



CRAZILY FOR YOU



Education
Pack

Contents

Introduction	2
1. About Musicals and <i>Crazy for You</i>	3
A History of the Musical.....	4
George and Ira Gershwin	8
Synopsis of <i>Crazy for You</i>	9
The Characters	11
2. Meet the Team.....	12
Interview with the Director.....	13
Meet The Cast.....	15
3. The Rehearsal Process	17
The Journey of a Production	18
The Design Process	20
Costume Designs.....	22
A Day in Rehearsals.....	23
Inside the Rehearsal Room.....	24
Rehearsal Report.....	27
Credits	28

Introduction

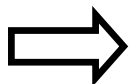
This pack has been designed to support your visit to The Watermill to watch our production of *Crazy for You*.



This is a digital pack; where you see this arrow there is a link that you can click on to view other material online.

Your feedback is most welcome, please email outreach@watermill.org.uk or call me on 01635 570927.

Don't forget that we offer workshops on most aspects of drama, and visit many schools in the surrounding area to work with students and teachers. For an education brochure, please visit the Outreach pages on our website, or contact us.



For our schools brochure please [click here](#).

We hope you find the pack useful.

Heidi Bird

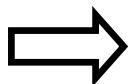
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This pack was written and designed by work experience placement, Esther Mead with contributions from Ella Wilson, Emily Beck, Matthew Waite, Millie Randall and Beth Flintoff.

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Rehearsal photos by Philip Tull.

Production photos by Richard Davenport.

1. About Musicals and *Crazy for You*

A History of the Musical

Theatre and music have always gone hand in hand, ever since the Ancient Greeks started exploring different ways of performing two thousand years ago. In the 1700s people were putting songs and musical interludes into their plays, but they weren't called 'musicals' until nearly 200 years later. Opera – a play entirely sung by classical singers accompanied by a full orchestra – had been around for hundreds of years by this time. A musical, by contrast, will generally have scenes with spoken dialogue interspersed with songs and dancing, accompanied by an orchestra or band. The music is more pop than classical, and the orchestra will contain instruments not normally found in a classical orchestra, such as drums, guitar and saxophone.

The West End and Broadway

The world of musicals in this country is centred on the West End – a handful of streets in the heart of London that are littered with large theatres. There aren't just musicals in the West End – there are also plenty of plays – but this is where people come to see the big musical of the moment. It's the same in America, where there is a single street in New York called Broadway with 40 theatres. Sometimes musicals that are really successful in London's West End will transfer to Broadway, and vice versa. A successful musical in the West End, where thousands of tickets are sold every night, could make a fortune for everyone involved; a flop can mean financial ruin.

Early musical theatre

At the start of the Twentieth Century there were light-hearted musicals, often coming from America by jazz composers such as George Gershwin and Cole Porter such as *Funny Face*, and *Kiss Me Kate*. There were similarly jolly English shows that were mostly

a series of sketches by writers like Ivor Novello and Noel Coward, such as *London Calling* in 1923.

After World War II, a musical called *Oklahoma* surprised everyone with its brilliant energy. It was written by two Americans, Rodgers and Hammerstein, who worked together with one writing the music and the other the lyrics. For the first time the storyline was properly interwoven with the music.

In the East End of London, at the Stratford East Theatre Workshop, a director called Joan Littlewood decided that theatre shouldn't be just for 'posh' people, as she put it. She wanted real accents, and encouraged the actors to improvise. Everyone was involved in the creation of the work. The first musical she created was called *Fings Ain't What They Used to Be*. The songs were put together by an unknown composer called Lionel Bart, who couldn't read or write music, but had an ability to create great songs in his head. *Fings Ain't What They Used to Be* had lots of rude lyrics and suggestive dialogue, and at the time there was still censorship. The censors came to see the performance, and were predictably upset - they even thought that a ladder was carried at an 'erotic angle'! But the show was so heavily improvised that the actors simply changed it the next night. And shortly afterwards, with *Saved* at the English Stage Company, censorship was abolished.

Meanwhile over in America *West Side Story*, a musical version of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, updated to street gangs in contemporary America, marked the first time that a serious theme had been attempted on such a large scale. The choreography was dynamic and edgy, expressing the anger of disaffected teenagers. Lionel Bart's next musical was *Oliver!*, also about street gangs,

but set in the Victorian era with homeless children instead of teenagers. It was also a huge hit and the first successful British show to travel across to America.

Lionel Bart became a celebrity, and his next collaboration with Joan Littlewood was hotly anticipated. It was called *Twang*, and told the story of Robin Hood. But it went terribly wrong. The director and composer disagreed, and scenes were constantly changed. Barbara Windsor, an actress famous for appearing in the Carry On films who later went on to star in the BBC's long running soap *EastEnders*, was a member of the cast, as was the comedian Ronnie Corbett. He said later that 'if you went to the toilet you would come back and your part had been completely cut.' The show was a disaster, critics hated it, and poor Lionel Bart, who had paid for it with his own money, went bankrupt.

Controversial musicals

Theatre is always a reflection of the world around it, and in the 1960s the world of peace-loving protest found its way into the musicals. *Hair*, a show about hippies protesting against the Vietnam War, was all about spontaneity and authenticity. They cast unknown actors who weren't necessarily trained, and the musical caused a big stir by featuring full nudity and talking openly about sex and drugs. *Hair* didn't open in London until three days after censorship ceased – which was probably wise! Some of the cast got into trouble for smoking dubious substances on the roof during the interval, which made the show seem incredibly 'cool'. It got young people excited and interested in going to musicals for the first time.

