

Musical treatment for Capra film

The classic film *It's A Wonderful Life* is to be turned into a musical by the producer of the controversial hit show *Jerry Springer - The Opera*.

Frank Capra's 1946 movie starring James Stewart, is being turned into a £7m musical by producer Jon Thoday. He is working with Steve Brown, who wrote the award-winning musical *Spend Spend Spend*. A spokeswoman said the plans were in the "very early stages", with no cast, opening date or theatre announced.

A series of workshops have been held in London, and on Wednesday a cast of singers unveiled the musical to a select group of potential investors. Mr Thoday said the idea of turning the film into a musical had been an ambition of his for almost 20 years. *It's a Wonderful Life* was based on a short story, *The Greatest Gift*, by Philip van Doren Stern. Mr Thoday managed to buy the rights to the story from Van Doren Stern's family in 1999, following Mr Brown's success with *Spend Spend Spend*. He later secured the film rights from Paramount, enabling them to use the title *It's A Wonderful Life*.