

THE PRODUCERS

Village Theatre Production Preview Guide

IN ISSAQUAH:

Francis J. Gaudette Theatre,
303 Front Street North, Issaquah

MAY 9- JULY 1, 2012

WEDNESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY: 8:00 PM

SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS: 2:00 PM

SELECTED TUESDAYS: 7:30 PM

SELECTED SUNDAYS: 7:00 PM

IN EVERETT:

Everett Performing Arts Center,
2710 Wetmore Avenue, Everett

JULY 6- 29, 2012

WEDNESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY: 8:00 PM

SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS: 2:00 PM

SELECTED SUNDAYS: 7:00 PM

PATRONS HAVE DIFFERENT IDEAS OF WHAT MATERIAL OR THEMES ARE APPROPRIATE FOR THEM OR THEIR FAMILIES. FOR THIS REASON, WE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

THE PRODUCTION:

Mel Brooks' record-breaking, 12-time Tony Award-winner, *The Producers* is a hysterically outrageous hit! When an out-of-luck Broadway producer and his nervous accountant hatch a plan to mount a guaranteed Broadway flop in order to turn some quick cash, their wrongful scheming goes wildly awry. With swingin' tunes like "I Wanna Be a Producer" and "Where Did We Go Right," this show is loaded with laughs and dazzling choreography that is sure to leave stars in your eyes.

VERSIONS AVAILABLE TO PREVIEW:

Film versions, both titled *The Producers*, were produced in 1968 and 2005. The 1968 version stars Zero Mostel, Gene Wilder, Kenneth Mars, Dick Shawn and Christopher Hewett and is directed by Mel Brooks. The 2005 film stars Nathan Lane, Matthew Broderick, Uma Thurman and Will Ferrell and is directed by Susan Stroman.

PRODUCTION LENGTH

Exact length to be determined.

WHY DID VILLAGE THEATRE CHOOSE TO PRODUCE *The Producers*?

The Producers has been one of the most beloved pieces of American musical theatre since it debuted in 2001. The winner of 12 Tony Awards, the show has toured around the county to great applause, but has never been professionally produced by a theatre company in the Pacific Northwest...until now! We are thrilled to finally bring this uproarious musical comedy to the Mainstage and are certain audiences will not soon forget the glitzy experience.

SCRIPT CONTENT DETAILS Please note: the following information may contain plot spoilers.

Village Theatre encourages parents to investigate the themes in this story to ensure that it is appropriate for younger audiences (under 13). The humor of the show is accessible to a variety of audiences; however much of it is drawn from ridiculous accents, caricatures of homosexuals and Nazis, as well as many jokes about show business. There is very little violence; however a gun is fired during Act II. There is very little drug or alcohol use that would be considered inappropriate; however alcohol will be on stage a certain points. Sexual references and gestures appear throughout jokes in the play. Additionally, mild swear words are used occasionally throughout the play, often as part of jokes. This musical may not be suitable for children under 13, so parents of younger children are encouraged to investigate the material further.

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ACT I

On a spring evening in 1959, the curtain rises at Shubert Theatre to the newest production by Max Bialystock. Two usherettes wonder how audiences will react to the opening night, as first nighters start to burst out of the doors to the theatre, calling the play the worst show in town. As the first nighters exit, Max Bialystock, the producer appears with a newspaper featuring bad reviews to his latest play. Max wonders what happened and begins to sing about how he was once the “king” of Broadway. He is joined by late-night Broadway denizens, who join in the song, singing that they believe him, though thousands would not. Max ends the song optimistically by predicting his return to the top.

The set changes to what is apparently Max’s office, a room that was once grand, but now appears shabby and cluttered. Evidence suggests that Max may be living in his office. A young man steps in and Max, previously asleep, jumps up from the sofa, apparently scaring the visitor. The young man introduces himself as Leopold Bloom, an accountant. Suddenly, there is a knock at the door, with a voice claiming to be “Hold me. Touch me.” Max sends Leo to the bathroom, saying he needs to meet with the person at the door, an important investor. He then opens a cabinet to reveal dozens of framed photographs of little old ladies and rifles through the collection until he finds Hold Me-Touch Me’s photo and places it on the piano. Leo reappears from the bathroom, but Max hastily sends him back and opens the door to an old woman, who is inquiring about Max’s love. Max declares his love, while asking for a check, but the old lady refuses until Max plays a dirty game with her. Leo reappears, shocked, during the middle of the game.

As the old lady leaves, the two proceed to discuss Max’s books and Leo reveals his admiration for Max. Leo begins the accounting work, but goes into a panic attack as he tries to explain a discrepancy in the accounts. Hysterics ensue as Max attempts to calm him down. The two finally begin to discuss an error in the accounts for Max’s most recent production.

While adjusting the error, Leo speculates that a failed Broadway show could make much more money than a successful one. Interested, Max then attempts to convince Leo to help him develop a bad play, so that the two may raise money and escape following opening night. Leo is not sure, so Max sings a song about the possibilities, while Leo joins in with his doubts. Leo ultimately leaves Max’s office to return to the accounting firm.

Leo arrives back to a row of accountants singing about their unhappiness. The boss scolds Leo for arriving late and talks down on his position in the firm. Leo joins the accountants in singing about their unhappiness and drifts into a fantasy about his desire to be producer—causing him to quit his job at the accounting firm. Leo returns to Max’s office and informs him that he has changed his mind. The new business partners begin to sing about the possibilities and their new partnership.

