-husband displayed towards her. Elyot and Amanda have been divorced for five years, following a volatile three-year marriage. While on their honeymoons with their new, younger spouses, they discover they share a terrace, and quickly beg their new mates to leave the hotel with them immediately. Both new spouses refuse to cooperate and storm off to dine alone. Elyot and Amanda, realizing they still love each other and regret having divorced, abandon their mates and run off together to her flat in Paris.

**Act 2**
After dinner at the Paris flat several days later, Elyot and Amanda use their code word "Sollocks" to stop their arguments from getting out of hand. They kiss passionately, but the harmony cannot last: while Elyot and Amanda cannot live without each other, neither can they live with each other. They argue violently and try to outwit each other, just as they had done during their stormy marriage. Their ongoing argument escalates to the point of physical abuse, as Amanda breaks a record over Elyot's head, and he retaliates by slapping her face. They seem to be trapped in a repeating cycle of love and hate as their private passions and jealousies consume them. At the height of their biggest fight, Sybil and Victor walk in.

**Act 3**
The next morning, Amanda tries to sneak away, but is surprised to find Sybil and Victor there. As they talk, Elyot comes in, and he and Amanda start bickering again. It has been decided that neither of the new spouses will grant a divorce for a year, to give Amanda and Elyot time to confirm if this is really what they want. As tempers rise, Sybil and Victor begin to bicker with each other, defending their respective spouses. Amanda and Elyot realize Sybil and Victor are as suited to each other as they are, forgive one another and sneak out, leaving the younger two together.
Glossary for *Moon Over Buffalo*

**Film and Theatre Personalities**

**The Barrymores (U.S. theatrical family)**
Maurice Barrymore (orig. Herbert Blythe; 1847–1905) made his stage debut in London before moving to New York City (1875), where he adopted Barrymore as his stage name. He joined Augustin Daly’s company and in 1876 married Georgiana Drew, of the theatrical Drew family. Their eldest child, Lionel Barrymore (orig. Lionel Blythe; 1878–1954), became a leading Broadway actor in plays such as *Peter Ibbetson* (1917) and *The Copperhead* (1918), then moved to Hollywood in 1926, where he appeared in films such as *A Free Soul* (1931, Academy Award) and *Grand Hotel* (1932). Famous as a character actor, he made some 200 films, including 15 *Dr. Kildare* pictures. His sister, Ethel Barrymore (orig. Ethel Blythe; 1879–1959), appeared in London in *Peter the Great* (1898) and on Broadway in *Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines* (1901). She opened the New York theatre named for her in 1928 in *The Kingdom of God*. She appeared in more than 30 films, including *None but the Lonely Heart* (1944, Academy Award). Their brother, John Barrymore (orig. John Blythe; 1882–1942), was acclaimed in plays such as *Justice* (1916), *Richard III* (1920), and *Hamlet* (1922). His films include *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1920) and *Dinner at Eight* (1933). An alcoholic, he was known for his flamboyant behavior. John’s granddaughter Drew Barrymore (b. 1975) first won notice at age seven in the film *E.T.* (1982).

**Frank Capra (1897-1991)**
During the dark decade of the 1930s, director Frank Capra became America’s preeminent filmmaker, leavening Depression-era despair with his irrepressible optimism of the Everyman triumphing over seemingly insurmountable odds. Packaging hope for the hopeless, his goodwill movies were as important to national morale as Franklin D.Roosevelt’s famed Fireside Chats. Over the course of his career, he won three Best Director Oscars. Some of his best-known films are: *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939), *Arsenic and Old Lace* (1944), and *It’s a Wonderful Life* (1946).

**Ronald Colman (1891-1958)**
British leading man of primarily American films, one of the great stars of the Golden Age. He was a popular star of silent films—romances as well as adventure films. With the advent of sound, his rich speaking voice made him even more in demand. He played sophisticated, thoughtful characters of integrity with enormous aplomb.

