

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

AN AMERICAN CLASSIC
Nov 21–Dec 30



IRVING BERLIN'S HOLIDAY INN

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Based on the film from UNIVERSAL PICTURES
Music and Lyrics by IRVING BERLIN,
Book by GORDON GREENBERG AND CHAD HODGE
Choreographed by DENIS JONES,
Directed by GORDON GREENBERG

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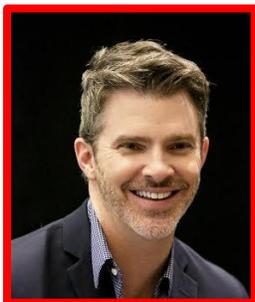
CREATIVE TEAM



GORDON GREENBERG (Director, Coauthor) directed and cowrote the Broadway stage adaptation of *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn* (Roundabout/Universal, PBS's *Great Performances*) and directed the acclaimed West End revival of *Guys and Dolls*, which starred Rebel Wilson and received six Olivier Award nominations (Savoy Theatre, Chichester Festival Theatre). Recent/current work includes *The Heart of Rock & Roll* (Old Globe); *Barnum* (Chocolate Factory, London); *Terms of Endearment* starring Alfred Molina, Calista Flockhart, and Constance Wu (Geffen); cowriting/directing *The Secret of My Success* (Universal Stage Productions); directing *Dietrich: Piaf* (Mirvish, Toronto); writing the new book for *Meet Me in St. Louis* (Muny); cowriting/directing *Mystic Pizza* (MGM/Araca); cowriting *Port Au Prince* (New Group); cowriting/directing *Ebenezer Scrooge's Big (Your Town Here) Christmas Show* (Bucks County, Old Globe); cowriting/directing *The Curious Case of the Curse of Count Dracula* (Maltz); and cowriting original movie musicals for the Disney Channel and Nickelodeon. Other credits: *Jacques Brel...* (Drama Desk, Drama League, Outer Critics nominations), *Working* (Drama Desk), Disney's *Tangled*. Paper Mill: *The Baker's Wife*, *Pirates!*, *1776*, *Happy Days*. Regional: Williamstown, Muny, Goodspeed, Huntington, Signature, Dallas Theater Center, NY Stage and Film, Philadelphia Theatre Company. Education: Stanford, NYU, RADA. Member, SDC, WGA, The Dramatists Guild. Co-Artistic Director, Broadway Teaching Group. Artistic Associate, New Group.



CHAD HODGE (Coauthor) co-created and was showrunner and executive producer of TNT's drama *Good Behavior*. He also created and executive produced *Wayward Pines* on Fox. In addition, he created NBC's *The Playboy Club* and the CW's *Runaway*. His film projects include *The Darkest Minds* for 20th Century Fox, based on the *New York Times* bestselling trilogy by Alexandra Bracken, which was released in August 2018, and *Anita*, about notorious singer and orange juice spokeswoman Anita Bryant. Hodge grew up in Chicago and graduated magna cum laude from Northwestern University. He lives in Los Angeles.



DENIS JONES (Choreographer). Paper Mill Playhouse: *Mary Poppins*, *Honeymoon in Vegas*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Damn Yankees*, *The Full Monty*, *High School Musical*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*. Broadway: *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn* (Tony Award nomination for best choreography), *Honeymoon in Vegas*. Other recent credits: *How to Succeed...* (Kennedy Center); *Hey, Look Me Over!* and *Paint Your Wagon* (NY City Center Encores!); *Crazy for You* (Signature—Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Choreography); *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Goodspeed); *The Wiz* and *42nd Street* (Muny—St. Louis Theater Circle Award for Outstanding Choreography); *Moonshine: That Hee-Haw Musical* (Dallas Theater Center); *A Funny Thing...Forum* (Two River/Williamstown). Upcoming: *Tootsie*.

"If the traffic noise affects you like a squeaky violin. Kick your cares down the stairs and come to Holiday Inn."

~ Lyrics from "Holiday Inn" from IRVING BERLIN'S HOLIDAY INN ~

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HOLIDAY INN - PRODUCTION HISTORY



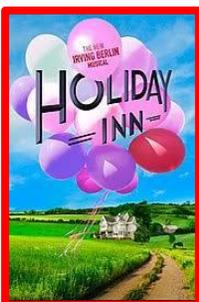
The musical *Holiday Inn* is based off the 1942 Paramount film, which was released right in the heart of World War II. The idea for the film began 10 years earlier after Irving Berlin wrote the hit song "Easter Parade" for his Broadway revue *As Thousands Cheer*. He had an idea to create a revue based on major holidays. Working with director Mark Sandrich, they worked on a story about an inn that was only open on holidays. While Berlin's original concept was to debunk the holiday spirit, there was a larger cultural shift happening from Depression-era cynicism into wartime patriotism. Berlin made *Holiday Inn* into a sincerer celebration of American holidays. With Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire onboard, the movie was set up to be a massive success.

The film was shot from November 1941 through January 1942 on the Russian River in Northern California. It premiered on August 4, 1942 and was an instant sensation, becoming one of the highest grossing musical films of its era. It received 3 Academy Award nominations, with Berlin taking home a Best Original Song Oscar for "White Christmas." This song was the bestselling single in history until 1997 when Elton John's "Candle in the Wind" eclipsed it.



While the film has a very theatrical format, it wasn't until Director/Co-Author Gordon Greenberg talked with Chris of the film's story, they had a lot of potential to build out the story for even more humor and heart. One of the biggest changes Gordon and cowriter Chad Hodge made was to move the story forward to the late 1940s, post-World War II.