In the 1970s there was the first 'Rock Opera' – still technically a musical, but entirely sung this time, and with a strong rock music score. This was *Jesus Christ Superstar*, a musical by two men who would dominate the musical theatre world from now on, composer Andrew Lloyd Webber and the lyricist Tim Rice. Even the title caused outrage, and nuns

protested outside the theatre. But the reviews were fantastic. Paul Nicholas, the actor playing Jesus, said later that playing the crucifixion scene 'was very overwhelming'. As he was lifted up by a hidden frame, so that it looked as though he was suspended mid-air, with beautiful music playing, he said he 'had tears streaming' down his face.

The producer of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Robert Stigwood, had the clever idea that this production might work around the world. After all, nearly everyone has heard of Jesus Christ. So it was carefully replicated, with the same music, set, and direction, and sold to other countries. It was a brilliant idea that still works today, but at the time it wasn't without problems. Andrew Lloyd Webber, for example, hated the French version in Paris so much that he ran down the aisle shouting 'this must be stopped' until Robert Stigwood was able to calm him down.

The development of musicals

For a while, after the success of *Superstar*, musicals got bigger and bigger – their sets and production values were huge, and the storylines took on epic themes. They became known as 'mega musicals'.

Andrew Lloyd Webber began to experiment with the form: he wrote *Cats* – a musical about the lives of cats based on the poems of T.S. Eliot – and *Starlight Express* – a musical about trains where the performers wore roller-skates. Both were huge hits. Biggest of all was his musical *The Phantom of the Opera*, which has been running for over 25 years and is seen around the world.

In 1985 a musical of Victor Hugo's French novel, *Les Misérables*, came to London. It's all sung, like an opera, with no spoken dialogue. The production was put together by the producer Cameron Mackintosh and the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Barbican Theatre. *Les Mis* (as it's commonly known) tells an epic tale of ordinary people swept up in the French Revolution and encountering

poverty, love, danger, friendship and betrayal on the way. It is unashamedly emotional – the sight of innocent orphans dying on the barricades often leaves audience members in tears. The first reviews were extremely critical – but for once this didn't stop the public from loving it. They really, really loved it. It is now the longest running musical ever and has been seen by an estimated 55 million people around the world. It was made into a successful film starring Hollywood actors Hugh Jackman, Russell Crowe and Anne Hathaway. *Les Mis* wasn't the only hit musical created by The Royal Shakespeare Company - more recently they have had huge success with *Matilda*, based on the Roald Dahl book, with music by Tim Minchin, which won a record-breaking seven prizes at the prestigious annual Olivier Awards.

After the success of *Les Mis*, Cameron Mackintosh worked again with its composers, Boublil and Schonberg, and made a new musical based on Puccini's opera, *Madame Butterfly*. They updated it to the Vietnam War and called it *Miss Saigon*, telling the story of an American soldier who falls in love with a Vietnamese prostitute who has a child after he has returned to the States. *Miss Saigon* was also a big hit – and gained fame for creating the realistic effect of a helicopter landing onstage.

Trying to achieve success

Since the 'mega musicals', there has been a constant search to find the secret to creating a successful musical. Cameron Mackintosh, who has produced disastrous shows as well as his big hits, said 'you can't programme big hits,' but people keep trying. Often producers will cast celebrities in their shows, so that people will come and see them. Ideally, the star will be known on film or television. Andrew Lloyd Webber came up with an idea to make sure that his star would be famous – a television series in which the audience can, over the course of a few weeks, choose who will land the lead role. This was how Connie

Fisher was chosen to play Maria in *The Sound of Music* in 2006, and it worked brilliantly for the production, selling millions of tickets before it even opened. He has since repeated the formula to find leads for *Joseph, Oliver!* and *The Wizard of Oz* as well as a new rock stadium version of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

On the other hand, *Billy Elliot*, about a boy who wants to learn ballet during the miners' strikes in the 80s, had no big star names and relies mostly on a young boy actor playing the title role to carry the story. In fact, the part of Billy is so exhausting that one of the first young boys to play the role, Liam Mower, would sometimes throw up in a bucket at the side of the stage. *Billy Elliot* used the fact that it was based on the film of the same name to generate interest. This has happened to lots of other films that have been made into musicals, like *Grease*, *Dirty Dancing*, *Ghost*, *Sister Act* and *Shrek*. Meanwhile two other musicals based on films, *Hairspray* and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* were also successful hits, with their kitsch, retro appeal and outrageous costumes.

Another way of making sure that people come to see the musical is to choose music that everyone knows already. This was first done by an inexperienced producer called Judy Craymer, who thought that the songs of ABBA would make a great musical. She managed to get together the money by giving up her job and selling her flat, but the risk paid off. *Mamma Mia!* was a worldwide success and has since been made into a film starring Meryl Streep. Since then other musicals based on the songs of well-known bands, such as *We Will Rock You*, based on the music of Queen, have also proved popular, alongside nostalgic shows looking back to a different musical era such as *Jersey Boys*, *Top Hat*, and *Dreamboats and Petticoats*.

Meanwhile in America, Disney, the film company famous for its cartoons and family films, also used the fame of its stories to make musicals. This began with *The Lion King*, which

involves puppets and elaborate costumes fitted around the bodies of dancers to tell the story of feuding animals in Africa. The show features birds on wires swooping over the audience, and music by Elton John with lyrics by Tim Rice. Some of the songs, like *Circle of Life* and *Can You Feel the Love Tonight?* made the top of the charts. Meanwhile the long-running musical *Wicked* tells the story of life before *The Wizard of Oz*, explaining how there came to be a good and bad witch in Oz and imagining them as friends when they were growing up.