**Katharine Cornell (1893-1974)**
American stage actress “Kit Cornell," writer, theater owner and producer raised in Buffalo, New York. Cornell is known as the greatest American stage actress of the 20th century. She was nicknamed "First Lady of the Theatre," a title also bestowed upon her friend Helen Hayes, though each deferred to the other.
Errol Flynn (1909 –1959)
Australian-born actor known for his romantic swashbuckler roles in Hollywood films and his playboy lifestyle. Working throughout his career with a cross-section of Hollywood's best fight arrangers, Flynn became noted for his fast-paced sword fights as seen in *The Adventures of Robin Hood, The Sea Hawk* and *Captain Blood*.

Lynn Fontanne (1887-1983) and Alfred Lunt (1892-1977)
Husband and wife team that, by the mid-20s, were the two most popular, critically acclaimed, and highest-paid stage actors in the country. At the height of their individual careers, they each took enormous pay cuts (from $900 per week to $300 per week) to sign on with The Theatre Guild—a fledgling company dedicated to performing new and avant-garde work—by writers like Ibsen and Shaw. The Lunts believed strongly that creating great theatre with broad impact was far more important than money. But since they were taking such large cuts in salary, they were able to put two clauses into their contracts: they would only act together and never in the summer. They retired in 1960.

Greer Garson (1904-1996)
British-born actress who was very popular during World War II. The *Motion Picture Herald* listed her as one of America's top ten box office draws in 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, and 1946. As one of MGM's major stars of the 1940s, Garson received seven Academy Award nominations, winning the Best Actress award for *Mrs. Miniver* (1942).

Sir John Gielgud (1904-2000)
English-born actor and theatre director whose career spanned eight decades. The *Independent* described him as one of a great trinity of actors, together with Ralph Richardson and Laurence Olivier, who dominated the British stage for much of the 20th century. He was a member of the Terry family theatrical dynasty and gained his first paid acting work as a junior member of his cousin Phyllis Neilson-Terry's company in 1922. After study at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art he worked in repertory theatre and in the West End before establishing himself at the Old Vic as an exponent of Shakespeare in 1929–31.

Laurence Olivier (1907-1989)
English actor, director, and producer. One of the most revered actors of the 20th century. He played a wide variety of roles on stage and screen from Greek tragedy, Shakespeare and Restoration comedy to modern American and British drama. He was the first artistic director of the National Theatre of Great Britain and its main stage is named in his honor.
Eugene O’Neill (1888-1953)
American playwright and Nobel laureate in Literature. His plays were among the first to introduce techniques of realism into American drama more commonly associated with playwrights Anton Chekhov (Russian), Henrik Ibsen (Norwegian), and August Strindberg (Swedish). His plays were among the first to include speeches in American vernacular and involve characters on the fringes of society, where they struggle to maintain their hopes and aspirations, but ultimately slide into disillusionment and despair. Best known work: Long’s Day Journey Into Night, Desire Under the Elms, The Emperor Jones, The Ice Man Cometh, and Mourning Becomes Electra.

Ringling Brothers
The Ringling brothers were seven siblings who transformed their small touring company of performers into one of America's largest circuses in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Born in McGregor, Iowa and raised in Baraboo, Wisconsin, they were the children of Heinrich Friedrich August Ringling (1826–1898) of Hanover, Germany and Marie Salome Juliar (1833–1907) of Ostheim, France. They merged their Ringling Brothers Circus with America's other leading circus troupes, ultimately creating the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, which still tours today under that name.

Mickey Rooney (1920-2014)
American film actor and entertainer whose film, television, and stage appearances span nearly his entire lifetime. He was a superstar as a teenager, particularly for the films in which he played Andy Hardy (of which 13 were made). In his later career, he became a well-known character actor. He has received multiple awards, including a Juvenile Academy Award, an Honorary Academy Award, two Golden Globes and an Emmy Award.

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962)
The longest-serving First Lady of the United States (March 1933 to April 1945), during her husband President Franklin D. Roosevelt's four terms in office. President Harry S. Truman later called her the "First Lady of the World" in tribute to her human rights achievements.

