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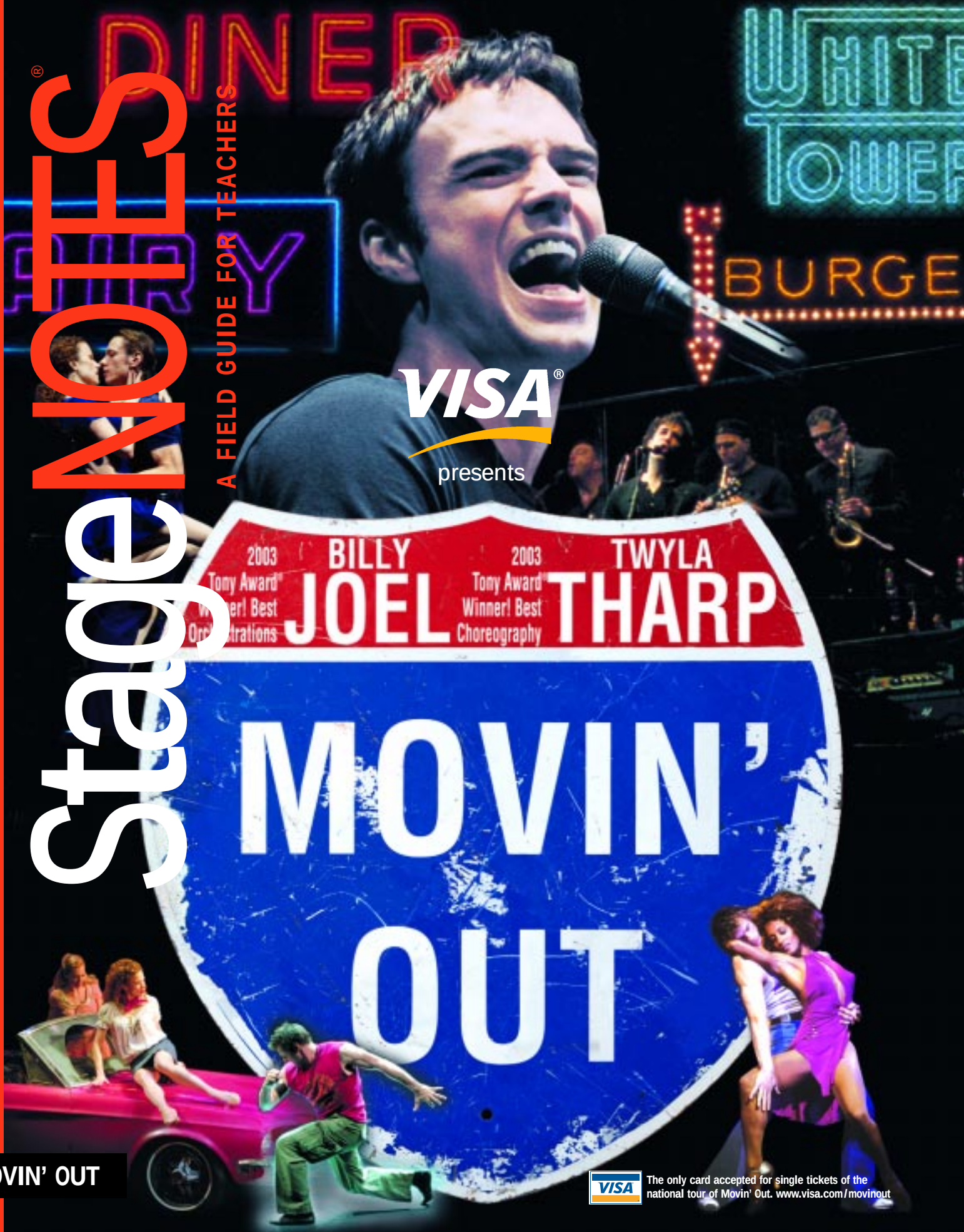
A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



MOVIN' OUT

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Camp Broadway LLC
145 West 45th Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10036
Telephone: (212) 575-2929
Facsimile: (212) 575-3125
Email: info@campbroadway.com
www.campbroadway.com

StageNOTES®

A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

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JOEL THARP

MOVIN' OUT

Letter from the Producer

Forget everything you've been told.

What do you think a Broadway musical should look like? What do you think it should sound like?

Forget what you know about dance — or even what you supposedly don't know. What do you think is good music for a ballet? What is appropriate subject matter?

The choreographer Twyla Tharp has given some surprising answers to those last two questions. In 1973, she choreographed a dance, Little Deuce Coupe, to music of the Beach Boys. Later she worked with David Byrne, the founder of the '80s band Talking Heads, another innovator. Now, Twyla Tharp, one of the great creative artists of our time, has come up with some amazing answers to those first two questions.

A Broadway musical can look like a rock concert that tells a story with dancers. It can look like a ballet that has working class kids going off to war. It can look like your favorite Broadway show, but with dialogue that comes from bodies, not from mouths.

And what should a Broadway musical sound like? How about a rock album? What if, instead of writing songs to fit characters, someone took a bunch of rock songs by one person and created characters from them? What if a musical spoke with the voice of that one person, finding in his songs the story of his generation?

What if the story of his generation were, in some way, the story of your generation?

And what if your generation rewrote the book on musical theater? Or the book on dance or rock or rap or movies or quantum physics or politics or life in general? We don't want you to come see *Movin' Out* so that you can go off and do something like it. We want you to see *Movin' Out* so you'll start thinking about what you're going to do differently — whatever your interests are. Because you will rewrite the book. So you might as well be ready.

Of course, we also want you to have a great time. That pretty much transcends generations.

