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# Guys and Dolls: The Process of Becoming Sky Masterson

Peter Colombatto

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**Guys and Dolls** 

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## **Guys and Dolls**

## The Process of Becoming Sky Masterson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Theatre with an emphasis in Arts Management

Ву

Peter Colombatto B.A. B.F.A Lindenwood University, 2010

May 2013

Lindenwood University

## **Thesis Approval Form**

This thesis is approved.

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#### Abstract

In order to satisfy the requirements for a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre from
Lindenwood University, I was required to perform a leading role in a production. In addition to
the rehearsal and performance process, I am required to submit a thesis paper to supplement
my experience. My proposal to perform the role of Sky Masterson in Guys and Dolls was
accepted and the process began in the fall of 2012. Contrary to popular belief, Sky is a complex
character that is more than just a typical leading male. Throughout the rehearsal process I was
able to explore new tactics that would help Sky achieve his objectives. This paper will document
that process and provide insight into the choices I made as Sky Masterson.

## **Thesis Duplication Release**

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Peter Colombatto

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#### Introduction

Department. During that time I have been given the tools to polish my craft and expand my knowledge of music, dance, and theatre. As an undergraduate student I earned degrees in Musical Theatre, Business Administration, and Arts Management. During that six year period I participated in over twenty theatre productions, several choral concerts, and worked in the theatre as a volunteer house manager. I was lucky enough to be part of the startup of the J. Scheidegger Center which would mark the beginning of a new chapter for Lindenwood University Fine and Performing Arts. I graduated in May 2010 and spent the next year working as an event coordinator for one of the largest marketing firms in Saint Louis. After a year an opportunity to return to my alma mater came up allowing me to pursue a Master's Degree in Theatre with an emphasis in Arts Management. Though it would be a difficult transition back to being a student, I was excited for the opportunity to earn Master of Fine Arts that could open new doors for my future.

The corner stone of the Master's program is the thesis project. Since my program focuses on acting, my project is a process thesis with a paper to supplement my experience. When it came time for proposing a project my options were limited. Typically my program is completed in three years, but because I am a Graduate Assistant I was able to attend class during the summer allowing me to complete the process in two years. The only downfall of this was not being able to propose a show that wasn't already on the schedule. I chose to propose the role of Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls* as my Thesis project. Though I had participated in

this show once before, this presented a unique opportunity to not only showcase my ability, but to also challenge myself to continue to grow and learn.

#### Chapter One

#### The Production

Casting for *Guys and Dolls* began in the fall of 2012. The show was part of the semester cattle call that auditioned along with several other shows. The show was scheduled for March 14-17, a Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday run with a preview night on Wednesday. After the show was cast, rehearsal would begin in January of 2013. Since this was a main stage musical taking place in the spring, we are allowed to use J term for music rehearsals. This can prove to be an advantage or a difficulty. In one aspect that helps because you have extra time, but in another way it makes you feel like you have more time than you do. The entire process would run from January through mid-March, allowing for roughly 10 weeks of rehearsal before the show opened. Rehearsals would include music, blocking, acting and character development, fight choreography and performance technique.

Since this was a university production, we tried to include several different aspects of the Fine Arts Department. The large spring musical is a perfect example of how the entire department works together to put on a production. First and foremost the show was directed by Larry Quiggins of the Theatre Department. He was assisted by Pam Grooms of the Music Department fulfilling the role of Musical Director. Pam grooms with the help of Dr. Matt Hoorman coordinated the pit orchestra for *Guys and Dolls*. Jan Strzelec, the head of the dance department, would choreograph the show with the help of her assistant Erica Bibas. The

publicity poster for the show, as well as a photo that would be used for the press release, were designed by Luis Basantes from our Graphics Department. The costumes for the production were designed and built by Louise Herman with the help of her assistant Phil Gill. The technical departments handled everything from lights, sound, and scenery. Both costumes and set design were able to use a combination of work and learn students and volunteers to help build sets and costumes. I have included a program from the production as appendix A that gives a much more comprehensive breakdown of who was involved, and what they contributed to the project. In just one paragraph you can see how many different people are involved in putting on a show of this size. In fact there were 42 cast members, 20 members of the production staff, 14 members of the pit and orchestra, and 27 members of the production crew. This comes to a grand total of 103 people working on one project.

#### The Script

The script for *Guys and Dolls* was written by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows with music and lyrics composed by Frank Loesser. Though it is an original work, the script is adapted from a series of short stories by Damon Runyon. Runyon was a sports writer who turned to writing short stories full of colorful characters. Theses "tall tales" included stories about gangsters and gamblers, missionaries and showgirls. It is from these stories that *Guys and Dolls* was born.

The show is set in late 1940's or early 1950's New York, specifically on Broadway. Guys and Dolls focuses on the lives of two couples, Sky Masterson and Sarah Brown as well as Nathan Detroit and Miss Adelaide. Sky and Sarah are a new couple; in fact they haven't even

met at the beginning of the show. The complete opposite, Nathan and Adelaide are a time tested, 14 year romance.

Nathan is the proprietor of a floating crap game, the oldest running in New York City. At this given time, the heat is on due to the efforts of Lieutenant Brannigan keeping him from being able to find a place to host the popular event. At the same time the town is busting at the seams with "high players" all flush with cash and looking for some action. Even Sky Masterson is in town, and he is the highest player of them all. Nathan has found one spot willing to take the risk, but it comes at the cost of one thousand dollars, which he does not have. In an effort to get the cash together, Nathan devises a plan to bet Sky a thousand dollars that Mindy's sold more strudel than cheesecake the day before. Of course Nathan has his cronies Nicely Nicely and Benny South Street find out the correct information for him before he places the bet. But Sky is no one's fool and sees right through this trick, citing a wonderful story his father told him.

"When I was a young man about to go out into the world, my father says to me a very valuable thing. He says to me like this. Son the old guy says, I am sorry I am unable to bankroll you to a very large start, but not having any potatoes to give you I am now going to stake to you some very valuable advice One of these days in your travels, a guy is going to come to you with a nice brand new deck of cards on which the seal is not yet broken. And this guy is going to offer to bet you that he can make the Jack of Spades jump out of the deck and squirt cider in your ear. But son, do not bet this man, for as sure as you stand there you are going to wind up with an ear full of cider!"