Esther Williams (1922-2013)
Retired American competitive swimmer and MGM movie star. Williams made a series of films in the 1940s and early 1950s known as "aqua-musicals", which featured elaborate performances with synchronized swimming and diving.

Loretta Young (1913-2000)
American actress. She began acting as a child and had a long and varied career in film (1917–1953). She won Academy Award in 1948 (best actress) for The Farmer's Daughter (1947), and an Oscar nomination in 1949 for Come to the Stable. Young then moved to the relatively new medium of television, where she had a dramatic anthology series called The Loretta Young Show, from 1953 to 1961, which earned three Emmy Awards.
**Movies and Television**

**Apache Woman (1955) (film)**
Starring Lloyd Bridges and Joan Taylor. A government agent is sent to a western town to investigate attacks that the townspeople say are being committed by rampaging Apaches. The agent, however, suspects that different forces may be committing these crimes.

**It Happened One Night (1934) (film) directed by Frank Capra**
American romantic comedy with elements of screwball comedy. A pampered socialite (Claudette Colbert) tries to get out from under her father's thumb, and falls in love with a roguish reporter (Clark Gable). The plot was based on the 1933 short story "Night Bus" by Samuel Hopkins Adams, which provided the shooting title. One of the last romantic comedies created before the MPAA began enforcing the 1930 production code in 1934.

**It’s A Wonderful Life (1946) (film) produced and directed by Frank Capra**
American Christmas fantasy comedy-drama, based on the short story "The Greatest Gift", which Philip Van Doren Stern wrote in 1939 and published privately in 1945. The film is considered one of the most loved films in American cinema and has become traditional viewing during the Christmas season. The film follows George Bailey (James Stewart), a man who has given up his dreams in order to help others and whose imminent suicide on Christmas Eve brings about the intervention of his guardian angel, Clarence Odbody (Henry Travers). Clarence shows George all the lives he has touched and how different life in his community of Bedford Falls would be had he never been born.

**Gone with the Wind (1939) (film) produced by David O. Selznick/ Selznick Int’l Pictures**
American epic historical romance film adapted from Margaret Mitchell's Pulitzer-winning 1936 novel and Set in the 19th-century American South, the film tells the story of Scarlett O'Hara (Vivien Leigh), and her romantic pursuit of Ashley Wilkes (Leslie Howard) who is married to his cousin, Melanie Hamilton (Olivia de Havilland), and her marriage to Rhett Butler (Clark Gable). Set against the backdrop of the American Civil War and Reconstruction era, the story is told from the perspective of white Southerners.

**Sergeant Yukon – Sergeant Preston Of The Yukon (1955-58) (TV)**
Follows Canadian Mountie Sgt. Preston as he patrols the wilds of the Yukon with his horse Rex and his faithful dog Yukon King, battling both the elements and criminals.

**The Scarlet Pimpernel (1955) (TV)**
One of the earliest costume dramas produced for television. Sir Percy Blakeney is a notorious fop and hedonistic member of Prince Regent's court, but he is secretly "the Scarlet Pimpernel", a mysterious figure who rescues innocents from the Reign of Terror taking place in France and transports them to safety in England. Based on the classic adventure novels by Baroness Orczy. ("Mr. Pimpernel Goes To Washington": the title is a pun combining The Scarlet Pimpernel and a famous Frank Capra film, Mr. Smith Goes To Washington.)
**You Can’t Take It With You (1938) (film) directed by Frank Capra**
Starring Jean Arthur, Lionel Barrymore, James Stewart, and Edward Arnold. American romantic comedy film adapted from the Pulitzer Prize-winning play of the same name by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart. The film is about a man from a family of rich snobs who becomes engaged to a woman from a good-natured but decidedly eccentric family.

**Plays and Characters**

**Arms And The Man (1894) (comedy) by George Bernard Shaw**
The title comes from the opening words of Virgil's Aeneid in Latin: "Arma virumque cano" (I sing of arms and the man). Set during the four-month-long Serbo-Bulgarian War that occurred between November 1885 and March 1886, this play is a satire on the foolishness of glorifying something so terrible as war, as well as a satire on the foolishness of basing your affections on idealistic notions of love.