So keep the faith. Fight the fire. And search for something you'll never lose.

Welcome to *Movin' Out*.

Elizabeth Parkinson and company

Synopsis

Musical? Ballet? Social commentary? Hey, "It's Still Rock and Roll to Me"!! *Movin' Out* bursts onstage to Billy Joel's throbbing 1980 hit. The dancers' bodies declare that, whatever they do, they'll do it a thousand percent, to a big, loud beat.

So — you remember Brenda and Eddie from "Scenes from an Italian Restaurant"? ("Bottle of red, bottle of white," etc.?) Well, it's Long Island in the '60s and Brenda and Eddie are king and queen of the prom — the kind of moment you think will last forever. Except it doesn't. Eddie's an angry young man who doesn't treat his girl right, so she ends up in the arms of Tony. Meanwhile, sweethearts James and Judy are ready to get married.

But the times they are a-changing. The kids' friendly neighborhood cop becomes a drill sergeant who puts the boys in line and takes them off to Vietnam. There, to the manic pulse of "We Didn't Start the Fire," the boys from middle America become damaged and disillusioned men. Eddie will come home angrier than ever. Tony will come home unable to relate to Brenda. And James, like so many of his generation, will come home in a box. The grieving Judy gets just a neatly folded flag. Act One — of the play and of our heroes' lives — is suddenly over.

Back home, shell-shocked, misunderstood, and rejected, the vets drift. Like many of life's throwaways, Eddie turns to drugs, accompanied by the bitter, ironic words of "Captain Jack." He flashes back to Southeast Asia, imagining Judy as his guide. The music is the long, heartrending march of "Goodnight Saigon" (a song, it's interesting to note, that has no chorus).

Brenda and Tony meet again, and, during an intimate duet danced to "Shameless," rediscover the love underneath.

Eddie has a real encounter with Judy, just jogging in the park. Her acceptance and forgiveness allow him to integrate his past and his anger into his life in the present and to move on. Though he remains essentially a loner, his life is now on track, perhaps for the first time.

Finally the whole gang — except for James — reunites. One way or another, each has found his or her way home.

VISA presents

BILLY JOEL TWYLA THARP MOVIN' OUT

The Synergy of the Creators: Billy Joel and Twyla Tharp

Billy Joel wasn't surprised when, a few years ago, he got a call from someone interested in turning his songs into a musical. He'd received many similar requests in the past, but had never paid serious attention to them. The earlier ideas had all been "cornball," in Joel's own words, full of clichés. Producers once wanted to make a drama out of his song "Piano Man," for example. But this time the caller was one of New York's preeminent choreographers, and her plan to turn his tracks into an innovative dance piece caught Joel's attention.

Billy Joel and Twyla Tharp had never met at the time she made that phone call, and the two would seem an unlikely duo. Joel is a pop star from a suburban, middle-class Long Island background. He'd played plenty of live concerts, but he'd never been involved in the dance or theater worlds. Tharp is a member of the dance world's aristocracy and the director of a cutting edge dance company. What the two share, however, is a sharp eye for presenting stories in new and unique ways.

Tharp's interest in Joel's music dates back to the 1970s, when she was attracted to the energy of his melodies. She'd been dancing to his tunes in her studio for years when her son, who is also the general manager of her dance group, finally suggested that she create a work based on Joel's music. She loved the idea and had a hunch that the songs, filled with emotional stories and specific characters, would work perfectly. But before approaching the songwriter with her plan, Tharp wanted to be certain.

She gathered six dancers, all of whom who would later lead the Broadway cast, and choreographed a handful of the songs. She videotaped them, tracked Joel down through his agent, and invited him to her apartment to watch the tape. Immediately after watching the performance he agreed to the project. He was moved when he saw his imaginary, song-based characters come to life. The next day he sent Tharp a package which contained recordings of all his songs — as well as permission to use whichever ones she chose.

Tharp set to work writing a storyline that would encompass the full scope of his music, from the 1970s through the '90s. While she was conceiving the plot, she asked Joel only one question. Did Brenda and Eddie, the couple from his song "Scenes from an Italian Restaurant," talk to each other in the years after their breakup? Joel didn't know. He had never imagined what happened to these characters after they graduated from high school, and he gave Tharp the freedom to invent full lives for them.

She was eager to bring not just these characters, but a whole era of American history to life. She researched the period, watched Vietnam War documentaries, and even looked at the classical depictions of war in the The Iliad. Then she worked out the detailed choreography and began rehearsing the show. Tharp and Joel agreed from the start that he shouldn't be a part of this process. Tharp was taking his music and turning it into something new, something her own, and she had his blessing.

Joel did offer a few bits of advice from afar. While in Las Vegas, he'd heard a young pianist and singer, Michael Cavanaugh, play some of his tunes. He suggested Cavanaugh as the piano player and vocalist for the show. It was also important to Joel that the band be a real rock band, accustomed to playing his gritty style of music, and he helped hire some of the band members.

Joel was in the audience for *Movin' Out*'s opening night of previews in Chicago, where the show debuted with a pre-Broadway run. He was awed by the performance. He gave Tharp some minor critical comments afterward (he wanted Brenda's character to be softer and thought

certain scenes could be clearer) which she eagerly incorporated as the show evolved. Overall, however, he's been thrilled, and even compared seeing the show to watching a child get married, watching something you love grow into a larger, wholly independent entity. Sitting in the audience at *Movin' Out*, Billy Joel has seen compositions that he wrote dozens of years ago take on new, greater meaning.

Joel continues to follow the play, stopping by rehearsals and occasionally catching performances. And here's the true sign of his approval: the concert-playing, bar-singing Long Island boy is now talking about writing a Broadway musical that's all his own.