[sic] Guys and Dolls Pgs. 20-21

Now Nathan being very good at what he does, he is able to think on his feet. After a brief argument about Dolls and whether or not Sky could take any girl he wishes to Havana Nathan sees his opportunity to act. Miss Sarah Brown, the local Mission Sergeant, has just come out with her mission band and Nathan Can't resist. Sky has walked right into a trap of convenience. Before knowing the exact conditions, Sky accepts Nathans bet that says he cannot take any girl to Havana. Immediately after they shake on it, Nathan points out Miss Sarah and the bet is on.

Feeling quite confident, Sky makes his way into the mission and starts charming his way into Sarah's heart... or so he thinks. Sky's tricks seem to work on everyone around him except Sarah. She seems to see through him, but is intrigued at what he wants out of her. Once Sky realizes what he's up against he has to change tactics and charm turns into joking and flirtatious bickering. During this scene Sky reveals that he wants to take Sarah to Havana Cuba for dinner. In exchange he will guarantee a dozen sinners for a prayer meeting being held that week. Sarah is curious but denies Sky's advances stating that he is not the kind of man for her. This discussion leads into the song "I'll Know" In which Sky and Sarah both describe their perfect match. This is a very important scene because Sky's motivation needs to change from winning a bet to winning Sarah's heart.

In the following scene we become more acquainted with Adelaide and Nathans' relationship. We learn that they have been engaged for fourteen years and Adelaide is about fed up with waiting for Nathan to marry her. She reveals that she has been lying to her mother for years about their lives. She has told her mother they have been married and even have five

children together. At the same time Nathan has been lying to Adelaide, insisting that he has given up his crap game because he loves her so much. Nathans plans are ruined when Mimi comes in and blows his cover. Adelaide is so mad that after he leaves, she laments about how a woman remaining unmarried can develop several ailments affecting the eyes, the ears, the nose, and the throat.

Throughout the show, Nathan has several run-ins with Lieutenant Brannigan. The Lieutenant has been breathing down his neck trying to keep him from finding a spot to hold his crap game. After one such altercation, Nathan is tricked into finally setting a date to marry Adelaide. To make matters worse, at the end of the scene in the mission band comes across stage without the leadership of Miss Sarah. In this moment Nathan realizes that sky has taken her to Havana.

The last scene before intermission takes place mostly in Havana. Sky and Sarah tour around the city taking in the sights until Sky fed up with the sightseeing, takes Sarah to a nightclub. While they are there they enjoy several Dulce de Leche's, this of course being the first time Miss Sarah has ever had alcohol. After enjoying themselves for some time, a young Havana dancer comes and sweeps Sky off his feet for a dance. In retaliation Sarah links arms with a young man. Right when things are about the heat up, Sarah comes over and pushes the young woman dancing with Sky. This prompts a fight to begin ending with Sky and Sarah both knocking out their respective opponents, and fleeing the scene. Once out of harm's way, Sarah reveals how much fun she is having and how she's come to feel about Sky in the song "If I Were

a Bell" The thought of real feelings forming between the two prompts Sky to be the gentleman and take his inebriated date back to New York.

Once back in the city the two solidify their romance in the songs "My Time of Day" and "I've Never Been in Love Before". Not long after expressing their love for each other, we hear sirens and a score of gamblers dash out of the mission. Brannigan runs on stage revealing that there has been a crap game running full blast in the mission. This immediately causes Sarah to close back up, assuming that Sky has only taken her to Havana in order to leave the Mission empty for the gamblers to use. Even though that is not the truth, Sarah exclaims that "it's no good" and when Sky asks her "what kind of a doll are you any way" she angrily responds "I'm a mission doll!"

Act two begins with a moving scene between Sky and Adelaide where Sky realizes that he really is no different than Nathan and at this moment his transformation is complete. He realizes it was wrong of him to make a bet on Sarah but ultimately it led him to her. On the way to the crap game, Sky comes across Sarah and Arvide. During this exchange Sky vows to make good on his end of the bargain by producing twelve genuine sinners for their meeting.

Sky makes his way down to the sewer where Nathan and the other gamblers have been shooting crap for twenty four hours. He comes in at the perfect moment just before Nathan and Big Julie start to tear each other apart. After failing to convince the crap shooter's to attend the meeting on their own Sky devises a plan to win them with a roll of the dice. If he wins each man has to attend the Save-A-Soul Mission's midnight prayer meeting. If Sky loses they each win a thousand dollars cash. "Luck Be a Lady" is a soliloquy that Sky has where he is essentially

praying to his goddess Lady Luck. He says "You've seen me roll for a hundred G's... But I've got a lot more than dough riding on this one." Obviously Sky is referring to his chance to win back the heart of Miss Sarah.

With a roll of the dice the stage goes dark. The lights come up on the streets of New York, with gamblers walking toward the mission griping the whole way there. Through this we learn that Sky has won their souls in the bet. Unfortunately for Nathan, he runs into an angry Miss Adelaide. Even though Nathan has missed his appointment with Adelaide, and ruined their plans to elope she forgives, that is until she thinks he is lying about having to attend a prayer meeting. The song "Sue Me" takes place as an argument between the jilted couple and ends with Nathan down on his knees and Adelaide leaving the stage.

The scene shifts to the Save-A-Soul Mission. Sarah is there with the rest of the mission group as well as the General. Just before the general closes the mission, in comes the crap shooters led by none other than Sky Masterson and Nathan Detroit. Before departing for points West, Sky instructs the men to behave and leaves Nathan in charge. Upon Sky's exit, the meeting goes on. At the General's request Nathan has the men begin to give testimony about their lives of sin. The scene culminates with Nicely's testimony of a dream he had in the form of the song "Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat". The show ends the same way most musicals of the Golden Age do, with a happy ending. Nathan and Adelaide have made up and are getting married, and Sky and Sarah are married themselves. Not only has Sky won the heart of Miss Sarah but he has found a new life with her, and the mission.