**Brutus**
Marcus Brutus, protagonist of Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, is Caesar's close friend and an elected official. Brutus allows himself to be cajoled into joining a group of conspiring senators because of a growing suspicion—implanted by Caius Cassius—that Caesar intends to turn republican Rome into a monarchy under his own rule.

**Falstaff**
Sir John Falstaff is a fat, vain, boastful, and cowardly knight who appears in three of Shakespeare’s plays. In the two *Henry IV* plays, he is a companion to Prince Hal, the future King Henry V. Falstaff leads the apparently wayward Prince Hal into trouble, and is ultimately repudiated after Hal becomes king. Falstaff also appears in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

**Hamlet (tragedy) by William Shakespeare**
Set in the Kingdom of Denmark, the play dramatizes the revenge Prince Hamlet is instructed to enact on his uncle Claudius. Claudius had murdered his own brother, Hamlet's father King Hamlet and then taken the throne, marrying his deceased brother's widow, Hamlet's mother Gertrude.

**Henry V (historical) by William Shakespeare**
The story of King Henry V of England, focusing on events immediately before and after the Battle of Agincourt (1415) during the Hundred Years' War. The play is the final part of a tetralogy, preceded by *Richard II*, *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Henry IV, Part 2*.

**Horatio**
Horatio is a character from William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*. A friend of Prince Hamlet from Wittenberg University, Horatio's origins are unknown, though he is evidently poor and was
present on the battlefield when Hamlet's father defeated 'the ambitious Norway'. Horatio is evidently not directly involved in the intrigue at the Danish court; thus, he makes a good foil or sounding board for Hamlet. He is often not identified as any specific court position, but simply as "friend to Hamlet."

**King Lear (tragedy) by William Shakespeare**
The title character descends into madness after foolishly disposing of his estate between two of his three daughters based on their flattery, bringing tragic consequences for all. The play is based on the legend of Leir of Britain, a mythological pre-Roman Celtic king.

**Lady Bracknell**
A character from Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest.*

**Much Ado About Nothing (comedy) by William Shakespeare**
The story of two pairs of lovers, Benedick and Beatrice, and Claudio and Hero. Benedick and Beatrice are engaged in a "merry war"; they both proclaim their scorn for love, marriage, and each other. In contrast, Claudio and Hero are rendered practically speechless by their love for one another. By means of "noting" (which sounds the same as "nothing," and which is gossip, rumor, and overhearing), Benedick and Beatrice are tricked into confessing their love for each other. Claudio is tricked into rejecting Hero at the altar. Dogberry, the Constable, discovers the evil trickery of the villain, Don John. Don John is captured and everyone celebrates the marriages of the two couples.

**Pygmalion (1912) (lampoon) by George Bernard Shaw**
Professor of phonetics Henry Higgins makes a bet that he can train a bedraggled Cockney flower girl, Eliza Doolittle, to pass for a duchess at an ambassador's garden party by teaching her to assume a veneer of gentility, the most important element of which, he believes, is impeccable speech. The play is a sharp lampoon of the rigid British class system of the day and a comment on women's independence, packaged as a romantic comedy. In ancient Greek mythology, Pygmalion was a sculptor who fell in love with his sculpture, which is brought to life by the Goddess Aphrodite.

**Saint Joan (1923) by George Bernard Shaw**
Based on the life and trial of Joan of Arc. Published not long after the canonization of Joan of Arc by the Roman Catholic Church, the play dramatizes what is known of her life based on the substantial records of her trial. The play is known as Shaw’s only tragedy—he studied the transcripts from the trial and decided that the concerned people acted in good faith according to their beliefs.