So far we have mainly talked about big, 'blockbuster' musicals, but the musical is a diverse genre and there are all sorts of different types. In recent years there have been more controversial musicals like *Jerry Springer*; *The Opera*. Based on an American chat show, it contains beautiful tunes contrasted with lyrics full of swear words, and features a dancing Jesus dressed in a nappy. The BBC decided to televise the musical, causing – you guessed it – protests from people offended by the anti-Christian sentiment. The BBC staff received death threats and had to be protected by police on the night of the showing.

Actor-Musician musicals

Actor-Musician work (in which the actors provide the orchestra as well as the singing, acting and dancing) really began to establish itself at The Watermill from 1998 with *Cabaret*. The style was pioneered by the director John Doyle and musical director Sarah Travis. The work has attracted critical acclaim and national awards. Five productions have transferred to London. *Sweeney Todd*



Caroline Sheen and Peter Dukes.

ran for six-months at the Trafalgar Studios and then the New Ambassadors Theatre. It opened on Broadway in 2005 with an American cast and won two prestigious Tony Awards.

The concept of actor-musician productions has become popular in these straightened times, where multi-talented actors save the cost of hiring musicians. In the last decade actor-musicianship has become a career in its own right, and one of John Doyle's original company at The Watermill, Jeremy Harrison, runs a well-known Actor-Musician Degree course at Rose Bruford Drama College in London.

BETH FLINTOFF

George and Ira Gershwin

Known for their timeless jazz 'classics', the Gershwin brothers are one of the most famous song-writing duos of the twentieth century. Ira (1896-1983) was an American lyricist, whilst his younger brother George (1898-1937) worked as a composer and pianist. The two brothers collaborated to create many of their greatest works, with compositions spanning both popular and classical genres of music. George also worked independently; among some of his best-known orchestral works are *Rhapsody in Blue* and *An American in Paris*.

Lady, Be Good was the brothers' first Broadway hit, which first demonstrated the effectiveness of their combined talents, with other popular shows including *Funny Face* and *Of Thee I Sing* (the first musical comedy to win a Pulitzer prize). Initially a commercial failure, their first musical opera *Porgy and Bess* is now considered one of the most important American operas of the twentieth century and contains recognisable songs such as *Summertime*. Other well-known songs by the duo include *I Got Rhythm*, *The Man I*

Love and They Can't Take That Away From Me. Overall the brothers collaborated on more than twenty scores for stage and screen.

Their partnership continued until George died prematurely from a brain tumour, after which Ira ceased writing for 3 years. Following this, he collaborated with successful composers such as Vernon Duke (*Ziegfeld Follies*, 1954), Jerome Kern (*Cover Girl*, 1944) and Harold Arlen (*A Star Is Born*, 1954).

The Gershwin brothers are just as well-known now for their moving ballads and exciting rhythm numbers as when they first found fame in the mid-20th Century. The continued interest in their music led to several people bringing parts of the wealth of songs by the brothers together, in order to create new Gershwin musicals. *Crazy for You* is an example of one of these new musicals and with audiences still enjoying the production today, this shows just how timeless the works of George and Ira Gershwin are.

EMILY BECK

Synopsis of *Crazy for You*

THE ZANGLER THEATRE, NEW YORK

As the Follies Girls prepare for their next new production of *Zangler Follies* at the Zangler Theatre, a very enthusiastic Bobby Child, the rich son of a banking family, is waiting backstage. He is hoping to audition for Mr. Zangler, performing 'K-razy for You'. However, this does not go as planned as Bobby ends up standing on Mr. Zangler's foot and doesn't make the cut.

Bobby is met by Irene, his wealthy fiancée, and then by his mother, Lottie, who demands Bobby carry out her banking business. Lottie orders Bobby to go to Deadrock, Nevada, to close a rundown theatre. As the women argue over him, Bobby imagines himself dancing with the Follies Girls in the theatre and joins them in singing a dreamy fantasy in *I Can't Be Bothered Now*. When he is brought back to reality, Bobby decides to escape Irene by going to Nevada.

DEADROCK, NEVADA

When Bobby arrives in Deadrock, he is greeted by the lazy cowboys singing *Bidin' My Time* in a long, slow drawl. Everett Baker, who owns the Gaiety Theatre, receives a letter from New York warning of the bank closing the theatre if they don't pay the mortgage. The only woman left in this desolate town is Everett's daughter, Polly Baker, who promises to stop Bobby Child from taking the theatre if she ever meets him. Lank Hawkins, the owner of the town's Saloon, argues with Everett, wanting to buy the theatre before the bank takes it. Everett refuses to give up the theatre in memory of Polly's mother being the star of all the theatre's old shows.

Bobby enters the town almost dying of thirst, and falls in love with Polly at first sight, not realizing who she is, expressing his excitement in the song *Things Are Looking Up*. Lank isn't pleased to see a rival for Polly's affections as he wishes to marry Polly himself.

Bobby comes up with a brilliant idea of putting on a show to pay off the mortgage, to avoid closing the theatre and losing the girl of his dreams. Polly agrees to this plan until she finds out who he is and suspects it to be a trick. Bobby and Polly are both heartbroken, but Bobby decides to put on the show anyway... disguised as Mr. Zangler. Polly, deeply hurt, expresses her loneliness in *Someone to Watch Over Me*.

A few days later, the Follies Girls (on vacation from The Zangler Follies) appear in the desert of Nevada. Bobby has asked them to help stage a spectacular show in Deadrock at the Gaiety Theatre. When the men of Deadrock see the girls, the sleepy town becomes very lively. Lank is relentlessly scathing about the show and threatens to shoot Bobby.

Rehearsals for the show aren't going well and the Cowboys in particular are terrible dancers. However, Bobby changes all this whilst singing *Slap That Bass* and everyone is excited for the performance. Meanwhile, Polly has fallen in love with Bobby, who she now thinks is Zangler, but Irene has arrived in Deadrock, threatening to expose Bobby's real identity. Polly expresses her love for Zangler with the song *Embraceable You*.