VISA presents

JOEL THARP MOVIN' OUT

The History in *Movin' Out*

In the beginning, there was World War II. Many Americans called it "the Good War." They agreed that Germany and Japan's aggressive expansionism had to be stopped. The American soldiers who fought and won World War II were universally hailed as heroes. They belong to what recently has been called "The Greatest Generation."

America did more than win World War II. The wartime economy pulled the country out of the Great Depression of the 1930s, and the War was followed by the greatest economic expansion in United States history up to that time. In the late 1940s and 1950s, the American suburbs grew and prospered — suburbs like Levittown, New York, where William Martin Joel was born in 1949. Twyla Tharp was born in 1941, the same year the United States entered World War II.

American prosperity grew into the 1950s, but that decade also had a dark side: the Cold War with the Soviet Union, and the fear of encroaching Communism and nuclear conflict. In an attempt to contain Communism, the U.S. fought the Korean War in the early '50s. That war ended in a stalemate, while the next fight against Communism was already beginning in French Indochina, also known as Vietnam. There, the Red Chinese backed a Communist regime in North Vietnam, which threatened to take over a more democratic South Vietnam.

Meanwhile, many U.S. citizens had problems closer to home. In the 1950s, African Americans were still denied basic rights and daily faced the threat of violence, especially if they spoke up for those rights.

The 1950s and early 1960s saw a number of landmark civil-rights protests by African Americans, and by some whites. Some of these protests produced important legislative victories. Almost all initially produced violence, and even death.

Then, the election of President John F. Kennedy in 1960 seemed to promise a new era for America. The charismatic young President spoke of going to the Moon, and suggested that we ask not what our country could do for us, but what we could do for our country. Many idealistic young people heeded this call, joining the Peace Corps or the civil-rights movement. But Kennedy's assassination on November 22, 1963, not only put the country in mourning; it seemed to throw us into turmoil. Over the next few years civil-rights protests escalated, as did U.S. involvement in Vietnam.

Era of Upheaval and Change: 1960–1973

	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
	Sit-in at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, NC that refuses to serve blacks	Freedom Rides: a national campaign to enforce the ban on segregation of interstate US travel.	United States Federal Marshals escort the first black student at the University of Mississippi. Two students die in the ensuing riots. 12,000 U.S. "military advisors" in South Vietnam.	Birmingham, Alabama: protest marchers are met by police and dogs. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., arrested and put in Southside Jail. At the March on Washington, Dr. King delivers his "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial. President Kennedy assassinated in Dallas.	North Vietnamese patrol boats allegedly attack an American destroyer. U.S. starts pre-planned bombings of North Vietnam.	Civil-rights leader Malcolm X assassinated in New York City. Selma, Alabama: State troopers attack protesters with tear gas and batons. Dr. King later leads a successful march from Selma to Montgomery.	Number of U.S. troops in Vietnam rises to 400,000; 500,000 the next year.
Twyla	Twyla Tharp arrives in New York, as a student at Barnard College.			Twyla Tharp joins the Paul Taylor Dance Company.		Tharp leaves Paul Taylor to start her own company.	
Billy					Billy Joel, age fifteen, joins his first band, the Echoes.		

Vietnam would soon tear at the social fabric of the United States. As the war escalated and began to seem futile, many young people, not understanding why they had to go to war or what they were supposed to be dying for, marched and protested and burned their draft cards. Some protests turned violent. The protesters' vehemence angered and confused their parents, who had gone willingly to and served bravely in World War II. To these heroes of an earlier generation, the youth of the 1960s sounded spoiled and shrill. Some young people protested more than the deaths and the deceptions involved in Vietnam. Some protested the older generation's entire way of life. "Tune in, turn on, drop out" became the slogan of a youth culture involved not only in protest, but in drugs and in a general overthrow of their parents' values.

Civil rights protests, too, would turn from righteous to rageful after the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in the spring of 1968. And other groups rose up, too. Women, gays, and lesbians were demanding equal rights and fair treatment. Now the slogan was "Burn, baby, burn!" Burn what? Everything, it seemed. And still the war in Southeast Asia dragged on, with reports of civilians slaughtered by American troops, and an escalating American body count, given by anchorman Walter Cronkite each evening at the top of the CBS Evening News.

We did finally get to the Moon, on July 20, 1969. We did finally see important gains in civil rights and social recognition for oppressed minorities. And we did finally broker something like peace in Vietnam, in January 1973. That spring American troops began to come home — to places like Levittown — though many were still not certain why they had gone in the first place.

"The Sixties" were finally over.

Or were they?

Not all Vietnam veterans reintegrated easily into society. Some withdrew, emotionally scarred. Others had become physically disabled. Some that took pride in their service were nonetheless haunted over the years by certain memories and accusations. Resentment over the war would be passed to members of a new generation, and the mistrust of that generation would be fueled by continuing injustices suffered by minorities and women.

What is the role in American society of the soldier, the housewife, the young man from the projects? What must a president do when hostile forces threaten American interests and values? How must we react when we pass a man on a street corner asking for change with a sign that says "Vietnam Veteran"? How can we still love and build families in such a world? How can we write songs and make dances?

For we still do. Songs and dances may not stop war or prejudice. But they can illuminate the confused feelings of those who suffer. They can give hope and meaning and insight.

They can give us reasons to keep going and to try again.

1967

The National Organization for Women (NOW) becomes the first national organization to call for the legalization of abortion.

1968

Tet Offensive: Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army assault U.S. positions. More than 500 Vietnamese civilians die at My Lai.

Assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Riots threaten American cities.

Two months later, Robert F. Kennedy, the late president's brother, and himself a candidate for the presidency, is assassinated.

First national women's liberation conference in Lake Villa, Illinois.

1969

Police raid Manhattan's Stonewall Inn. Patrons fight back, setting off three days of riots and giving birth to the modern gay-rights movement.

1970

Students at Kent State University in Ohio protest the bombing of Cambodia. The National Guard kills four students.

1971

Shirley Chisholm, Betty Friedan, Bella Abzug, Gloria Steinem, and others help found the National Women's Political Caucus.


Gloria Steinem

1972

U.S. troop withdrawal from South Vietnam begins. Some returning soldiers report being spit on and called "Nazis" or "baby killers." Many have difficulties readjusting to civilian life.

1973

The Nixon administration is accused of covering up a break-in at Democratic headquarters at the Watergate Hotel in Washington. The scandal will lead to Nixon's resignation the following year.

Tharp premieres Deuce Coupe, choreographed to music of the Beach Boys.

Joel quits the Echoes to form the Hassles with a friend.

1971 Joel writes "Captain Jack."

1972 Joel signs his first recording contract, takes a "temporary gig" at an L.A. piano bar. The experience will inspire his hit "Piano Man."

1973 Columbia releases Joel's first album, Piano Man.

VISA presents

JOEL THARP MOVIN' OUT

A Closer Look at

Movin' Out enters dark territory in the middle of Act I, when the Vietnam War invades the stage to the hard-rock pulse of Billy Joel's "We Didn't Start the Fire." Twyla Tharp uses the angry, passionate hit from Joel's Storm Front album to portray jungle fighting; James's death in combat; and the fear, disorientation, and disillusionment that overcome Eddie and Tony.

Young people in the 1950s and 1960s witnessed many fires — literally. They saw fires in western deserts and on Pacific atolls, as the U.S. tested ever bigger nuclear bombs; they saw fires in the jungles and villages of Vietnam; they saw fires on college and university campuses where student protesters bombed buildings, and in a Birmingham, Alabama, church where a bomb planted by white supremacists killed four black girls.

Children of the 1960s didn't understand why they should be caught up in these fires, that is, why they should pay the price for a frenzy of violence, prejudice, and hypocrisy they didn't start.

At first, the lyrics of "We Didn't Start the Fire" seem like a straightforward statement of that frustration. The verses simply list prominent people and events of the post–World War II era, starting with the year of Joel's birth (1949), and coming up to the year of the song (1989). Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin is mentioned, as are many incidents from the civil-rights battles and the Vietnam War. ("We Didn't Start the Fire" is a good example of a "list poem.")

Then Joel kicks in with the chorus:

We didn't start the fire
It was always burning,
Since the world's been turning.
We didn't start the fire
Well we didn't light it,
But we tried to fight it.

Simple enough. But look closely. Many protesters in the 1960s turned on the older generation, saying, "It's your fault!" Joel doesn't do this. He notes that the fire has always been burning "since the world's been turning." He absolves his own generation, and absolves past generations as well. To borrow the title of another Joel song, we are all "only human." We inherit prejudice. We get caught up in our parents' battles and try to win them. We may in part succeed, but we will also in part fail. And we'll pass the conflagration — at least part of it — on to our children. As Joel says, ". . .when we are gone / It will still burn on, and on, and on, and on . . ."

Take a look, too, at the verses of "We Didn't Start the Fire." If you haven't heard the song in a while, you may remember it as being all about catastrophes like Vietnam and AIDS, and abusers of power such as Stalin, Nixon, and Communist witch-hunter Joe McCarthy. But this is not the case. Fifties chanteuse Doris Day is in there. The great conductor Toscanini is there, as is Prokofiev, the composer of Peter and the Wolf. (Remember Joel's aspirations as a classical composer, fulfilled on his 2001 CD Fantasies and Delusions, some of which is heard in *Movin' Out*.) Joel includes Elvis, *The Catcher in the Rye*, Buddy Holly, Ernest Hemingway, Lawrence of Arabia and many more artists and works of art in "We Didn't Start the Fire."

So perhaps the fire is also a creative fire. Elvis started a fire — of which Billy Joel became a part. (Joel in his teens tried on a number of musical styles, including the psychedelic sound of Jimi Hendrix.) But if the fire is creative, what about the line that says Joel's generation tried to fight it? Fighting a tyrant like Stalin is understandable, but why should we fight artistic heroes like Elvis and Hemingway?

Younger artists honor older ones. In 2003, we have Lil' Kim saying, "The best rapper's still B.I.G, " referring to the late artist, Biggie Smalls, the Notorious B.I.G. But younger artists also dream of outdoing previous generations. On his 2003 debut CD, rapper 50 Cent promises, "when I die my art will be worth more than Picasso's." (Coincidentally, the song is called "The Good Die Young.")

In younger artists' minds, older artists may be linked to outmoded political systems and social values. Many members of Joel's generation scorned all-American Doris Day as a symbol of the tidy, conformist 1950s — just as in 2000, rap artist Eminem declared, "I'm anti-Backstreet and Ricky Martin."

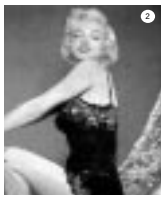
By 1969, the year of the original Woodstock festival, even Elvis seemed irrelevant — which could explain why Joel was instead emulating Hendrix. "Tune in, turn on, drop out." Buddy who? Twyla Tharp started out in Paul Taylor's company, and then went off to found her own company. Or, we might say, start her own fire.