**She Stoops To Conquer (1773) (restoration comedy) by Oliver Goldsmith**
Subtitled *The Mistakes of a Night,* the play is a lighthearted farce about misunderstandings. Mr. Hardcastle plans to marry his forthright daughter Kate to bashful Marlow, the son of his friend Sir Charles Marlow. Mrs. Hardcastle wants her recalcitrant son Tony Lumpkin to marry her ward Constance Neville, who is in love with Marlow’s friend Hastings. Humorous mishaps
occur when Tony dupes Marlow and Hastings into believing that Mr. Hardcastle's home is an inn. By posing as a servant, Kate wins the heart of Marlow, who is uncomfortable in the company of wellborn women but is flirtatious with barmaids. Through various deceptions, Tony releases himself from his mother's clutches and unites Constance with Hastings.

**Literary References**

*The Hound Of The Baskervilles*
Third of four crime novels by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle featuring the detective Sherlock Holmes. It is set largely on Dartmoor in Devon in England's West Country and tells the story of an attempted murder inspired by the legend of a fearsome, diabolical hound.

*The House of Usher*
"The Fall of the House of Usher" is a short story by Edgar Allan Poe first published in 1839.

*Pride And Prejudice*
A novel by Jane Austen, first published in 1813. The story follows the main character Elizabeth Bennet as she deals with issues of manners, upbringing, morality, education and marriage in the society of the landed gentry of early 19th-century England. Also a 1940 film starring Lawrence Olivier and Greer Garson

*Quasimodo*
Fictional character in the novel *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (1831) by Victor Hugo. Quasimodo was born with a hunchback and feared by the townspeople as a sort of monster, but he finds sanctuary in an unlikely love that is fulfilled only in death.

**Miscellaneous**

*Chivas Regal*
A blended Scotch whisky produced by Chivas Brothers, owned by Pernod Ricard. Chivas Brothers was first established in 1801. The Chivas Regal brand's home is Strathisla Distillery at Keith, Moray in Speyside, Scotland, the oldest operating Highland distillery, which was founded in 1786.

*Demerol*
A drug once widely used during childbirth.

*Forest Of Arden*
The forest in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* [Rosalind in *Moon Over Buffalo* is named after the play’s main character].

*Mr. Potato Head*
An American toy consisting of a plastic model of a potato, which can be decorated with a
variety of plastic parts that can attach to the main body. These parts usually include ears, eyes, shoes, a hat, a nose, and a mouth. The toy was invented and developed by George Lerner in 1949, and first manufactured and distributed by Hasbro in 1952.

Scientific American
An American popular science magazine, informally abbreviated as SciAm.

Variety
Broadway’s theatre newspaper and trade journal

Quotes

“Up to the top. What would you have me do?
Seek out a powerful protection, pursue
A potent patron? Cling like a leeching vine
To a tree? Crawl my way up? Fawn, whine
For all that sticky candy called success?
No, thank you. Be a sycophant and dress
In sickly rhymes a prayer to a moneylender?
Play the buffoon, desperate to engender
A smirk on a refrigerated jowl?
No, thank you. Slake my morning mouth with foul
Lees and leavings, breakfast off a toad?
To advancement and wear the skin of my belly through?
Get grimy calluses on my kneecaps? Do
A daily dozen to soften up my spine?
No, thank you. Stroke the bristles of some swine
With one hand, feel his silk purse with the other?
Burn up the precious incense of mother-wit to perfume some bad bastard's beard?
No, thank you. When all pride has disappeared,
Sail stagnant water, with madrigal for oars,
The canvas filled with the breath of ancient whores
Of unfructified duennas? Be the pope
Of some small literary circle and softsoap
Editors and reviewers? Shall I look
For a lifetime's reputation from one book
And then give up the agonizing art
As far to wearing? No, thanks. Shall I start
Finding true genius only in imbeciles
And acneous hairy oafs? No, thanks. Is it
Best I should think best to make a visit
Rather than make a poem? Relish the savour
Of stuffy salons? Seek condescension, favour,
Influence, introductions? No, no, no,
Thank you, no. No, thank you. But to go
Free of the filthy world, to sing, to be
Blessed with a voice vibrating birility,
Blessed with an eye equipped for looking at
Things as they really are, cocking my hat
Where I please, at a word, at a deed, at a yes or not,
Fighting or writing: this is my true life. So
I go along any road under my moon,
Careless of glory, indifferent to the boon
Or bane of fortune, without hope, without fear,
Writing only the words down that I hear
Here -- and saying, with a sort of modesty
'My heart, be satisfied with what you see
And smell and taste in your own garden -- weeds,
In wrestling some small triumph for me -- well,
I render nothing unto Caesar, sell
No moiety of my merit to the world.
I loathe the parasite liana, curled
About the oak trunk. I myself am a tree --
Not high, perhaps, not beautiful, but free
My flesh deciduous, but the enduring bone
Of my spirit tough, indifferent, and alone!”

