



# WALNUT STREET THEATRE



## Study Guide

## SHOW SYNOPSIS



Nurse Nellie Forbush of the U.S. Navy falls for middle-aged French plantation owner Emile De Becque, but recoils upon discovering that he's fathered two mixed-race children. When Nellie leaves him, the heartbroken Emile agrees to take on a dangerous espionage mission. In his absence, Nellie struggles to reconcile her prejudices with her love for him -- and after she spends time with his children and comes to care for them, fears that Emile may not return alive.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### BEFORE THE SHOW

- Has anyone ever been to a live play before? How was it different from television or a movie?
- What is the difference between a play and a musical?
- Have you ever seen the movie *South Pacific*?
- Have you ever felt judged because of your appearance or ethnicity?
- What does “prejudice” mean to you?

### AFTER THE SHOW

- Did you enjoy this performance? What was your favorite part?
- Who was your favorite character? Why?
- Why do you think it was so difficult for Nellie to look past her prejudices and love Emile’s children?
- What did this show teach you about World War II?
- What are examples of prejudices that exist in today’s society?



## THEATRE 101



### Ever wondered how to put on a play?

There are many different elements that go into putting a show up on its feet. Please review the following with your students:

**PLAYWRIGHT** The playwright writes the script.

**DIRECTOR** The director is in charge of orchestrating the entirety of the production. They lead the actors, designers, and production crew to put the show on its feet.

**COSTUME** What the actors wear during the show.

**SCENERY** Everything on stage (*except props*) used to represent the place at which action is occurring.

**PROPS** All physical items on stage with the exception of the scenery. This includes lamps, chairs, pens, paper, books, and more!

**LIGHTS** Stage lights illuminate the actors so that they look their best. The colors used, focus of the light, and amount of lighting can really set the mood and environment of a scene.

**SOUND** Everything that you hear during a performance that does not come from the actors.

**ACTORS** The actors are the people that perform the show onstage.

**AUDIENCE** The lucky people that get to watch the show. New to being an audience member? Follow these rules and you will be a natural!

### AUDIENCE RULES

- ◆ Unlike a movie, the actors are performing in front of you. They can see everything that you do. Talking, sleeping, poking your neighbor, or making noise during the performance distracts the actors and others around you.
- ◆ Don't bring electronics to the performance. The use of cell phones, cameras, computers, tablets, and video game devices are **not allowed**.
- ◆ Use your better judgment on when to laugh, clap, and/or cry during the performance. But don't forget to clap at the end of the show!
- ◆ Stay in your seat during the performance.
- ◆ Make sure you go to the bathroom *before* the show starts.

## WARM-UP: MAN OVERBOARD

In *South Pacific*, Nellie is a U.S. Navy nurse and many other characters are U.S. Marines. In this sailing-themed exercise, students will have the opportunity to get out of their seats, practice focus, and think quickly.

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Spread students out in a staggered line.
2. Designate someone to call out commands.
3. Commands include:

*'Land ahoy'* - everyone hops on one foot, doing a salute with one hand

*'Hit the deck'* - all down on the floor in a push-up position

*'Octopus'* - make groups of 2, flailing arms like tentacles

*'Man overboard'* - make groups of 2, one holds other on their back, piggy-back style

*'Two three hour'* - all sit down and start rowing

4. Whoever is last drops out. Repeat until all but one are out.

### VARIATION:

Instead of students getting out, have the "out" student make a funny noise instead of leaving the game, then add them back in!



## TRY IT YOURSELF!

### DIRECTIONS

Give students a chance to act out a scene from *South Pacific*. Before jumping into the performance, think about all of the elements that go into a play. Are there any props that we can use to help improve the scene? Where are the characters when this scene is taking place? What might the scenery look like?



## SAMPLE SCENE

**BILLIS:** Oh, beg your pardon

**NELLIE:** Oh, Luther, you really are a honey bun! These beautiful flowers! I needed someone to think of me tonight. I appreciate it, Luther—you don't know how much.

**BILLIS:** Miss Forbush, I would like you to know I consider you the most wonderful woman in the entire world—even including the fact that you're an officer and all. And I just can't go on being such a heel as to let you think I thought of you giving you those flowers.

**NELLIE:** But you did give them to me and I...

**BILLIS:** He's the card that came with them.

*Hands her a card.*

Are you all right, Miss Forbush? I'll be waiting around the area here in case you need me. *Exits.*

*Cable enters.*

**CABLE:** What's the matter, Nellie the nurse? Having diplomatic difficulties with France?

**NELLIE:** Joe Cable! Who let you out of the hospital?

**CABLE:** Me? I'm okay.

**NELLIE:** Joe! You're trying to get over to Bali Ha'i. That little girl you told me about!

**CABLE:** Liat. I've just seen her for the last time, I guess. I love her and yet I just heard myself saying I can't marry her. What's the matter with me, Nellie? What kind of guy am I, anyway?

**NELLIE:** You're all right. You're just far away from home. We're both so far from home.



## STUDENT WORKSHEET: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

### DISCUSSION

Musicals, plays, and movies typically end with a “happily ever after,” but what happens next? Nellie and Emile have finally figured out how to be together, while other characters were not lucky enough to end up with their true loves. Will Nellie and Emile stay happy? What is the fate of Liat and Bloody Mary?

### DIRECTIONS

- In the space below, write a short sequel for *South Pacific*.
- Think about each character and their motivations. How would these come into play in your sequel?

### LIKE THE SHOW? LET US KNOW!

Send letters or drawings to:  
Walnut Street Theatre  
ATTN: Education Department  
825 Walnut St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19107



A large, rounded rectangular area with horizontal lines for writing, intended for the student's response to the directions.