A few days later the night has finally arrived for the opening performance. Everyone is buzzing with excitement as they put on makeup and costumes to prepare for the show and sing *Tonight's the Night*. Disappointment strikes the town when they find that the only people to arrive are Eugene and Patricia Fodor, British tourists writing a guidebook on the American West and who have not actually come to watch the show. However, Polly reminds everyone that they have transformed the town and their community into a lively and spirited place. They celebrate this by singing the showstopper, *I Got Rhythm*. During the performance, the real Bela Zangler stumbles unnoticed into the town as he collapses just as the scene ends.

At the start of Act 2, Bobby is in Lank's saloon professing his love to Polly. Unfortunately, she is still in love with the man who she thinks is Zangler. Bobby is about to convince Polly that he has been dressed up as "Zangler" the whole time, when the real Zangler stumbles into the saloon looking for Tess. Zangler finds Tess, but refuses to produce the show. Tess storms off, and a very drunk Zangler, heads to the bar. Bobby, dressed as Zangler, also goes into the bar to drown his sorrows over losing Polly. Drunk and depressed, the two men act as mirror images of each other, and sing about their lost loves in *What Causes That*.

The next morning, Polly sees the two Zanglers and realises what has happened. She slaps Bobby and leaves in a huff, while the townsfolk prepare for a meeting at the theatre to discuss what to do with the show. Irene comes to Bobby in one final attempt to make him go back to New York with her, but Bobby rejects her, and tells her of his love for Polly. Incredibly frustrated with Bobby, Irene seduces Lank in *Naughty Baby*.

The townsfolk are all now gathered at the theatre. Bobby is all for trying the show again, while Polly thinks they should abandon it. The Fodors counsel the dejected townspeople to keep a *Stiff Upper Lip*, but by the end of the song, only Polly, Everett, Bobby, and Tess still think the show should continue.

Everyone but Bobby and Polly leave the theatre; Bobby prepares to leave for New York, professing that his memories of Polly will never fade in *They Can't Take That Away From Me*. Polly realises, too late, that she does love Bobby, and after he leaves she sings about her loss in *But Not for Me*.

Meanwhile, Bela Zangler decides to put on the show for Tess's desirers and the two seem to be in love once more. Although Zangler had been planning to cast Bobby as the lead, he makes Polly the star of the show after learning that Bobby has left for New York.

BETWEEN NEW YORK & DEADROCK, NEVADA

Six weeks later, Bobby is still thinking of Deadrock as he works for his mother's bank. For his birthday, his mother gives him the Zangler theatre (as Zangler has not paid his mortgage, having used all his money on the show in Deadrock). While initially ecstatic, Bobby realises that his love for Polly is worth more as he sings *Nice Work if You Can Get It*, and leaves for Deadrock with his mother to find Polly.

Meanwhile, Polly has decided to leave for New York to look for Bobby, who enters Deadrock just after she leaves. After learning that Polly has left to find him, he plans to drive back to New York to catch her. Bobby's mother and Irene (who is now married to Lank) notice each other, and start an argument. Everett notices Lottie, and falls head-over-heels in love

with her, as he sings the reprise of *Things Are Looking Up*.

Polly goes with Custus, one of the cowboys, to get a ride to the station, but his car has run out of gas, and she has missed the train to New York.

Together the townspeople create a plan, and Polly and Bobby are finally reunited. All is happy in Deadrock as the Theatre is saved and everyone is happy at last.

ELLA WILSON



Left: Tom Chambers (Bobby). Top: Caroline Sheen (Polly) and Tom Chambers (Bobby) - centre - and the cast of "Crazy for You". Bottom from left to right: Katrina Kleve (Mitzi), Anne White (Margie), Hollie Cassar (Tess), Seren Sandham-Davies (Patsy).

The Characters

Deadrock, Nevada:

Polly Baker is an “All-American Girl”, and the Postmistress in Deadrock. She is incredibly protective of her father, and refuses to let his theatre be taken over by the bank or bought by Lank.

Everett Baker is Polly’s father, a gentle, befuddled man in his 60s. He is the owner of the Gaiety Theatre, which is physically and financially crumbling. His spirits remain high due to his love of Polly and memories of his late wife.

Eugene & Patricia Fodor are a chirpy English couple who arrive in Deadrock as tourists. They are travelling the American West with the intention of writing a guide book.

Moose is a member of the Cowboy Trio, alongside Mingo and Sam. He is extremely lazy and smelly, and proves to be a truly terrible dancer – but a great bassist!

Lank Hawkins is the Saloon proprietor in Deadrock. He is an intense, usually manic fellow, blessed with a vision for the town that no one else quite shares. He hopes to marry Polly, as she is the only woman within fifty miles of him!

Custus is a Cowboy in Deadrock. He agrees to be in the company for Bobby’s show and turns out to be a fantastic tap dancer.

New York City:

Bobby Child is a young man, training as a banker, who is in love with musical theatre. He dreams of being on the stage and wants to prove himself, to both Bela Zangler and his mother.

Irene Roth is a society debutante and Bobby’s fiancée. She is desperately planning her much-awaited wedding, and frustrated by Bobby’s complete lack of interest.

Mrs. Lottie Child is Bobby’s business-oriented and domineering mother. She disapproves of his passion for dancing, as well as his engagement to Irene.

Bela Zangler is an established Broadway producer. He is an imposing, dapper man with a moustache, beard and Hungarian accent with only one weakness – Tess.

The Follies Tess, Patsy, Mitzi and Margie are all members of the Follies. Tess is in charge of the chorus of Follies. She’s also Bobby’s friend and Zangler’s mistress.