Guys and Dolls uses the colorful characters that Runyon has created to make Broadway come to life. Nathan and Adelaide are larger than life comedic caricatures while Sky and Sarah represent the truth and honesty of love in the story. Nicely and Benny also aide in the comic relief and almost act as narrators throughout the script. But what really gives the show that New York feeling is the ensemble. The crapshooters, tourists, Hot Box Girls, gangsters, and mission folk give diversity to the streets of the city and provide the necessary living backdrop that the principal roles need to live.

#### Chapter Two

#### Research and Character Analysis

Being a musical comedy, *Guys and Dolls* had a relatively large writing team compared to a regular straight play. The script was adapted and written by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows while the music and lyrics were composed by Frank Loesser. The story in its entirety is adapted from a series of short stories written by Damon Runyon.

Jo Swerling (April 8, 1897 - October 23, 1964) was a writer in the American theatre, a screen play writer, and a lyricist. Born in the Russian Empire, Swerling and his parents fled the Czarist regime to New York where he would eventually become a newspaper and magazine writer. This line of work seemed appropriate since as a child, he sold newspaper's to help support his family. Swerling's early playwriting career began with a work named *Street Cinderella*, a comedy for the Marx Brothers. His first major success came in 1927, after writing the script and lyrics for a musical revue titled *The New Yorkers*.

After establishing himself as a credible writer, Swerling set out for Hollywood to work as a screenwriter. He is credited with films such as Frank Capra's Ladies of Leisure, Platinum Blonde, Once Behind the Mask, and The Pride of the Yankees. His two most notable Hollywood successes were It's a Wonderful Life and Gone With The Wind, of which he was a co-writer. In 1950, Swerling made his way back to Broadway to join the creative team working on Guys and Dolls which would open that same year. The piece written by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows would go on to win a Tony as well as a New York Drama Critics' Award.

Abe Burrows (December 18, 1910 – May 17, 1985) was born as Abram Solomon

Borowitz in New York City. Before he branched out into entertainment, he worked as a runner on Wall Street as well as for an accounting firm in the city. He began his entertainment career as a joke writer, selling them to comedians and impressionists who appeared on the Rudy Vallee Radio Show.

Burrows would make much of his career as a radio show writer collaborating with Ed Gardner on the program *Duffy's Tavern*. Abe became the shows' head writer in 1941 and would later credit the experience as an opportunity to invest in the "Runyonesque" characters that would go on to create *Guys and Dolls*. "The people on that show were New York mugs, nice mugs, sweet mugs, and like Damon Runyon's mugs they all talked like ladies and gentlemen. That's how we treated the characters in *Guys and Dolls*." This quote is important because it gives insight into why Burrows and Swerling wrote in the style they did.

Abe's two greatest successes are Guys and Dolls (1950) and How to Succeed in Business

Without Really Trying (1961). The first was selected as the winner of the Pulitzer Prize in Letters

but due to actions being taken by the House-Un-American Activities Committee, no award was given that year. However Burrows would go one to win the Pulitzer for his work on *How to*Succeed in Business.

Francis Henry Loesser is an American born composer who made his career during the golden age of Broadway. He was born in New York City on July 29th, 1910 to Henry and Julia Loesser. Loesser's father was a German born pianist well known as a teacher of classical music. Franks brother Arthur was a touring concert pianist, musicologist, and music critic who also made a name for himself in classical music. The important thing to note about Loesser's youth is that even after growing up in a home that was very traditional and focused on classical music, he never received classical training.

By all accounts Loesser was a rebel from a very young age. Even though his parents were both German, Loesser refused to speak their native language at home. He also enjoyed playing practical jokes. His parents realized his potential as a naturally talented musician but claimed he was too restless to settle down for lessons. Despite his rebellious attitude, by age four Loesser had taught himself to play piano by ear, and had even began composing original works. He wrote his first song at the age of six titled "The May Party". Furthering his rebellious behavior, Loesser's interest was in pop music, which his father disapproved of. This interest in witty and enjoyable pop music would eventually blossom into writing for some of the most popular musicals of all time.

At age fifteen Frank was accepted to Townsend Harris School, a three-year high school for gifted children. According to his biography written by his daughter, he was more concerned

with playing practical jokes than completing his school work. After his failed high school career, Loesser was accepted to The City College of New York. While in college, Frank failed every class but English and gym. This combined with the oncoming Great Depression in America prompted him to drop out to pursue other jobs. After dropping out of college Loesser supported himself and his family with an array of jobs that included selling advertising for newspapers in town, working as a process server, and working as the city editor of a small newspaper in New Rochelle. While working numerous odd jobs, Loesser maintained his creative side continuing to write. His writing included silly sonnets and songs as well as sketches and radio scripts. His first published song was written with William Schuman and was titled "In Love with a Memory of You". Schuman is quoted saying "Frank Loesser has written hits with Hoagy Carmichael, Burton Lane, Jule Styne and other Hollywood grand dukes, but I have the distinction of having written a flop with him." Even though his first published song was a flop, his future would be much more beneficial.

In the 1930's Loesser had begun playing piano and singing in nightclubs. He had also teamed up with music composer Irving Actman as a lyricist. This duo lead to the first Broadway show Loesser was a part of, *The Illustrator's Show*. This show Opened in 1936 and closed after five performances. Even though this show was a flop, it led to a position working in Hollywood for Paramount writing music for movies. Throughout his career Loesser would write songs that would be featured in sixty films.

Loesser's work would be changed by joining the war effort in 1942. After enlisting in the Army, Loesser was assigned to the Special Services writing songs for the military camp shows.

One of these songs was "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition". This song would go on to be used as the anthem for the fight against the Nazis and Japanese in World War II. Other than its use as a fight song, "Praise the Lord" is important to the career of Frank Loesser because it was the first song that he had written both the melody and the lyrics for.

After World War II Loesser's career as a Broadway composer would take off in a serious way. Over the next twenty years, Frank Loesser would compose the music for several successful musicals. The two most important contributions to musical theatre by Loesser are *Guys and Dolls* and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying. Guys and Dolls* premiered in New York November 24, 1950 at the 46th Street Theatre. Instantly the show was a theatrical master piece which to this day many consider the perfect Broadway musical. The first review was by Brooks Atkinson of the New York Times saying "Mr. Loesser's lyrics and songs have the same affectionate appreciation of the material as the book, which is funny without being self-conscious or mechanical".