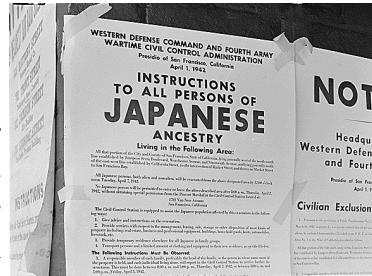
## A QUICK LOOK: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

### Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

(AAPI) trace their

roots through hundreds of global journeys and to many different lands, nations, and tribes. The “AAPI experience,” is diverse and often contested. The Asian American and Pacific Islander population in the United States and its territories/Empire, like throughout the Americas, is directly connected to European and American colonization and imperialism. Often, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are discussed together though they have very different historical roots and journeys. Like other diasporic groups, the journeys of Asians and their descendants in the Americas is linked to the histories of war, colonization, and economic exploitation that has undergirded world history for five centuries. Pacific Islanders, who trace their roots to the islands of Oceania including Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, Micronesia, and Polynesia, have historically faced colonization from European, American, and sometimes Asian forces.

The first people of Asian descent in the United States were thought to be sailors from the Philippines on Spanish boats who jumped ship in Louisiana in the 1700s. Starting in the late 1800s, migrants from China began to come to the West Coast due to increased aggression from the United States and Europe in China and the rumors of gold. These migrants faced violence from whites who drove Chinese people out of their towns and terrorized them with racial violence and destruction of their homes. They were followed by Japanese, Indian, Korean, and Filipino migrants who arrived in the U.S. and Hawaii from different circumstances but all to fulfill America’s desire for cheap labor. Indian and Chinese laborers, called “coolies” were also brought to work on the plantations in Hawaii and throughout the Caribbean.



In 1882, with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, Chinese were banned from immigrating to the United States. Japanese, Indian,

and Filipino migrations also started in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1898, the United States colonized the Philippines and it remained an American colony until 1943. Hawaii, Guam, and other Pacific islands also became American territory. After 1917, no person of Asian ancestry was allowed to enter the United States, except those of higher classes such as students, professionals, scientists, etc. Before 1952, no person of Asian ancestry could become a naturalized citizen of the United States. Wars and imperialism in Southeast Asia, Korea, and Japan generated new migrations of refugees, war brides, international adoptees, and others.



During World War II, over 110,000 Japanese Americans (2/3 of them American citizens) were relocated from their homes to internment camps throughout the West Coast. Deemed permanently alien and therefore, not capable of being trustworthy due to their race, Japanese Americans lost billions of dollars of property as they had to flee their homes and land.

<http://bmoreantracist.org/asian-american/>



# WALNUT STREET THEATRE

## BIOGRAPHY



Walnut Street Theatre has the unique distinction of being the oldest, continuously operating theatre in the English-speaking world, having served Philadelphia audiences for over 200 years!

Today, under the direction of Producing Artistic Director Bernard Havard, Walnut Street Theatre is in its 34th season as a self-producing, non-profit theatre company. Walnut Street Theatre continues to entertain and enlighten diverse audiences with high quality theatrical programming. With more than 50,000 subscribers, the Walnut is also the most subscribed theatre company in the world!

Last season, **172,000** children and adults were impacted by the Walnut's Education Programs: including our theatre school with classes for kids and adults, Camp Walnut, Our Touring Outreach Program to local schools and our artist in residency programs.

## WALNUT STREET THEATRE EDUCATION STAFF

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Thomas Quinn

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Ashley Kerns

### EDUCATION PROGRAMS ASSOCIATE

Patrick Shane

### EDUCATION PRODUCTION ASSOCIATE

Angie Confredo

### RESIDENT TEACHING ARTIST

Jasmine Hammond

### EDUCATION APPRENTICE

Amanda Pasquini

### ACTING APPRENTICES

Anne Bragg

Alexa Cepeda

Dana Orange

Austin Turner

### WEB

- **Walnut Street Theatre Touring Outreach Company**  
<https://walnutstreettheatre.org/education/outreach.php>
- **Creative Drama Lesson Plans**  
<http://www.childdrama.com/lessons.html>
- **Drama Games**  
<http://dramaresource.com/drama-games/>

## SOUTH PACIFIC Creative Team

### DIRECTOR

Charles Abbott

### CHOREOGRAPHY

Michelle Gaudette

### MUSIC

Richard Rogers

### LYRICS

Oscar Hammerstein II

### BOOK

Oscar Hammerstein & Joshua Logan

### BASED ON THE BOOK BY

James Michener



## About the Rogers and Hammerstein

After long and highly distinguished careers with other collaborators, Richard Rodgers (composer, 1902-79) and Oscar Hammerstein II (librettist/lyricist, 1895-1960) joined forces in 1943 to create the most consistently fruitful and successful partnership in the American musical theatre. OKLAHOMA!, the first Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, was also the first of a new genre, the musical play, blending Rodgers' sophisticated style of musical comedy (which he had perfected in a twenty-five year partnership with lyricist Lorenz Hart) with Hammerstein's innovations in operetta (conceived in collaboration with such composers as Sigmund Romberg, Vincent Youmans, Rudolf Friml and Jerome Kern.) OKLAHOMA! was followed by CAROUSEL (1945), ALLEGRO (1947), SOUTH PACIFIC (1949), THE KING AND I (1951), ME AND JULIET (1953), PIPE DREAM (1955), FLOWER DRUM SONG (1958) and THE SOUND OF MUSIC (1959). The team also wrote one movie musical, STATE FAIR (1945; adapted to the stage, 1995), and one for television, CINDERELLA (1957). Collectively, their musicals have garnered dozens of awards including: Pulitzer Prizes; Tonys, Oscars, Emmys, and Grammys; and Drama Desk, Drama Critics' Circle, Outer Critics' Circle, Laurence Olivier, and Evening Standard Awards.