Cyrano de Bergerac
Act 2, by Edmund Rostand,
as translated by Anthony Burgess

“Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more;
Or close the wall up with our English dead!
In peace, there ’s nothing so becomes a man,
As modest stillness and humility:
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood.”

Henry V
III.i, by William Shakespeare
“This rough magic
I here abjure, and when I have required
Some heavenly music, which even now I do,
To work mine end upon their senses that
This airy charm is for, I’ll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I’ll drown my book.”

The Tempest
V.i, by William Shakespeare
A Brief History of American Touring (Or: The Indignities of the Road)

In 1782, the American Company started American touring with shows that played in New York and Charleston—prior to the Revolutionary War theatrical touring groups in America were mostly foreign-based. The Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia took over as the principal American touring group from 1794 to 1815, touring to New York and other venues. The Park Theatre opened in New York in 1798 and became a touring base. In 1810, they imported George Frederick Cooke from England and his profitable tour created a demand for other “star” tours. Mostly, shows were British and classical with an occasional native drama. Samuel Drake expanded touring with a circuit opened in 1815 which included Lexington, Louisville, and Frankfort, with occasional appearances in Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee, and Missouri. Tours adapted to local conditions and stayed in each town as long as they had an audience. James H. Caldwell, an English actor, took over the Mississippi Valley between 1825–35. He controlled theatres in Natchez, St. Louis, Nashville, and New Orleans. He left the business after the depression of 1837, giving up his theatre altogether in 1843. His successors were Noah Ludlow and Solomon Smith. They controlled tours to St. Louis and Mobile, and finally arrived in New Orleans in 1853. The touring companies found a rival in showboats, which began to appear in the 1830s. These theatres could go wherever there was a major river and they were a popular venue until 1925.

The touring groups helped establish theatre in places that might never have known live theatre otherwise. New companies were established, and by 1850 there were about twenty resident troupes in America outside of the eastern seaboard. The resident companies often hosted guest actors from England, but these actors soon found it more lucrative to tour, venturing as far as the Mississippi River Valley. Eventually the “star” tours would undermine resident company tours, but both remained a stable existence until the Depression hit in 1929.

American Touring in the 20th Century

1929-1939: The Depression’s economic situation closed touring to all but a few highly publicized successes. The tours also needed high-profile Broadway or Hollywood stars to maximize success. Hollywood was changing the face of entertainment in America. It was able to offer a standardized product at a cheaper ticket price than live theatre could sustain. Radio drama and comedies, available to the American Public at no charge, was also a factor in the loss of touring audiences. Writers, directors, and actors were leaving Broadway and moving to Hollywood. The money and the promise of fame had moved to the West Coast.

1940-1960 (the time of our play): After World War II, there was a brief demand for theatrical entertainment that died out with the cessation of wartime inflation. Production costs rose making touring more expensive. The “in-between” plays that filled a moderate house but were not major hits died early deaths and never toured. Hollywood had been investing in Broadway productions and buying a great number of new scripts during the war years. With the post-war slump, they ceased to do so. Broadway’s only salvation seemed to be the popularity of its new venue, musical comedies and dramas. These reached wider, more diverse audience and became major touring pieces in the 1950s. Audiences across America wanted musicals or, lacking those, big name stars from Broadway or Hollywood in more traditional theatre pieces.
June 1953 (Or: What Was Happening In The World Outside The Play)

Dates of interest:
- June 2 – Coronation of Elizabeth II at Westminster Abbey.
- June 18 – Egypt declares itself a republic.
- June 19 – The U.S. executes Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for spying for the USSR.
- June 30 – The first Chevrolet Corvette is built at Flint, Michigan.