Guys and Dolls is based on several short stories by Damon Runyon out of the book Guys and Dolls. The show is based primarily on the short stories The Idyll of Miss Sarah Brown and Blood Pressure. The show has two major story lines. First we are introduced to Nathan Detroit who is the facilitator of the greatest floating crap game in New York. This is an illegal crap game that moves from place to place to avoid alerting the police. Nathan is trying to avoid his inevitable marriage to Miss Adelaide, a night club performer and his fiancé of fourteen years. The second and main story line from the show is that of Sky Masterson and his mission to win the heart of Sarah Brown. Sky is a popular gambler said to own nothing but an extra suit and his

bank roll and named for the high level of his bets. Sarah is a mission worker, trying to save the souls of the "evil doers" of Broadway at her Save a Soul Mission.

Loesser had several songs that made Guys and Dolls so popular. "Fugue for Tinhorns" and "Oldest Established" were songs that set the stage for the gangsters looking to make an easy buck. But the most memorable songs include "Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat", "Luck Be A Lady" and "Sue Me".

The original production of Guys and Dolls ran for 1,200 performances and was nominated for and won five Tony awards including best Musical. Since then, this insanely popular show has become a beloved landmark of musical theatre. *Guys and Dolls* is regularly performed both professionally and academically. Loesser's moving melodies and catchy yet intelligent lyrics are among the most popular from the golden age of Broadway.

Many years later after a few other marginally successful musicals, Loesser would have another great success with the show *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying. How to Succeed* opened in the same theater that *Guys and Dolls* did in October 1961. The theatre was the 46th Street Theatre and the show ran for 1,417 performances. A show about a young man using his charm and wit to move up the male dominated corporate ladder, *How to Succeed* became wildly popular. The show was nominated for eight Tony Awards and won seven. Oddly enough the one Tony they were nominated for and didn't win was Best Composer. Despite losing the Tony award in 1961, Loesser had several hit songs featured in *How to Succeed*. Such songs as "Coffee Break"," The Company Way" and " A Secretary is Not A Toy" helped make this show a household title. Both of Loesser's most popular shows were also turned into motion

pictures. Guys and Dolls featured both Frank Sinatra and Marlon Brando. Straying slightly from the stage adaption, most of Loesser's songs remained intact in the film version.

Frank Loesser's popular career may have been relatively short, but in this case quality ruled over quantity. You can gauge the success of a show not only by its original production but also by how relevant it remains. The fact that Loesser has two shows that not only became Hollywood films, but also to this day remain two of the most revived musicals is a testament to his success.

Loesser died at the unfortunately young age of 59 in New York City. Loesser's legacy is not constricted to theatre alone. Loesser is also well known for his contributions to songwriting in both the film industry and the theatre industry. The combination of these to popular realms has sealed the legacy of Frank Loesser as one of America's greatest composers of all time.

Though he never wrote a single line intended for use in a Broadway show, it would be foolish to not analyze Damon Runyon as a contributor to the script. Though he would die four years before *Guys and Dolls* opened on Broadway, his short stories gave birth to one of the greatest musicals of all time.

Runyon is known for his short stories that are based on life in New York City after the prohibition era. His stories contained larger than life caricatures that were so unique, the term "Runyonesque" was coined. They all talked a certain way and were by no means "normal citizens". His stories focused on the colorful lives New Yorkers that included gamblers, actors, actresses, night club singers, gangsters, and other sorts of mugs. Runyon's writing career began

in the military after he enlisted during the Spanish-American War. His assignment was to write articles for The *Manilla Freedom* and the *Soldier's Letters*. After the war he emerged as a sports writer covering the New York Giants baseball team as well as professional boxing.

Upon leaving the world of sports writing, Runyon took to writing short stories that would be compiled into the book *Guys and Dolls and Other Short Stories*. The book contains the stories that were adapted to form the script for the Broadway Show.

### Guys and Dolls Production History

#### a. Premier Production

- Opened Nov. 21, 1950, closed Nov. 24, 1953
- ii. 46th Street Theatre

#### iii. Production Team

- 1. Director: George S. Kaufman
- 2. Choreographer: Michael Kidd
- 3. Scenic Design: Jo Meitziner
- 4. Lighting Design: Jo Meitziner
- 5. Costume Design: Alvin Colt

#### iv. Lead Actors and Their Roles

- 1. Robert Alda as Sky
- 2. Isabel Bigley as Sarah
- 3. Vivian Blaine and Adelaide
- 4. Sam Leven as Nathan

#### v. Awards

- 1. Best Musical 1951
- 2. Best performance by a Leading Actor in a Musical 1951
- 3. Best Performance by a Featured Actress in a Musical 1951b
- 4. Best Choreography 1951
- 5. Best Direction of a Musical 1951

#### b. 1976 Revival

- i. Opened July 1, 1976, closed July 14, 1977
- ii. The Broadway Theatre
- iii. Production Team
  - 1. Director: Billy Wilson
  - 2. Choreographer: Billy Wilson
  - 3. Scenic Designer: Tom H. John
  - 4. Lighting Designer: Thomas Skelton
  - 5. Costume Designer: Bernard Johnson

#### iv. Lead Actors and Their Roles

- 1. James Randolph as Sky
- 2. Ernestine Jackson as Sarah
- 3. Norma Donaldson as Adelaide
- 4. Robert Guillaume as Nathan

#### v. Awards

1. Theatre World Award 1977

- c. 2005 West End Revival
  - i. Opened June 1, 2005, closed April 14, 2007
  - ii. The Piccadilly Theatre
  - iii. Production Team
    - 1. Director: Michael Grandage
    - 2. Choreographer: Rob Ashford
    - 3. Scenic Design: Christopher Oram
    - 4. Lighting Design: Howard Harrison
    - 5. Costume Design: Christopher Oram
  - iv. Lead Actors and Their Roles
    - 1. Ewan McGregor as Sky
    - 2. Jenna Russell as Sarah
    - 3. Douglas Hodge as Nathan
    - 4. Jane Krakowski as Adelaide
  - v. Awards
    - 1. Outstanding Musical Production 2006
    - 2. Best Actress in a Musical 2006
- 2. I will read reviews on Guys and Dolls
  - a. I chose to read reviews on Guys and Dolls.
  - b. I have chosen three reviews to distill
    - The New York Times- Brooks Atkinson, Published Nov. 25, 1950. This
      review was written the day after the original production opened in 1950.