2. Meet the Team

Interview with the Director

Esther Mead talked to The Watermill's Artistic and Executive Director, Paul Hart, who has directed *Crazy for You*.



Paul Hart

The music of the Gershwin brothers is so well-known and loved. Why do you think it has such a lasting and timeless appeal?

The sheer brilliance of them both individually and as a team. Together they produced some extraordinary work, which was so different to everything else of their time. They had the ability to create sophisticated music, which would please both critics and their audiences.

How have you incorporated actor-musicians to achieve this?

In actor-musician shows, the audience can literally see the music being produced onstage, which helps them become more aware of the musicality of the production.

I think seeing how all the different elements of the music are put together works especially well for Gershwin as it fits with the way he composes.

Have there been any difficulties coordinating the use of musical instruments and the choreography?

Yes, I think that is possibly our biggest challenge and we have had to keep it in mind from the start. Our choreographer, Nathan, used the music and the instruments as a starting point and built up from there. We have aimed to include dancing that works around the instruments without any compromise – there are actors dancing with trumpets or clarinets as part of the movement.

When you were first discussing the show and working with designer, Diego Pitarch, did you know how you wanted the set to look and what impact has The Watermill's architecture had on the show?

Part of the reason I wanted to put on this production is because of the theatre and the stage and, with Diego, we based the whole production on the space. I saw many similarities between The Watermill and the Gaiety Theatre, as they both have history and character. My idea was to use the Gaiety Theatre as a backdrop for the whole show. From here, I worked with Diego on how we would show the changes between the two main settings: New York and Nevada.

Why did you want to become a Director and Artistic Director?

I knew from a young age that I always wanted to do something in the theatre. I

was fascinated by all aspects of a working theatre and tried to gain experience in different areas. It was from this experience that I decided to work as a director as you get to work with all the different departments, overseeing all the elements needed to put a show together.

The big difference as an Artistic Director is the relationship I am able to create with my audience. Whilst I was a freelance director, I could communicate one message to lots of audiences in many different places. However, as Artistic Director I am able to choose a seasonal or annual programme which both challenges

the audience and gives them something to enjoy.

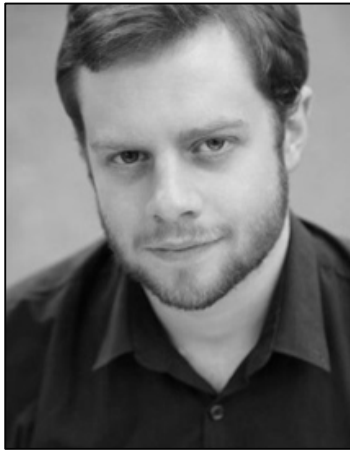
What advice would you give to aspiring directors?

My advice would be to get as much experience as possible in all areas of the theatre – Front of House, Backstage, Admin – to gain an understanding of all of the different roles. I would also advise reading as much as possible, to explore a range of repertoire and expand your own style, material and ideas.



Top: Paul Hart with members of the cast in rehearsals. Below (Left to right): Holly Cassar, Seren Sandham-Davies and Anne White. Right (Left to right): Holly Cassar and Kit Benjamin.

Meet The Cast



Matt Bateman
Billy / Eugene Fodor



Kit Benjamin
Everett Baker



Tom Chambers
Bobby Child



Hollie Cassar
Tess



Peter Dukes
Bela Zangler / Cowboy



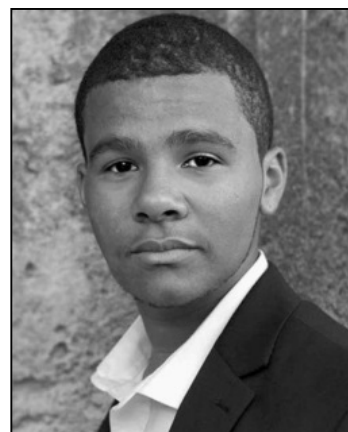
Lindsay Goodhand
Lottie Child/Patricia Fodor



Katrina Kleve
Mitzi



Jeremy Legat
Lank Hawkins



Emile Ruddock
Custus



Ned Rudkins

Moose



Seren

Sandham-Davies

Patsy



Caroline Sheen

Polly Baker



Lucy Thatcher

Irene Roth

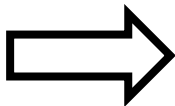


Anne White

Margie

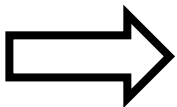
Interview with the Actors

Read an interview with Caroline Sheen who plays Polly here:



<http://www.westendwilma.com/caroline-sheen-tea-with-wilma>

Watch an interview with Tom Chambers (Bobby), Caroline Sheen (Polly) and Director, Paul Hart here:



http://www.whatsonstage.com/newbury-theatre/news/crazy-for-you-tom-chambers-caroline-sheen_41428.html?cid=homepage_news

3. The Rehearsal Process

The Journey of a Production

The Watermill Theatre is a producing house. This means the vast majority of our shows are created in-house, and we have a different cast and creative team for every new show we put on. Work on each show begins here several months before the actors take to the stage on opening night, and it's a long road from choosing a show to perform, to the curtain call on first night.

The first step of putting on any production starts with finding a good script. Of course, there are many to choose from, spanning hundreds of years and several continents, but selecting those plays that fit The Watermill's intimate nature, have something compelling to say to a modern audience, and can be performed in new and interesting ways, often presents quite a challenge. You can always commission a writer to produce an entirely original script, one that suits the kind of production you're looking for. Indeed, The Watermill often takes this route – in 2014 we staged *Sense and Sensibility*, an adaptation of the classic Austen novel by Jessica Swale; *A Bunch of Amateurs*, a new play by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman, and *Hardboiled*, an entirely original piece written by Beth Flintoff in collaboration with Rhum and Clay Theatre Company.