President:
- Dwight Eisenhower

In theatre:
- The Tony Awards were still practically brand new—it was the 7th annual presentation. Arthur Miller won “Outstanding Play” for The Crucible.
- Samuel Beckett’s play Waiting For Godot had its first public stage première in French as En attendant Godot at the Théâtre de Babylone in Paris.
- South Pacific opened on Broadway on April 7, 1949, at the Majestic Theatre, moving to the Broadway Theatre in June 1953.

In movie theatres:
- The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms (Warner Brothers). A ferocious dinosaur awakened by an Arctic atomic test terrorizes the North Atlantic and ultimately New York City.

On television [a selection]:
- Meet the Press (1947–present)
- Candid Camera (1948–present)
- The Ed Sullivan Show (1948–1971)
- Truth or Consequences (1950–1988)
- Dragnet (1951–1959)
- I Love Lucy (1951–1960)
- Adventures of Superman (1952–1958)
- The Today Show (1952–present)
- This Is Your Life (U.S.; 1952–1961)
About the Play

*Moon Over Buffalo*

*Moon Over Buffalo* marked Carol Burnett’s triumphant return to Broadway after 30 years. She received a Tony nomination for her portrayal of Charlotte Hays. The Broadway production in 1995, directed by Tom Moore, also starred Philip Bosco and Randy Graff. Subsequent Broadway casts included Lynn Redgrave and Robert Goulet. *Moon Over Buffalo*, under the title *Over the Moon* opened at London’s legendary Old Vic in 2001. The production starred Joan Collins and Frank Langella and was directed by Ray Cooney. Documentary filmmaker D.A. Pennington followed the original Broadway cast from rehearsals to the Broadway opening to create the film *Moon Over Broadway*. A highlight of the film is a preview performance stopped for technical difficulties—Carol Burnett took the stage and entertained the audience until the glitch was resolved and the show could resume.
About the Playwright

Ken Ludwig

Ken Ludwig is an internationally acclaimed playwright whose many hits on Broadway, in London's West End and throughout the world have made his name synonymous with modern comedy. He has had six shows on Broadway and six in the West End, and he has won the Laurence Olivier Award, England’s highest theatre honor, as well as three Tony Award nominations and two Helen Hayes Awards.

His work has been commissioned by the Royal Shakespeare Company and has been performed in thirty countries in over twenty languages. His musical Crazy For You ran for over four years on Broadway and in London. After a hit revival at The Open Air Theatre in Regent’s Park, it transferred to the West End for an open-ended run. Lend Me A Tenor, originally produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber and recently revived on Broadway with an all-star cast, was called “one of the two great farces by a living writer” by The New York Times.

Other plays and musicals include Moon Over Buffalo (Broadway & London’s Old Vic, starring Carol Burnett, Lynn Redgrave, Joan Collins & Frank Langella); Twentieth Century (Broadway, starring Alec Baldwin & Anne Heche); The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (Broadway); Treasure Island (London, Theatre Royal, Haymarket; 2009 AATE Distinguished Play Award for Best Adaptation); Shakespeare in Hollywood (commissioned by The Royal Shakespeare Company, Helen Hayes Award as Best Play); Leading Ladies; Be My Baby (starring Hal Holbrook and Dixie Carter); The Beaux’ Stratagem (adaptation with Thornton Wilder at the request of the Wilder Estate); The Three Musketeers (Bristol Old Vic); An American in Paris; Sullivan & Gilbert; The Fox on the Fairway; The Game’s Afoot, Midsummer/Jersey; The Hound of the Baskervilles; and his first children’s play, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas.

His work has appeared in The Yale Review, and he is writing a book for Crown Publishing entitled How To Teach Your Children Shakespeare. He studied music at Harvard with Leonard Bernstein and theatre history at Cambridge University in England.

For more information, please visit www.kenludwig.com