It praises the way that writers Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows, and composer Frank Loesser stayed true to the stories written by Damon Runyon, which inspired the show. The original cast shined onstage staying true to Runyon's characters providing colorful representations of the New York City lifestyle. Director George S Kaufman is given credit for putting together a strong a well done production. The writer admits that from a technical point of view, *Guys and Dolls* is a work of art. "It is spontaneous and has form, style and spirit" Says the critic. He also compliments the choreography as well as the scenic and costume design. All aspects seem to have captured Runyon's ideas of the sights and sounds of Broadway, without taking itself too seriously.

ii. The Guardian.com-Michael Billington, Published June 2, 2005. This review was written in reference to the 2005 revival of Guys and Dolls at the Piccadilly Theater at the West End in London. This production was described as being more of a play with music, with very real attached characters in contrast to the usual caricatures this show can produce.

Ewan McGregor stars as Sky Masterson, who acts and dances the part well but has a less than perfect singing voice. The reviewer praises the artistic design throughout the show and also is very impressed with the way that director Michael Grandage has put on a funny musical but stayed true to the characters." Grandage has not just revived one of the

- best of all Broadway shows; he has reminded us that even musicals need to be rooted in truth if they are to earn their classic status".
- iii. NewYorkTheatreguide.com- Tulis McCall, Published May 2009. In this review, the reviewer is unimpressed with what is called an "uninspired new revival". Rather than focus on the ups and downs of the show, the review spends the bulk of its time on the synopsis of the show itself.

  Once the writer gets to this particular production they disregard it as nothing special. The only aspect of the show they enjoyed was the choreography saying it was "glorious". The review went on to say the theatre was uncomfortably small comparing it to airline seating. IN the end, the real problem is that even though the show is set in the 1940's the actors are anchored in the present, unable to suspend the audience's disbelief. This results in the production being "not quite together" From the costuming to the lack of crispness in the musical numbers.
- Compare and contrast my three distillations.
  - i. I chose reviews from three different performances of *Guys and Dolls*, the premier in 1950, the West End revival in 2005, and the most recent Broadway revival in 2009. The obvious difference is that the third review stands out as a negative one. The reviewer went as far as to call it an "uninspired new revival". The other two were overwhelmingly impressed with almost all aspects of their productions respectively. All three reviews gave a summary of the shows synopsis, and the first two compared and

contrasted the productions the works of Damon Runyon, whose writing inspired the musical. One thing was present throughout all three articles, Guys and Dolls is a favorite among musical theatre goers, and they want it to be done well with a good balance of truth, experimentation, and respect.

#### d. Compose a summary distillation

i. Guys and Dolls is a respected and beloved piece of musical theatre which has been influential in its history. The show is based on Damon Runyon's stories which include the characters in Guys and Dolls. An important aspect to the production will always be the artistic design: set, lighting, and costumes. These combined with solid performances will ensure a good show. The 1950 review captured the initial excitement of the show but was very technically based. The 2005 review was the most focused on the overall performance praising the actors for staying true to the characters and the book. The most recent revival was lacking the most all around being cited for lack of creativity and production value. All three reviews share the common thread that the viewer wants to see an honest but fun productions complete with what you'd expect but some new tricks as well.

#### Text Work

1. My name is Sky Masterson. I've travelled all around the country and have built sort of a reputation for being "the highest player of them all." (Pg. 14) I am sort of legend as Nathan goes on to tell tales of the "crazy bets" (Pg. 15) I like to make. Some of my favorite bets include being known to "bet five thousand dollars on a cockroach" (Pg. 14) or "another time, he was sick and he wouldn't take penicillin on account he had bet ten C's that his temperature would go to 104." (Pg. 14) Along these same lines Nathan points out my caution when it comes to his money when he says "Not Sky, with him that kind of money ain't lending money, its betting money." (Pg. 14-15) When Sarah and I met for the first time in the mission, she saw through my act right away. "I now realize Mr. Gambler, when you were describing the blackness of your heart, you didn't do yourself justice." (Pg. 30) This is a perfect example of how I view myself compared to how the rest of the world views me. In the underworld of gamblers and gangsters I am well known and respected, my word and my marker are as good as gold if not better. But to the rest of world I am looked at as a petty gambler always looking for his next bet. I am not discouraged by Sarah's dismissal however; as I know everything comes down to timing. And when I realize that the General is about to shut down the

down to timing. And when I realize that the General is about to shut down the mission that is when I act. I use my greatest skill to get what I want, my charm. "What a remarkable young man." (Pg. 110) 2.

2. Throughout the course of the show, I really come to see myself differently. There is a sense that I am tired of the life I've been living and it's time for something different. I even start to believe that I'm not good enough for Miss Sarah. "A doll like you doesn't belong with a guy like me.. it's no good.. I'm no good." (Pg. 69) This line of thinking even leads me to confess my entire plan to Sarah which is a moment of real redemption for me. "You know why I took you to Havana? I made a bet! That's how you met me in the first place, I made a bet!" (Pg. 69)
In my most personal scene in the play, I share "My Time of Day" with Sarah and even go as far as to reveal my real name to her. "Obediah Masterson... That's' my real name. You're the first person I've ever told it to." (Pg. 73) During this scene I share the details of my life, and what I enjoy about the night time. And more importantly I realize that Sarah Brown is the only person I've ever wanted to share that part of myself with.

#### <u>Past</u>

1. My childhood was not unlike most kids. I had a mom and a dad. I was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado on January 5<sup>th</sup> 1917. My father was Isaiah Masterson, married to my mother Elizabeth Masterson, formerly Elizabeth Donaghy. My parents were both first generation born Americans whose parents immigrated from Ireland and England. The families came over to the United States together in the late 1880's on a cross Atlantic steamer. Once in New York they went where they

could find work, out west. First the families worked on the railroads and once they were complete they worked in the Colorado coal mines near Colorado Springs.