In tandem with finding the perfect script is the search for a director who can bring the show to life, who has their own personal take on the play, and can bring their unique vision to the table. Once the script has been married to a director, designers and lighting designers begin to come aboard, and the visual nature of the play starts to develop. A set design is created, first through sketches and drawings, and culminating in a model box, illustrating how the set will appear on the Watermill stage.

The designer also creates costume designs for each character, in line with the overall design of the show. Once the actors are cast (and

forced to hand over their measurements) our Wardrobe department gets to work sewing and stitching to create the costumes you'll see on stage.

The casting process can vary greatly depending on the size of the cast and the skills required from the actors in each role. For actor-musician productions one of the biggest challenges is forming a cast with the right balance of instruments. Other productions require actors to play several characters throughout the course of the show, often a tricky proposition! Actors will attend an initial audition and follow that up with one or more recalls, in order to demonstrate different talents, read for a different character, or audition with an actor already cast to test their chemistry together.

Rehearsals begin three or four weeks before the show opens. The actors – recruited from all over the country – all live on site at The Watermill or in the surrounding area throughout the rehearsal and performance periods. On the first day of rehearsals the cast meet one another, and work begins on everything from costume fittings and dialect coaching, to instrument practice and fight choreography – along with learning all their lines of course! Throughout the rehearsal process all aspects of the production begin to come together.

Our Stage Management team assists the director in blocking the show – figuring out how the characters move around the stage and interact with one another in each scene. The Deputy Stage Manager keeps a record in the prompt book of all the notes taken down during rehearsals, and this is what the show will be called from. There are also many requests for props – from old-fashioned typewriters to stuffed animals – which we source from our own prop store, eBay, flea markets, and occasionally the homes of Watermill staff members.

A lot of research takes place as the cast and creative team collaboratively create the world of the show. This involves reading around the history and setting of the play, societal norms and beliefs, facts about the characters or their real life counterparts, looking at photos or paintings from the period, and anything else that helps to delve further into the minds of the characters. In the days leading up to opening night, rehearsals move into the theatre itself.

Often just a day or two after the previous show has finished, our dedicated Production team will have spent that brief window performing the 'get-out' of the last set, and the 'get-in' of the new one. The actors can now step onto the stage they'll be performing

on, interact with the scenery and props, and come to terms with just how close the audience in the front row will be. The dress rehearsal takes place on the afternoon of opening night, and it is the cast, crew and stage management's final opportunity to make any changes, or correct any problems that have arisen throughout the rehearsal period.

The actors are all in full costume, props are set, lighting and sound cues finalised, and hopefully everything goes off without a hitch. A few hours later the first audience members begin to arrive, and from then...the show must go on!

MATT RAY



Left: Tom Chambers and Caroline Sheen. Top (Left to right): Matt Bateman, Emile Ruddock, Ned Rudkins-Stow, Peter Dukes. Bottom (Left to right): Anne White, Tom Chambers, Ned Rudkins-Stow, Lindsay Goodhand

The Design Process

The set is what we put onstage to help re-create the world of the play. The set designer makes a model box of the set to show the production department, director and actors what they want the set to look like. Designer, Diego Pitarch, talked to the cast and production team about the design on the first day of rehearsals. There are many stages the designer goes through before they get to this point.

Step 1. Research

The first step is to research the time period and location of the piece. Often the designer will create a scrap book of images, materials and textures that may inspire their design. Initial ideas are discussed with the director to make sure they fit with the director's overall vision. These can also be given to the production team to help them when bringing the design to life. For example, the designer sometimes draws sketches of how they would like the costume to look and this is given to the wardrobe department as a reference.



Step 2. White Card

The White Card is an unpainted model of the set which is sent to the production team who makes sure it fits the space and the budget that is available.

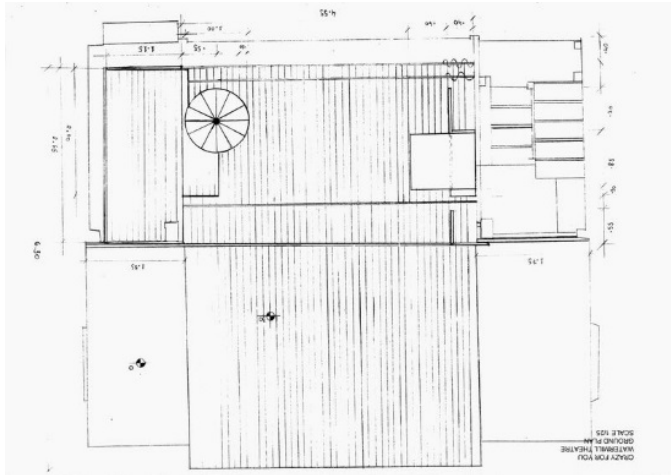
White card example from a previous Watermill show.

Step 3. Model Box

The designer then creates a model box. This is made on a 1:25 scale to give the creative team a clear picture of the set. The production team uses the model for the building process, ensuring that the final set replicates exactly the designer's original model.



The model box for *Crazy for You*



Step 4. Scale Drawings

The designer then draws a ground plan of the model box to the scale of the theatre. This gives the carpenter the exact dimensions to work from.

Scale Drawing of *Crazy for You*

Step 5. Building The Set

The carpenter then starts to make the set. At The Watermill the set is built off-site in a large barn in Coventry and then brought to the theatre and constructed during the weekend before the show opens.



The final set

Step 6. The Final Set

The final set is fitted into the theatre. During the fit-up the designer will work with the production team to ensure that all the final details are perfected on the set before the show opens.