Later, Max and Leo are reading scripts in the office. Leo complains about the number of scripts they have read, but they continue to browse for the worst script they can find. They are beginning to feel frustrated when Max discovers Springtime for Hitler. They set off to meet Franz Liebkind, the author.

Max and Leo find Franz on the rooftop of an apartment, where he is singing to himself about how much he misses Germany. Franz is startled and begins to explain his actions during World War II until Max explains their desire to produce his script. Franz is very excited, but refuses to sign a contract until Max and Leo join him in singing and dancing to Hitler’s favorite song. The producers reluctantly agree, but after the dance Franz still refuses to sign, this time citing the need for a

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pledge of allegiance to his beloved Fuhrer. The producers reluctantly agree once again and finally the contract is signed. As they prepare to leave, Franz warns them about breaking the oath.

Later that day, as Max and Leo enter the living room of Roger De Bris, a director, they are greeted by Carmen, Roger's common-law assistant. As Carmen goes to find Roger, Max explains that Roger is the worst director in town. Roger enters wearing a ball gown and causing Leo to stare. Max asks about Springtime for Hitler. While Roger enjoyed the script, he claims that it is too serious for him. Max convinces him that Springtime for Hitler would be a great opportunity for Roger to do something different. Plus, he could add his own touch to the show, lightening the mood. After consulting his production team, and being reminded of the possibility of the elusive Tony Award, Roger agrees to direct Springtime for Hitler.

Max and Leo are back at Max's office when Ulla, a gorgeous Swedish woman enters, asking to about casting. She offers to audition and sings a song about flaunting her beauty and Max and Leo give her a role in the play and a job as a secretary. When she leaves, Leo admits his strong feelings for her, but is brushed off by Max who is ready to find investors by romancing little old ladies looking for one last thrill. Leo exits the office, as Max begins to sing about the little old ladies.

The scene changes and we see "little old ladies" in a park singing about their desires when Max enters and begins to romance various ladies, including Hold Me-Touch Me. The ladies continue to sing their praises for Max, as he transitions back to a room with Leo. Having collected all the money, the two sing in celebration of their plan.

ACT II

Max and Leo enter the office; however it has been remodeled. Thinking they have gone in the wrong door, they quickly exit, but are called back by Ulla who has made all the changes. Max must go pay for the theatre, leaving Leo alone with Ulla. Ulla tells Leo that she likes him and Leo reciprocates the feelings, but begins to feel nervous. He goes into a song about how Ulla's face is dangerous for him. He begins to dance with Ulla and she joins in the song about her feelings for his face. Max renters and Ulla reminds the producers of their auditions and as the duo prepares to leave they both finish the song about Ulla's face.

On the stage of a Broadway Theatre, Carmen leads a stage full of dancing actors auditioning for the role of Hitler. Roger, Franz, Leo, Max, and Ulla are seated at a table. Roger stops the audition in order to see one Hitler at a time. Franz is disgusted when someone attempts to sing a German song and begins to sing the song himself. Following the song, Max leaps up and grants the part of Hitler to Franz.

Several weeks later, two usherettes are again wondering what the fate will be of Max Bialystock's latest show, as the first nighters enter the theatre. Meanwhile, Max and Leo prep for the beginning of the show with Ulla, Franz, Roger, and Carmen. Leo wishes everyone "good luck," as Roger, Carmen and Franz react by claiming that the phrase was in fact bad luck. They sing about the luck behind opening night. They end by instructing Leo to say break a leg and Franz runs off to begin the show, promptly tripping and breaking his leg. Fearing the idea of returning the money, Max suggests that Roger take Franz's role. Roger initially refuses, but is convinced by Carmen.

The play goes on and later back in the office, Max and Leo are reading newspapers, which to their surprise heralds Springtime for Hitler as a great success. The duo begins to sing, wondering "where did we go right?" As the song ends, Leo goes

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for the books and claims that he will be turning himself in to the authorities. Roger and Carmen enter to celebrate the success of the show, as does Franz who is angry that the group made a fool out of Hitler. He begins shooting wildly and the group disperses to various hiding places. Franz angrily aims the gun at himself, but it jams. Before Franz can leave, the police enter and Leo runs to hide. Franz, who refuses to be arrested, tries to run away, but falls and breaks his other leg. As the police spot the accounting books and arrest Max. Ulla enters the office, finding Leo behind the door. He tells her that he must go to jail with Max. Ulla suggests they take the money and go to Rio instead. Leo bursts into song, ultimately deciding to go to Rio.

Weeks later, a disheveled Max is in jail and counting on Leo to come rescue him when a guard brings him a postcard from Brazil. Max reads the postcard from Leo and begins to sing about being abandoned by his friend and their failed scheme.

A few days later, Max sits at the defendants table in a courtroom. A jury declares him guilty and the judge asks him if he would like to say anything on his own behalf. Max responds by claiming he has been a crook, but that he thought he had found a man who cared for him and was now feeling deserted. Suddenly, Leo and Ulla burst into the room. Leo begins to sing that Max had made his life better. The judge then sentences both men to five years in prison.

Even in prison, Leo and Max decide to keep working on theatre together, producing a new musical called "Prisoners of Love". A prison trustee enters with news that Max and Leo have been pardoned for bringing joy to the other prisoners through musical theatre. The set changes to be a Broadway version of the prison. As the cast leaves, Max and Leo are singing about the success they've finally achieved.