Mother and father met because of the close knit community we lived in, and after a time were married. My father worked in the coal mines all his life working to support my mother until he could afford to buy their own home. My mother being an Irish Catholic was raised very religious and that faith carried over to her adult life. My father refused to start a family until he had the potatoes to raise a boy right. So by the time I was born my parents were both in their 30's, very strange for that time and I would be my parent's first and only child. The doctor said that my birth almost caused my mother's death. I came out backwards and caused her a great deal of bleeding and pain from which I don't think she ever really recovered. She died when I was five years old, leaving my father to raise me on his own. We were lucky that we lived in a close Irish community. I had many people to look after me while he would be in the mines.

My father was both a man of faith and a man of chance with a Bible in one hand and a deck of cards in the other. Most nights we would read the Good Book after supper and after a little reading we would listen to the radio and play different games of chance. He taught me the ins and outs of poker, blackjack, and craps. Of course we never played for much more than jelly beans but I got pretty good in my own right. My natural talent for sport grew but so did my hunger for something different. Unique propositions caught my attention. For example I would put a bet

on which leaf a fly would land on or how many seeds were in a single piece of watermelon.

When I was 18 years old I was out growing our town and ready to make my own way. My father not being able to give me a bank roll to start my own life gave me a very important piece of advice instead. He says to me "Son, one day in your travels, a guy is going to come to you with a nice brand new deck of cards on which the seal is not yet broken. This man is going to bet you that he can make the jack of spades jump out of the deck and squirt cider in your ear. But son, do not bet this man for as soon as you stand there you are going to wind up with an ear full of cider." Now what my father was saying was, if it sounds too good to be true, it usually is. I wish he had taught me not to make propositions on matters I knew nothing about. Right after I had left home and made a little money of my own, I blew it all on a bet that St. Louis was the biggest city in the world. In my defense, this was my first time outside of Colorado and Saint Louis seemed pretty damn big to me.

Rather than settling down and holding a regular job, I decided to live the life of a wanderer. Never staying in one place too long, or with the same collection of citizens long enough to watch the action die down. This kind of life style allowed me to support myself with what I won gambling. All I needed was an extra suit, my bank roll, and a hotel key. Now one might think this lifestyle would get stale quickly, but not for me. I'm the kind of guy who's always looking for where the action is.

Around the time I was 23, it was 1940 and I find myself in Cincinnati. Now my life 2. up to this point has been a combination of being lucky and making my own luck. In Cincinnati neither tactic was working. I had found myself owing just about everyone in town something or another, with no way to meet my debt. Now I am embarrassed to say this next part, but it happened just like this. When I realized I had bet what I did not have and then some, I figure the only way out is to skip town and fast. But when I'm packing up my hotel room I notice one of those Gideon Bibles next to the bed. I get to thinking about my father and what he would think about his boy welching on a debt to anyone. So I start flipping through the Book and I find the verse that reads like this: "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. " Now I get this feeling in my gut upon reading this, like this is a very important thing. Looking back this is the moment that defined who I am as a man. So I don't leave Cincinnati, instead I stick around until I can make good for every penny I owed. Now I couldn't make money appear out of nothing so I did odd jobs until I was even with all those honest citizens.

Now something was going on at this time, you might recall. There was this war gearing up, a world war. See there was Hitler in Europe, and The Emperor in Japan thinking they could muscle the rest of the world. But I don't gotta go over all of this, you know how it went and if you don't no amount of explanation can help you.

Now around this time I'm 26 and I know I've got two options: I can either enlist in the armed forces or get drafted. Remember earlier when I was talking about making my own luck? It's even truer when guns, danger, and potential demise are involved. So to hedge my bet I enlist in the army and since I am a wiz with numbers I score a gig as our company clerk, which seems to keep me out of harm's way. Through boot camp and all the traveling we did before we landed in France I spent a lot of time playing cards with the rest of the boys. You'd be shocked at how impossible it is to find the simple things while you're stuck in a God awful situation like we were, so we held onto our dice and cards pretty hard since they were difficult to come by. I spent about six months in France and Germany working in a field office. Though I wasn't on the front lines, hell was only a couple hundred yards away and danger certainly was everywhere. It was no rare thing to find that we had been cut off from our lines and had to "bug out" and re-position. I think it was situations like this that gave me a calm spirit in tough spots.

While I'm in Germany waiting to go home after the war has ended I get a letter from Colorado. The letter writes about my father. Turns out we had a pretty hard winter back home and pop caught a tough case of pneumonia. He fought hard but his body couldn't take it. Years of working on railroads and down in coal mines had taken a toll on his body, but never his spirit. About this time, the war had ended, it was 1945 and I was ready to go home. After a brief visit to Colorado to collect a few things and sell off the family home I moved on to New York. I spend much of my time on Broadway. If I had to say I lived anywhere it would be there. I would occupy my time doing the usual things, usually playing games of chance. But as lucky as I am, I am known to make my own luck from time to time. Like this one

time I head down to the baseball park to take in a Sunday afternoon game. I'm there with some less than reputable but well known citizens, and I make a bet that I can toss a circus peanut from the stands across home plate. Well everyone I am with that day thinks I must be out of my mind, or perhaps the sun was too hot that day. So I place the bet, wind up, and throw! Zing, the peanut crosses the plate with distance on the other side to spare. I won the bet and chuckled to myself, because I'm the only one who knows how I did it. No, I was never a ball player, but I do have a set of circus peanuts filled with lead for just such occasions.

3. As I grow a little older I have come to see the world a certain kind of way. I look out for myself, because if I don't no-one else will. I see the guys settling down and breaking their back to earn a few bucks for some doll to call them respectable. But that's not me; I live the way I want. I'll have breakfast in Los Angeles, Lunch in Las Vegas and Dinner in New York; that's just how I am. Just before I went to New York this last time I had a wonderful little trip out west in Nevada. Not only did I catch up on a little rest and relaxation, but I also beat the house for over fifty grand at blackjack! But you know, money is just paper. That's why I'm able to bet so high. I am not attached to it, as I can always make more. Now when I arrived in New York I was pleased to run into my good friend Nathan, the proprietor of the town's oldest floating crap game. He's all bent out of shape over his long time fiancée Miss Adelaide. I try to explain to him that "guys like us; we must always remember that pleasant as a doll's company may be, she must always take second place to aces

- back to back." But he's too far gone for Miss Adelaide and he goes on about Mindy's cheesecake.
- 4. I don't care much what others think about me, but there are some in this particularly story that I seek approval from. First and foremost, I want to please Miss Sarah. I want her to look at me the same way I look at her. Most importantly I want her to be able to trust me. Along those lines, I care about what Sarah's grandfather thinks of me. I want him to know that I'm not just using his granddaughter as the means to an end. I really do care about her. Then there's Nathan and Adelaide, the closest thing I have to real friends. We go way back, and I really do want them to be happy. And a large part of me wants them to be happy for Sarah and me.