We hope that what we have said about this song fuels some "fires" — that is, some discussions — in your classroom. Maybe it will inspire you to write some poems or songs of your own. If it does inspire you, though, don't give us the credit. These issues aren't new. They've been always burning since the world's been turning.

We Didn't Start the Fire

How many people and events do you know from "We Didn't Start the Fire"?

If you're curious, a good place to start would be http://uploader.wuerzburg.de/gym-fkg/schule/fachber/englisch/joel/songtext.html. Each item is presented as a link to a short history. Brush up on Panmunjom, Prokofiev, hula hoops, Bernie Goetz, and more. Or, you can start a discussion with your class about what people, places, and things you would put in a song about your lifetime.



"We Didn't Start the Fire"

[1949]
Harry Truman, Doris Day, Red China, Johnnie Ray
South Pacific, Walter Winchell, Joe DiMaggio [1]

[1950]
Joe McCarthy, Richard Nixon, Studebaker, television
North Korea, South Korea, Marilyn Monroe [2]

[1951]
Rosenbergs, H-bomb, Sugar Ray, Panmunjom
Brando, The King and I and The Catcher in the Rye

[1952]
Eisenhower, vaccine, England's got a new queen
Marciano, Liberace, Santayana good bye

CHORUS
We didn't start the fire
It was always burning
Since the world's been turning
We didn't start the fire
No we didn't light it
But we tried to fight it

[1953]
Joseph Stalin, Malenkov, Nasser and Prokofiev
Rockefeller, Campanella, Communist Bloc

[1954]
Roy Cohn, Juan Peron, Toscanini, Dacron
Dien Bien Phu falls, "Rock Around the Clock"

[1955]
Einstein, James Dean, Brooklyn's got a winning team
Davy Crockett, Peter Pan, Elvis Presley, Disneyland

[1956]
Bardot, Budapest, Alabama, Krushchev
Princess Grace, Peyton Place, trouble in the Suez

CHORUS

[1957]
Little Rock, Pasternak, Mickey Mantle, Kerouac
Sputnik, Chou En-Lai, Bridge on the River Kwai [3]

[1958]
Lebanon, Charles de Gaulle, California baseball
Starkweather, homicide, children of thalidomide

[1959]
Buddy Holly, Ben-Hur, space monkey, Mafia
Hula hoops, Castro [4], Edsel is a no-go

[1960]
U-2, Syngman Rhee, payola and Kennedy
Chubby Checker, Psycho, Belgians in the Congo

CHORUS

[1961]
Hemingway, Eichmann, Stranger in a Strange Land
Dylan, Berlin, Bay of Pigs invasion

[1962]
Lawrence of Arabia, British Beatlemania
Ole Miss, John Glenn, Liston beats Patterson

[1963]
Pope Paul, Malcolm X, British politician sex
JFK, blown away, what else do I have to say?

CHORUS

[1964–1989]
Birth control, Ho Chi Minh, Richard Nixon back again
Moonshot, Woodstock, Watergate, punk rock
Begin, Reagan, Palestine, terror on the airline
Ayatollah's in Iran [5], Russians in Afghanistan

Wheel of Fortune, Sally Ride, heavy metal, suicide
Foreign debts, homeless vets, AIDS, crack, Bernie Goetz
Hypodermics on the shores, China's under martial law
Rock and roller cola wars, I can't take it anymore

CHORUS

We didn't start the fire
But when we are gone
It will still burn on, and on, and on, and on . . .

Storytelling in Music The Roots of Pop Music and Billy Joel's Influences

As a child living in Hicksville, New York, Billy Joel was immediately drawn to music. He began studying classical piano when he was four years old and founded his own rock band when he was fourteen.

His parents were already divorced at that time, and he saw music not just as an artistic outlet, but also as a way to help his mother pay the bills. While still in junior high school, he started performing professionally, in the evenings after the school day was out.

Joel decided to pursue a real career in music after he saw the Beatles perform on TV's *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1964. The young British foursome (John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr) was already an international sensation when they came to the United States that year. Their sound was fresh and new. Their songs had upbeat melodies, complicated artistic layers, and lyrics that caught their listener's imagination. The band members themselves boasted exuberant, magnetic personalities and were clean-cut enough to appeal to both their targeted teenaged fans and also the parents of those fans. The Beatles' early works focused on stories of love and yearning, like many of Joel's earliest songs.


Sam Cooke


Ray Charles

Joel continues to cite the Beatles as one of his first influences, and also names a few other mid–twentieth century innovators, including Ray Charles. Critics often call Ray Charles a soul singer, but his music spans all of pop music's genres. He burst onto the music scene in the 1950s and revolutionized the industry with a sound that blends the blues with jazz, gospel, traditional ballads, rock, and even country music. He plays piano and saxophone with infectious energy. At a time when record companies insisted that musicians choose one style, they argued that audiences wanted a performer who could be easily labeled. Ray Charles refused to be categorized. As he once explained, "Look, let's face it. Good music is good music. I don't care if it's Beethoven, Chopin, blues, rock."

Before critics could try to label Charles as a "soul" singer, soul had to be created, and the credit goes to crooner Sam Cooke, who also influenced Joel. Sam Cooke got his start singing gospel, a form of music rooted in religious hymns and African-American spirituals. In the early 1950s, however, Cooke began performing in an all-new style that combined gospel's deep sensual rhythms with pop's ebullient, secular sensibilities. This new genre was soon labeled "soul." At the time of his death in 1964, Cooke's hits included light dance numbers such as like "Twisting the Night Away," as well as a handful of mellow ballads that recount the sad history of America's fractured race relations. He captured both sides of the '50s and '60s: the bubbly freewheeling sense of hope and the serious sense of a nation at its crossroads. When Joel

mentions Cooke as an influence, it's easy to see why. Joel's music, as heard in *Movin' Out*, captures all of the conflicting facets of a generation in transition.