Costume Designs

The wardrobe department are in charge of finding or making the costumes and then adjusting them to fit each actor. They also have to make sure that the costumes are perfect for each performance, which means that they must repair rips or tears.

Our wardrobe department will meet the designer a long time before the performance so that they have plenty of time to see the designs and get the costumes ready.

Below are some costume designs for *Crazy for You*.



Bobby Child



Polly Baker



Bela Zangler



Follies Girl



Cowboy




Irene

A Day in Rehearsals

Each day a rehearsal schedule is drawn up. This is distributed to the cast members, the creative and technical team. Below is a schedule for Wednesday 20th July on the last week of rehearsals. On the following couple of pages, two work experience students Esther Mead and Matt Waite document their experience of being inside the rehearsal room.

See how the schedule compares to what happened...

The day is then summarised in a rehearsal report (See page XXX), which the Deputy Stage Manager writes and distributes.

		
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Crazy For You</h2>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Rehearsal Call Sheet #20 Date: Wednesday 20th July Fittings in Blue</p>		
09:30	Sackler available to tune up	
09:45	Interview with marketing	Mr Chamber & Miss Sheen
10:00	Play through "Can't Be Bothered"	Full Company – exc – Miss Goodhand & Miss Sheen
10:00	Fitting in Wardrobe	Miss Goodhand & Miss Sheen
10:30	Run from top of Act One – start of 1:6	Full Company
11:00	Continue staggering from 1:6	Full Company
11:45	Tea Break	
12:00	Rope work with Mr Benzing in the theatre	Mr Chambers
12:00	Music/choreography work in the Rehearsal Room	Full Company – exc – Mr Chambers.
13:00	Fight work with Mr Benzing in the theatre	Mr Bateman, Mr Chambers, Mr Dukes, Mr Legat, Mr Ruddock & Mr Rudkins-Stow.
13:30	Lunch (Production Meeting)	
14:30	Continue staggering Act One	
18:00	Haircut	Mr Benjamin
18:30	All Calls to end	

Inside the Rehearsal Room

Work Experience placement, Esther Mead and Matt Waite, spent the afternoon in rehearsals with the *Crazy for You* cast. Below they share their experiences.

Esther's Rehearsal Report

Having run the first act in the morning, I joined the cast when they were going over specific songs and scenes in closer detail. They began with the *Follies Girls' Entrance* into Nevada, focusing on the music and choreography. After a short run of the sequence, Musical Director, Catherine, and Associate Choreographer, Claira, worked with the cast on different sections of the music and dancing, respectively, as well as how they would combine both aspects.

The four Follies Girls needed enough time to position their instruments at the side of the stage before getting in position to be able to sing, which was rehearsed a number of times to make sure this was secure in time to the accompanying music. The cast were able to make the most of their rehearsal time by going over different parts simultaneously: whilst Claira worked with the Follies Girls on some of the choreography, Catherine worked with other cast members on their instrumental parts. It was clear that possibly the most difficult part of the production is playing the accompanying instrumental music from memory, as the cast will all be on stage. At this point in the rehearsal process, the actors used music stands which were dotted around the edge of the space in case they needed music to refer to.

They then moved on to rehearse both *Embraceable You* and *Someone To Watch Over Me*, working mostly with Catherine on the music. The main thing worked on in this rehearsal was the cast agreeing on timings and speed as an ensemble, and especially together with Caroline Sheen singing. To help this, Caroline faced the rest of the cast – almost forming a circle – so that they



The cast of *Crazy for You* in rehearsals.

could all see each other and communicate better. Having worked on this, they then ran the two numbers, which were much more polished.

At this point in the rehearsal, Director Paul Hart took the male members of the cast to the stage to rehearse the fight scenes in the show with Fight Director, Paul Benzing. This was important as they needed to practise this movement sequence in the space they would be performing in. Whilst the male cast members were needed elsewhere, Claira continued to work on the Follies Girls' dance break. This included some tricky choreography with suitcases, such as sliding into splits from sitting on the suitcases, and a can-can routine standing on top of them. Claira worked with the girls on fitting the choreography in time to the music, and introduced some alternative movements into the routine to make this easier when dancing with the suitcases.

It was very exciting to watch all the elements of the show coming together in rehearsals and being polished in time for opening night next week!

Matt's Rehearsal Report

Keeping rehearsals on track and making progress is a full time job. Matt Waite, shadowing the production team, reports on a typical/the same day from the perspective of the stage management department:

Before Lunch

10:00am Cast get their instruments in tune by playing them to warm them up. In the rehearsal room there are a few print-offs of the "Agenda for the Day" for everyday so we know what we will be doing. But sometimes it does alter throughout the day.

10:09am Start work on *Things Are Looking Up*, fine-tuning the way they play and trying to get the balance right with the singing. There are 14 cast members and **every** cast member plays a musical instrument somewhere during the show.

10:24am Focus on just playing the music for *Things Are Looking Up*, with no singing.

10:38am Jump to a different number, in Act 2, where both Zanglers sing *What Causes That*. Focus on trying to combine the lyrics and the music together.

11:02am Set up for the beginning of the show.

11:08am Run from the top of the show.

11:37am Tea Break (the actors **have** to have breaks at certain times according to Equity, the artist's union)

12:07pm End of break

12:10pm Rehearsals split between a music call in the rehearsal room, and Tom's/Bobby's rope work and fight scene in the theatre.