#### Present

1. Nathan has been going on and on about Mindy's cheesecake and strudel since I ran into him on the street. He doesn't know this, but I see exactly what he is trying to do. He offers to bet me that Mindy sold more strudel than cheesecake the day before, which on the surface would seem very unlikely since Mindy has the best cheesecake in town. Rather than accept his bet, I share my little story about the man and the "magic" deck of cards, and offer Nathan a counter bet that he can not name the color of the neck tie he had on. Of course he hadn't paid particular attention to this and refused the bet. But it's not long before Nathan finds another opportunity to trap me in a bet he thinks he can't lose. He bets me that I cannot

know what's hit me he has chosen Miss Sarah Brown, the Sergeant of the local Save-A-Soul Mission. So now I have one goal and one goal alone, to somehow convince Miss Sarah to go to Cuba with me.

2. Over the course of these few days, my objectives would change considerably. At first it was all about the bet. I had one thousand dollars on the line. More so than that my pride was at stake, and I wasn't going to lose this one without a fight. So I go to Miss Sarah's Mission and do my best to convince her that I am a newly reformed sinner, ready to change my evil ways. Unfortunately this mission doll isn't as naive as I had thought. In fact Miss Sarah is sharp as a tack and see's right through what I am trying to do. So I change my tactics a little bit. I notice that her mission is a ghost town most of the time so I offer her a proposition. I will fill her meeting with sinners if she goes to Havana with me for dinner. Of course she refuses but I have a feeling I'm starting to grow on her, in fact she is starting to grow on me.

After spending some time with Sarah I find that I am truly falling in love with her, in fact in Havana I completely forget about the bet. I am more focused on the moonlight in her hair, and the smell of her perfume in the Havana breeze. Forget the thousand dollars; my objective now is to win Sarah.

After we return to New York I share everything with her. I open up to her about "My Time of Day" and even reveal my name to her. This is important because it is something I have never done before. But right when everything seems about as

perfect as it can be, out of the mission runs Nathan Detroit and his band of misfit gamblers. Of course Sarah thinks I was in on the plan, who could blame her! So as Sarah goes to reclaim what is left of her mission, I set off to find the guys and settle the score.

I find Nathan and the others shooting crap down in the sewer. I convince them to put their souls on the line. I will roll the dice and if I win they all come to the mission for one meeting, but if I lose they all win one thousand dollars cash. My objective here is to win their souls, so I can keep my word to Miss Sarah. Not so I can save my reputation, but because I truly care about her and want her to succeed. After some reflection and mental preparation during "Luck Be a Lady" I shoot the dice and win my objective.

3. If there's one thing my father ever taught me it's that nothing great ever comes for free. There are certain obstacles that are keeping me from what I want. At first when I'm focused on this bet I have with Nathan, Sarah's reluctance is between me and my objective. If I can't get her to go on this trip with me, not only am I out one thousand dollars, but my reputation will also suffer a blow.

After I am able to make a deal with Sarah for her to join me in Havana my objective is to win her heart, not for the bet but because I genuinely want her. The obstacle in my way here is that I don't believe that I am good enough for Sarah. I go as far as to tell her "Look, a doll like you doesn't belong with a guy like me, it's no good. I'm no

good." My guilt for making the bet as well as my tarnished self-image are standing in the way of me letting Sarah fall in love with me.

After we return to New York, I have come around to the idea of letting Sarah in but things are thrown off course once again when we find that Nathan has been running the crap game in the Mission. Briefly my goal is to make Sarah believe that I wasn't involved but she has shut down and closed up her heart again. It's not that she doesn't believe me, but she is now faced with her own guilt. She believes that if she hadn't left this would never have happened.

My new objective is to find the guys after they have scattered from the mission. My obstacle is that New York is a big city and they could be anywhere. I start by heading over to the Hot Box to see if I can find Nathan. Instead I find Nicely who is able to help me find the Guys. Once I've found them shooting crap in the sewers, my Objective is to get them to come to the prayer meeting. My obstacle is that these are gamblers and gangsters who are far more interested in shooting crap than saving their souls. They have no interest in attending any sort of prayer meeting.

4. There are many ways to get what you want in life. To accomplish your objectives sometimes you have to change up your tactics. For example, when Sarah and I met for the first time in her mission (scene two), my charm and humor wasn't working so I had to change my tactic. Instead of charm I tried making a proposition instead.

Though I didn't reveal anything about the bet I had made with Nathan, I made no secret of the fact that I wanted to take her to Havana in exchange for helping fill her prayer meeting with sinners. When that didn't work right away, I tried seducing her

during "I'll Know". Just when I thought I had her, smack! Literally smack, she slapped the heck out of me.

Later on when the guys refused my invitation to the prayer meeting, I changed up my tactic from pleading to bargaining. The best way to get a gambler to do something they normally wouldn't do is to bet them into it.

- 5. There are several immediate conditioning forces in Guys and Dolls.
  - 1. Most of the action takes place in 1950's New York City, specifically Broadway. Within this setting, the scenes are set either on the street, The Hot Box, the Save-A-Soul Mission, or the sewers under New York. The only time we leave New York, we head to Havana Cuba. While were in Havana we visit a local café, several on site locations, and end the evening in an intimate nightclub.
  - 2. New York is the largest city in the world in 1950, and there are all kinds of people everywhere. On the street you will run into tourists, locals, gamblers, businessmen, policemen, actresses, various performers, and anyone else you can think of. It's a bustling environment, filled with energy. It's the city that never sleeps.
  - 3. The mood is upbeat and energetic. People moving around and engaging with each other. There is also a slight sense of social change in the air. The presence of the mission band suggests that the social climate is changing in the country, and specifically New

York. Some people want to return to a time that is more morally focused.