One of the benefits of developing the stage adaptation was the world premiere happened up at Goodspeed Musicals in Connecticut. This placed the production within the area of New England where the musical is set. The new adaptation reimagined the story, adding some more characters, storylines, and more hit Irving Berlin songs. The new song additions included "Cheek to Cheek," "Blue Skies," "Steppin' Out With My Baby," and "Heat



Wave."

Two years after its world premiere at Goodspeed Musicals, it opened on Broadway on October 6, 2016. The production featured stand out choreography by Denis Jones, who received a Tony nomination for his work. Paper Mill's production features this same Tony nominated choreography and Gordon Greenberg's direction!

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IRVING BERLIN



Irving Berlin was born Israel Baline in May 1888 in a small village near Siberia, Russia. His family was forced to leave Russia soon after he was born due to violent pogroms, which they escaped by setting sail for New York City in 1893. They settled in the Lower East Side and a few years later, his father died, leaving his mother to care for eight children alone.

Berlin eventually left school to sell newspapers and when he couldn't make ends meet would stay on the streets.

He eventually started getting jobs as a singer and when he started working at the Pelham Café, he began composing original songs. As his work moved beyond cafes, he started writing lyrics for a publishing firm called Waterson and Snyder. He caught his big break in 1911 with the song "Alexander's Ragtime Band," which became an international hit. His newfound fame brought him to write his first musical revue *Watch Your Step*. In 1917, just as his career was taking off, he was drafted into the US Army. He ended up writing songs for the troops, many of which are still used today.



When he returned from the war, Berlin set up the Irving Berlin Music Corporation, a savvy move so that he would retain the copyrights for all of his work. Berlin's career was filled writing thousands of songs for numerous Broadway musicals, 12 classic Hollywood movie musicals, as well as contributed to many revues. He was regarded as having one of the most prolific careers in the history of American music. Some of his most famous songs include "God Bless America", "Blue Skies", and "There's No Business Like Show Business."

What made his talent so remarkable was that he was never able to fully read or write music. Instead, he would pick out a tune on a piano and he relied on the help of secretaries who transcribed his tunes as he played them. With his unique composing technique, his music always pointed towards the masses and he prided himself on writing accessible music.



SHOWBOAT composer Jerome Kern (see picture on left) famously said of Irving Berlin, "Irving Berlin has no place in American music. He is American music."

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As a businessman, one of his other legacies was that he created the Music Box Theatre on Broadway in 1921. Berlin wrote many of his revues for this theatre, which is still in operation today as the home for the musical *Dear Evan Hansen*. He also co-founded ASCAP, the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, an organization that controlled the publication of music in order to protect composers' rights.



During his lifetime, Berlin was awarded the Army Medal of Merit in 1945 by President Truman, the Congressional Gold Medal by President Eisenhower in 1954, and the Freedom Medal by President Ford in 1977.

Outside of his work, he was a very private man. His first wife Dorothy Goetz passed away a few months after their wedding from typhoid fever. He remarried a decade later to Ellin Mackay, whom he'd be with for 62 years until her death in 1988. He left the limelight after 1962 and passed away in 1989 at the age of 101.

POST WORLD WAR II LIFE



One of the biggest choices the stage adapters of *Holiday Inn* made was to move the story to after World War II. By moving it to start in August 1946, the story was able to utilize the optimism of a new American future to fuel the idea of creating this inn for celebration (*see picture on left*).

WWII transformed the United States' economy for the better, taking the country out of a more than decade's long depression. When the US entered the war at the end of 1941, the army required a coordinated national effort to manufacture and transport more goods and supplies than ever before. The federal government, which had become a strong economic force during the Great Depression, created "mobilization agencies" that directed the production of industries and imposed wage controls and price ceilings to limit inflation. As millions of men went into the military, the manufacturing industry was opened to women and African-Americans for the first time. Due to the war, unemployment went from 24% in 1932, to 10% by 1941, to 1.2% in 1944.

The post-war years were a time of adjustment in the United States, as the nearly 16 million men and 350,000 women who had served in the military returned home and wartime government regulation of the nation's economy ended.

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In June 1944, President Roosevelt (*left*) signed the G.I. Bill into law (*right*). The bill was designed to help returning servicemen and women transition into civilian life by providing loan guarantees for the purchase of housing, farms, or businesses and paying for veterans' college, vocational, and technical



education. Millions used this opportunity to study for their next career and set up a generation of college graduates that became innovators in their fields and important members of their communities. The G.I. Bill's loan guarantee made homeownership possible for millions of veterans, spurring growth in the suburbs. There was a spike in marriages that led to a baby boom.

During the war, all Americans made sacrifices to their daily lives. Rationing food was required, which made home cooks have to meticulously plan their meals. Drivers were forced to drive slower as to not wear down their tires. Due to fabric shortages, nylon and silk stockings were unavailable as the troops used them for parachutes and ropes. These every day sacrifices made a real impact and the nation rallied around the idea of created a post war America that was worth that sacrifice.

HOLIDAY INN DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After you see the show and read this study guide, use these prompts to start a discussion with your students and peers.

- 1) *HOLIDAY INN* is a movie and a musical. If you have seen the movie version, how does it compare to the musical? Are there elements that work better on screen rather than on stage or vice versa?
- 2) Explain how love, or the idea of love, complicates the plot of *HOLIDAY INN*.
- 3) Irving Berlin, an immigrant from Russia, wrote "God Bless America." Why do you think he wrote this song? What legacy has it created and how does that legacy apply to today's society?
- 4) What other Irving Berlin songs do you know? How do they make you feel?

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