Lunch

1:30pm The actors rest but the production team have to keep working! The production meeting brings together staff from every area of backstage. Everyone explains what progress they're making and we discuss any problems to solve. In the production meeting we talked about:

- Lighting: if we needed to hire some more lights or if we have enough.
- Choreography: is Tom/Bobby still going to dance on the ironing board because the ironing board might not be big enough.
- Props: How the swing will be constructed, used and stored.
- Costume: A question about whether the Dream Girls' clothing should be on the on-stage rail or kept backstage.
- Mics: Can we have them in rehearsals for the next few days because we can't hear the singing over the music.

After Lunch

2:45pm Sort everything out ready to continue.

2:49pm Acting rehearsal of when Bobby (Tom Chambers) and Polly (Caroline Sheen) are in the theatre finding out that Bobby is from the bank.

3:02pm Continue into Follies Girls' song; polish previous work on it. One thing that I have found through my placement is that the professional cast will often spend a

whole day just concentrating on one song, doing lots of detail. When I've rehearsed things before we've tried to cram as much as possible in but they take it one step at a time to get it right.

3:42pm Continue acting rehearsal of when Bobby and Polly meet but Bobby now is dressed as Bela Zangler.

4:12pm Song *Someone to Watch Over Me* (Polly/Caroline)

4:23pm Tea Break

4:40pm End of break

4:42pm Pick up from before break. Working out some stage action with the

on-stage packing crates. The show is very energetic, whether actors are playing music, singing, dancing, acting or re-dressing the set, they are never left with nothing to do!

4:45pm Continue acting rehearsal of the Follies Girls getting ready for the show, teaching the cowboys to dance.

5:00pm The end of my day but the cast and team will keep going for another hour and a half but some days they work until 10pm.



Left: The cast of *Crazy for You*. Right: Bobby (Tom Chambers) and Polly (Caroline Sheen).

Rehearsal Report

Organisation is the chief element of any stage manager's role. After each day of rehearsals, our Deputy Stage manager, Sara Shardlow, types up the notes she has made during the day and sends them to the staff at The Watermill involved in making the show. Below is an example of her report for Wednesday 20th July.



Crazy For You

Watermill Theatre
Rehearsal Report #19
Wednesday 20th July 2016

General:

No notes today.

Design:

1. Please see Wardrobe Note 1.

Wardrobe:

1. Is it possible to have four rehearsal kimonos in rehearsal for tomorrow morning? No problem if this is not possible.
2. Could you confirm if there is a hat as part of the Zangler costumes?
3. As discussed at the Production Meeting, please could we have a pair of gloves for Mr Chambers to wear as Zangler to help him climb down the rope onto stage in 2:1? They will need to be hard wearing (he was working with rigging gloves in the theatre today).
4. Mr Chambers will be climbing down the rope in 2:1 while wearing his Zangler suit. We may need to ensure that the suit jacket can cope with the movement as he is climbing down the rope – potentially we might need to put some elastic in the back of the jacket to ensure it doesn't break. Please see DSM for more details.

Sound:

1. Please could we have a neck crunch sound effect for p53? The three cowboys will all crick their necks to one side and then to the other in unison. It was suggested that the best way to achieve this might be by recording a polo being crunched. Please see DSM for more details.

Musical Instruments:

1. Please could we have two sweat guards for the trumpets?

Stage Management/Props:

1. We are hoping to be able to hang the sun and moon on the SL and SR slip beams.
2. As discussed, please could we have a phone book for Polly to use?
3. Please see Wardrobe Note 1.

Lighting:

No notes today.

Production/ Technical:

1. Please see SM note 1.

Risk Assessment:

No notes today.



Left to right: Sara Shardlow, Jerome Van den Berghe and Catherine Jayes.

Credits

Music and Lyrics by George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin

Book by Ken Ludwig

Co Conception by **Ken Ludwig** and **Mike Ockrent**

Inspired by Material by **Guy Bolton** and **John McGowan**

Originally produced on Broadway by **Roger Horchow** and **Elizabeth Williams**

Original Broadway Choreography by **Susan Stroman**

Presented by The Watermill Theatre in Association with **Jamie Wilson** and **Gavin Kalin**.

Director Paul Hart

Musical Supervisor & Arrangements Catherine Jayes

Designer Diego Pitarch

Choreographer Nathan M. Wright

Lighting Designer Howard Hudson

Sound Designer Tom Marshall

Associate Director Abigail Pickard-Price

Associate Choreographer Clairva Vaughan

Assistant Musical Director Jerome Van Den Berghe

Fight Director Paul Benzing

Dialect Coach Elspeth Morrison

Cast List in alphabetical order:

Billy/Eugene Fodor Matt Bateman

Everett Baker Kit Benjamin

Tess Hollie Cassar

Bobby Child Tom Chambers

Bela Zangler/Cowboy Peter Dukes

Lottie Child/Patricia Fodor Lindsay Goodhand

Mitzi Katrina Kleve

Lank Hawkins Jeremy Legat

Custus Emile Ruddock

Moose Ned Rudkins-Stow

Patsy Seren Sandham-Davies

Polly Baker Caroline Sheen

Irene Roth Lucy Thatcher

Margie Anne White

Production Manager Lawrence T. Doyle

Company Stage Manager Kerrie Driscoll

Assistant Production Manager Nelly Chauvet

Deputy Stage Manager Sara Shardlow

Assistant Stage Managers Ailsa Bonner, Ciara Dredge, Katie Newton

Wardrobe Supervisor Amanda Dooley

Wardrobe Assistant Eloise Short

Costumes by Bristol Costume Services, Louise Coughlan, Sarah Poxton Le-Strange, Sue Nicholson, Janet Christmas, Catherine Cottenden

Trainee Technician Ben O'Connell

Set Construction Belgrade Production Services

Beards Campbell Young Associates

Artwork & Design **Creativexs & EMG**

Production Photographer Richard Davenport

National Press and Publicity Clair Horwood