Like Billy Joel, the Rolling Stones got their start listening to soul and blues music. While the group was founded in the members' native England, the Stones (featuring Mick Jagger and Keith Richards) were enamored of the rhythms coming out of America and their earliest recording were covers of tracks by American rhythm-and-blues greats like Muddy Waters and Chuck Berry. By the middle of the 1960s, however, they were writing their own songs with a harder, grittier edge to fit the times. The post–World War II optimism of the 1950s was fading, and a new dread was descending along with the threat of the Vietnam War.

Following in the footsteps of the Rolling Stones, Joel released his first solo album in 1972. He'd already cut an album with Atilla, a heavy metal band he'd formed near his home on Long Island, but his solo effort was his first full-length record displaying his own characteristic style. The album, *Cold Spring Harbor*, featured songs about love and longing, like "She's Got a Way," which appears in *Movin' Out* as a powerful tribute to Brenda and Tony's connection while he is in Vietnam and she drowning her sorrows in a bar back home.

The year after *Cold Spring Harbor* was released, Joel's second album, *Piano Man*, debuted. The title song was an immediate Top 40 hit, and the album cemented Joel's reputation as one of America's leading songwriters. *Piano Man*'s songs were largely somber. They told serious stories taken from Joel's hometown of Hicksville. "Captain Jack," a raw tale of escape from suburban malaise, was the album's first hit and, in *Movin' Out*, serves to illuminate Eddie's fall after his return from Vietnam.

Since *Piano Man*, Joel's albums have continued to document the emotional landscape of communities like the one in which he grew up. His work has spanned the genres from hard-hitting rock (such as the song "Pressure") to Motown (the upbeat "Uptown

Girl"). Most recently, he's returned to his earliest roots and has composed classical instrumental music, some of which can be heard in *Movin' Out*. He's truly followed in his idols' footsteps. Like the Beatles, he's created a sound all his own. Like Ray Charles, he's crossed back and forth across the boundaries that separate music's genres. Like Sam Cooke, his pieces capture both the joy and the angst that have marked his generation. And like the Rolling Stones, Joel continues to evolve and record. Finally, Joel himself is as much an icon as Cooke and Charles, and his music is influencing today's up-and-coming stars as they record the sounds and stories of the generations to come.

Storytelling in Movement/Dance

Twyla Tharp's Influences

The practice of using dance to tell a narrative tale has been around for centuries. In African, Indian, and Native American cultures, storytelling through movement has been very much a part of daily life throughout history. Archeologists have found evidence that as long ago as 3000 BC Egyptians used movement as a form of language.

On the professional stage, dance as a method of relaying a tale has been popular since the rise of ballet under France's King Louis XIV in the 17 century. Ballets tend to be set to classical music. The music and dance in a ballet are more prominent than the storyline itself, which is often awkwardly conveyed with mimelike, overly theatrical gestures between the dance moves. And the dance elements are frequently familiar: many of the moves perfected by the dancers back in King Louis's day remain in use today and are still called by their French names (plié and pirouette, for example).

In the 20 century, however, ballet in the United States took a decidedly modern turn. George Balanchine (1904–1983) founded the first American Ballet Company (the School of American Ballet) and created a new type of dance that combined ballet's classic moves with freer forms of movement. He focused on creating dances that felt as if they were a part of the music itself, rather than mere accompaniments to the tunes.

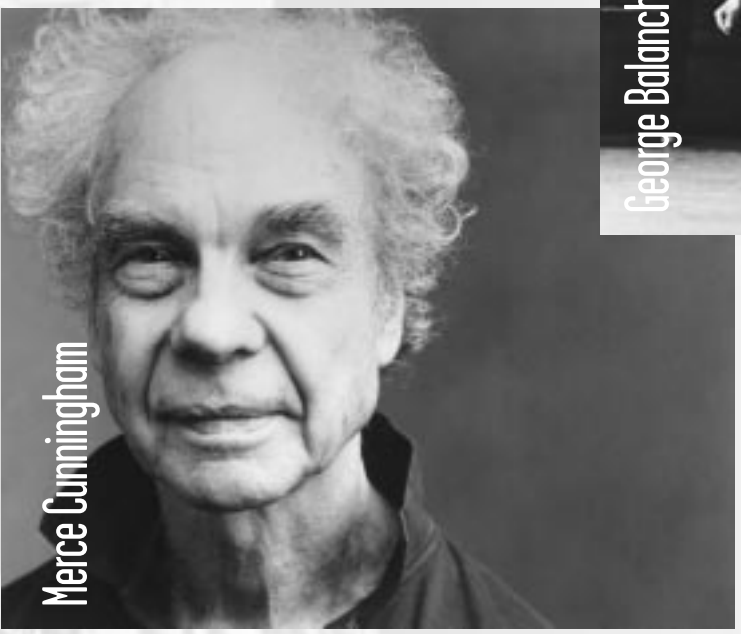
Twyla Tharp cites Balanchine as one of her major influences, though she never actually studied under the great choreographer. Tharp's dance career began when she was four years old and her mother encouraged her to take classes. The youngster studied a number of different forms: ballet, jazz, tap, and modern dance. She later attended Barnard College in New York City, where she worked with many of New York's most influential choreographers, including Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham, pioneers of the modern dance movement. Martha Graham (1894–1991) went beyond Balanchine. She rejected traditional ballet moves in order to focus on the natural movements of the human body. She created a completely new style of dance in which she saw her dancers as characters who conveyed emotions and ideas. The goal of her intense and often sexual routines was, she once said, to "chart the graph of the heart."


Martha Graham

Merce Cunningham (born 1919) trained with Martha Graham, and then broke out on his own in the 1940s and later founded his own company. His works are abstract, focusing on the act of movement itself, rather than on the music or a specific storyline. His routines often consist of isolated moves influenced by random chance and technology, outside the bounds of what audiences traditionally think of as dance.

Armed with Balanchine's influence, as well as mentoring from Graham and Cunningham, Twyla Tharp formed her own dance company in 1965. She began choreographing numbers that mixed the classical with the casual. She put some of her dancers in tennis sneakers. She integrated everyday moves, including walking and running, into old-fashioned ballet sequences. And in 1973, she even choreographed a ballet (titled Deuce Coupe) to the


George Balanchine


Merce Cunningham

pop music of the Beach Boys. Tharp has always believed that dance should not be a lofty and pretentious form of art aimed only at fans of the classics. Instead, she looks for ways to make dance a part of all audiences's lives.

She's reached millions of fans through the cinema, creating the dance sequences for films including *Hair* and *Ragtime*. And now, with *Movin' Out*, she is not only reaching a whole new audience, but she has also reinvented the ways stories are told through movement.

Tharp's characteristic traits are all here: time-tested ballet moves mixed with modern turns and vivacious twirls. Her historical influences are evident as well. The story follows a dramatic narrative like a classic ballet; the characters never speak but we follow their travails from start to finish. And the show features the best elements of a Broadway musical, including the modern sets and costumes and a boundless energy.

But this show isn't a ballet or a traditional musical. The story is conveyed without ballet's awkward, mimelike movements and without a musical's spoken-dialogue scenes. Tharp has captured the story of an American generation with dance as her primary narrator. She has recast dance as the language of her storytelling. Each dancer moves in a way distinct to his or her character's personality, and those moves tell the story.

This kind of in-depth acting-through-dance was new to many of *Movin' Out*'s classically trained dancers. So, in addition to rehearsing the dance sequences, the cast members also studied the era of Billy Joel's songs, read up on the Vietnam War, were drilled by a real Marine sergeant, and created in-depth histories for their characters. They went through all the steps that actors in plays, with lines of dialogue, go through to create their roles. Tharp wanted her performers to be true actors, with emotion and motivation, rather than simply dancers performing a routine. Rather than characterizing the performers as dancers, or actors, they truly become their characters.

If this isn't a ballet, and isn't a musical, then what is it? The critics are undecided. Twyla Tharp and Billy Joel are happy to simply call it A Show, letting the audiences decide what they want to label this new form of narrative. What everyone agrees on is that *Movin' Out* is a brand new form, the next generation in a family tree that includes 17 century ballet, George Balanchine, Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, Broadway, pop music, and old-fashioned storytelling.

VISA presents

MOVIN' OUT

Lesson Ideas for Educators

Writing

Objective:
Students will research life in the Vietnam War era.

From the Show:
At the start of *Movin' Out*, Brenda, Eddie, Tony, James, and Judy are just out of high school, concerned with typical high school issues. Soon, the Vietnam War hits and their concerns become much more serious. The men shed their varsity jackets for fatigues and enlist in the army. The women stop worrying about decorating their apartments and begin to fret for the safety of the soldiers and of the United States.

Exercise:
Research what it was like to be a student living in the era of the Vietnam War, and write a diary entry documenting one day in that student's life. How would that student's day-to-day existence be different from your own? What emotions might he or she feel at school each day, at a family dinner, or watching the news at night?

Teaching Tips:
Imagine yourself on both sides of the issue, as a young man or woman about to enlist in the army, and alternately as a pacifist questioning the war. What emotions might you feel in each of these positions? What might motivate you to chose one side or the other?

How might the onset of the Vietnam War have affected your relationships with your family members? Your friends?

Discussion

Objective:
Students will look at the ways in which loss is dealt with in *Movin' Out* and consider how they might react in similar situations.

From the Show:
At the start of the show, Eddie's wife, Brenda, leaves him to go out with Tony. Later, Eddie loses his close pal, James, to the war. The accumulation of the tragedies in his life turn Eddie into an "Angry Young Man:"

There's a place in the world for the angry young man,
With his working class ties and his radical plans.
He refuses to crawl,
And he's always at home with his back to the wall.
And he's proud of his scars
And the battles he's lost
And he struggles and bleeds
As he hangs on his cross
And he likes to be known as the angry young man.

Exercise:
As the song suggests, turning inward and angry is one way to react to loss and tragedy. Discuss other ways to deal with loss.

Teaching Tips:
Have you ever lost someone or something close to you? How did you react? How did you overcome your loss? How might one communicate their loss to others?

In the end, Tony finds solace in his old friends. Who do you rely on at difficult times?

Experiential

Objective:
Students will use lyrics and movement to relate an incident from their own lives.

From the Show:
Through lyrics and movement, this show covers an entire era in its main characters lives. Their emotions, dreams, and actions are conveyed without the use of any spoken dialogue.

Excercise:
Brainstorm a time in your life that you would like to explore further.Write a stanza of poetry or a verse of a song that tells an incident from your own life. Then choreograph a series of simple movements or gestures to go along with the words. Try to create gestures that tell the story on their own, so that even without the words the gist of the tale is apparent.

Teaching Tips:
How do the words and movements work to enhance each other?

What do you gain by telling a story through lyrics and movement, rather than using typical spoken / written narration?

After Hours

Objective:
Students will become aware of the role music plays in storytelling as a part of their everyday lives.

Excercise:
While listening to the radio or watching TV, note the lyrics to the songs you hear. Which songs can you relate to your own life and why? How does the music enhance the message of these songs? When watching TV and films, ask yourself how the soundtrack adds to the experience.

Teaching Tips :
Write down the lyrics to these songs and note what the words lose when they are separated from the music. Similarly, try to imagine the songs without the lyrics, and pinpoint what emotions you feel in the music itself.

VISA presents

JOEL THARP MOVIN' OUT

Resources

BOOKS

Caputo, Philip. *A Rumor of War.* Owlet, 1996.

Kissinger, Henry. *Ending the Vietnam War: A History of America's Involvement in and Extrication from the Vietnam War.* Simon & Schuster, 2003.

McNab, Chris, and Andy Wiest. *The Illustrated History of the Vietnam War.* Thunder Bay Press, 2000.

Moore, Harold G., and Joseph L. Galloway. *We Were Soldiers Once . . . and Young: Ia Drang: The Battle That Changed the War in Vietnam.* Random House, 2002.

Scott, Richard. *All About Soul: Billy Joel.* Vantage Press, 2000.

Tharp, Twyla. *Push Comes to Shove.* Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing, 1993.

MUSIC

Movin' Out (Based on the Songs and Music of Billy Joel): Original Broadway Cast Recording, Featuring Michael Cavanaugh, Sony, 2002.

Billy Joel: Fantasies & Delusions, Op. 1–10, Sony, 2001.

The Essential Billy Joel, Sony, 2001.

Billy Joel Greatest Hits, Volumes 1–2, Original Recording Remastered, Sony 1998.

Billy Joel Greatest Hits, Volume 3, Sony, 1997.

ENTERTAINMENT FILMS

Billy Joel: *Shades of Grey*. Released by Sony/Columbia, 1993, Not Rated.

Billy Joel: *A Matter of Trust.* Released by Sony/Columbia, 1991, Not Rated.

Billy Joel: *Live from Leningrad,* USSR. Released by Sony/Columbia, 1991, Not Rated.

Billy Joel: *Live from Yankee Stadium.* Released by Sony/Columbia, 1990, Not Rated.

EDUCATIONAL AND INFORMATIONAL FILMS

Vietnam: Television History, WGBH Boston Video, 1983.

Vietnam: The War at Home, First Run Features, 1979.

ON LOCATION

Applause Theatre Books
211 West 71 Street, NYC
212-496-7511
www.applausebooks.com

Drama Book Shop
250 West 40 Street, NYC
212-944-0595
www.dramabookshop.com

Theatre Circle Books
1 Shubert Alley, NYC
346 West 44 Street, NYC
212-586-7610
800-223-1320
www.BroadwayNewYork.com

WEBSITES

www.movinoutonbroadway.com
The official website for Movin' Out

www.billyjoel.com
The official website for Billy Joel

www.twylatharp.org
The official website for Twyla Tharp

www.playbill.com
For the latest information and news on Movin' Out

www.amazon.com
To purchase any of the merchandise listed

REFERENCE WEBSITES:

www.wmich.edu/politics/mlk/tm.html
Western Michigan State University, Department of Political Science

www.cwluherstory.com
Chicago Women's Liberation Union Herstory

http://209.146.26.198/teachers/icdv2i2s/SITES/ACHIEVE/tha0bio_.htm
Hall of Arts website featuring information on Twyla Tharp

The Standards listed throughout the StageNOTES™ Field Guide are excerpted from *Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education* (2nd Edition) by John S. Kendall and Robert J. Marzano, published by Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory, Inc. (McREL) and the Association for Supervision and Curricular Development (ASCD), 1997.

WRITING: HISTORY

Understands the historical perspective

- Analyzes the influences specific ideas and beliefs had on a period of history and specifies how events might have been different in the absence of those ideas and beliefs
- Knows how to perceive past events with historical empathy
- Analyzes the effects specific decisions had on history and studies how things might have been different in the absence of those decisions

DISCUSSION: HEALTH

Knows how to maintain mental and emotional health

- Knows skills used to communicate effectively with family, friends, and others, and the effects of open and honest communication
- Knows strategies for coping with and overcoming feelings of rejection, social isolation, and other forms of stress
- Understands the role of denial as a negative influence on mental and emotional health, and ways to overcome denial and seek assistance when needed

EXPERIENTIAL: LANGUAGE ARTS AND THE ARTS

Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the writing process

- Writes reflective compositions (e.g., uses personal experience as a basis for reflection on some aspect of life etc…)

Understands dance as a way to create and communicate meaning

- Understands how movement choices are used to communicate abstract ideas and themes in dance (e.g., isolation, relationships, poverty, the environment)
- Understands how interpretation of dance can be influenced by personal experience

AFTER HOURS: THE ARTS

Composes and arranges music within specified guidelines

- Uses the elements of music for expressive effect

StageNOTES™

A FIELD GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

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Editors: Lesley Mazzotta, Roseanne Saraceno, Jodi Simon Stewart

Art Director: Joseph M. Pisarchick

Writers: Allison Lynn: arts and entertainment journalist, credits include People Magazine, The New York Times Book Review and work for the Showtime Networks

David Pratt: writing credits include promotional materials for Lincoln Center, Inc., Dodger Stage Holding Theatricals, Carnegie Hall, Georgetown University, and Second Stage Theatre

Russell Granet: Associate Program Director at The Center for Arts Education and a member of the faculty for New York University's Kaplan Center for Educational Drama

Copy Editor: Lesley Krauss: owner of Book Project Management, a trade book editorial production company

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