- The weather is warm but not too hot, New York in the spring.
   Since its spring the humidity hasn't really set in and the temperature is set just around 65-70 degrees.
- I am most interested in Miss Sarah brown, first because of the bet I have made with Nathan, and secondly because I have fallen in love with her and want to be with her.
- I am least interested in shooting crap with the guys and dabbling in meaningless bets with Nathan about cheesecake.
- 8. In this place I discover that I am ready for a change. Before I met Sarah the only things that I needed were a fresh suit, a plane ticket, and my bank roll. After I met her I realized how tired of that life I really was. Constantly wandering looking for the next big thing has become exhausting for me, and it took meeting Sarah for me to realize that there's more to life than making a buck. I discover that people are more important than bets and that love means more than all the money in the world. I learned to be open to change and that no matter how a guy might seem it's never too late for him to become something else; someone better.

#### Expectation

In the future, if I reach my objective I would like to spend my life with Sarah Brown. I would help her with the mission and we would live out our days helping those who are less fortunate. I would be an example that it's never too late to change your life.

## **Chapter Three**

### The Process

Auditions for *Guys and Dolls* took place in the fall of 2012 as part of a cattle call for several of the University productions. For the first time I sat on the directors side of the table. It was a unique opportunity to be able to observe the audition process from a new prospective. Since I had proposed the role of Sky Masterson for my thesis, and it was accepted, I was not technically required to audition. Instead I was able to sit in on the auditions and offer my input to the director.

Actors were required to have 16-32 bars of music prepared as well as minute long monologue. Auditionees were then sent to the dance call to learn a simple combination to assess dance skill level. Rather than having a formal audition, I submitted a thesis proposal form (Appendix A) requesting the opportunity to perform the role of Sky Masterson.

Once the auditions were finished we moved on to the callbacks which are my favorite part of the audition process. You get an opportunity to mix and match, and you really start to get a feel for how you want these characters to look and sound together. We had a unique situation this year. Since both of the male leads were already cast so it was just a matter of finding the right match for the female leads. When you are matching two actors together you have to pay attention to several things. You want to make sure that they sound good together vocally, you don't want one person to be much louder than the other or have an overpowering voice. Also you want to pay attention to how two actors look together. You may not want to have Sarah be taller than Sky and things of that nature. The point is, when you are casting a

show, especially one that is as stylistic as *Guys and Dolls*, you want to have actors that look and sound good together.

After the show was cast the waiting game began. The cast list went up and actors were able to pick up a copy of the libretto within a few weeks. Casting the show so far in advance has both benefits and drawbacks. From a design standpoint, it is helpful to the designers to have more time to work on scenic design, lighting, and costuming for the show. As an actor one of two things can happen. You can use this extra time for research and character development or you end up thinking you have more time than you really do and the show sneaks up on you. I spent the months and weeks leading up to the first rehearsal doing a character analysis, reading the Damon Runyon stories, and listening to various musical recordings of cast productions.

Since I had done this show in the past, the concept wasn't entirely new to me, but I wanted to approach the show with a new set of eyes and ears.

The rehearsal process began with J-Term, which is the first three weeks of January. This time is crucial to the success of our spring musicals here at Lindenwood. J-Term give us a chance to work on just music, making the rest of the rehearsal process easier. If there is extra time we also work on choreography as well. This is the time where character work begins. My rehearsal journal (Appendix E) goes into great detail about the entire rehearsal process from January through March.

My favorite part of J-Term was really getting a feel for the music. Since *Guys and Dolls* is a musical, the music is a huge part of how the performance is perceived overall. I enjoyed getting to work on my duets with Katie, which included "I'll Know" and "I've Never Been in Love

Before". We would go over the songs together, trying to find little pieces of truth to share with the audience. Musicals, especially from the Golden Age, tend to lack a sense of realism. That is something we wanted to add to the show. Sky and Sarah fall in love in a matter of days, and are married in a matter of a few weeks tops. We wanted to make the relationship believable, investing the audience in the characters struggles and victories.

By the end of January, the music was in pretty good shape. We were dealing with a relatively young cast compared to years past. We also had several "non-singers" in the show. While providing opportunity on one hand, this did hinder some of the things we could do musically. It would become a constant battle to make sure the male chorus was staying on their assigned vocal parts, even down to performance week. But it is important to remember that this is educational theatre, and while we want to put on a polished and professional looking show, our main responsibility is the education of our students.

Blocking rehearsals began Monday January 28, and we would spend the next week blocking the entirety of the show. I appreciate this approach since blocking can be the most tedious part of the show. I have been in shows where blocking has taken up to three or four weeks of the rehearsal process. While that may work for some, I find it difficult to move on under those circumstances. Blocking went very smoothly, in part to the experience of the principal cast. Though the chorus is full of young actors, the lead roles are filled by seasoned performers familiar with blocking so we could move at a relatively quick pace. Of course like any show there are certain parts that will take more time and need their own rehearsals. This includes the Hot Box dance numbers, the scenes in Havana, and the crap shooters ballet.

Anything with choreography needs a separate time to block, choreograph, and rehearse. Over the course of the rehearsal process it is interesting to see these various parts of the show come together to create a cohesive piece. The trick is having everything seem organic and natural. You want the dance numbers and songs to feel like an extension of the dialogue and action, like there were no words left that could describe how you were feeling so you had to start singing and dancing.

After we blocked the show it was time to move on to scene work. The production staff believed we were far enough ahead to move up the off book date by about a week. While we appreciated the faith they had in us, it did come as a surprise. It took a few days to adjust to being off book. Since we got the scripts out of our hands so quickly paraphrasing became a problem as well as changing or missing blocking. There are two problems with paraphrasing with any show, paraphrasing makes it difficult for other actors to pick up their cues, and this in turn can add un-necessary air to a scene causing it to drag. Secondly, *Guys and Dolls* was written very specifically meaning every word and phrase was written a certain way for a reason. For example Sky says "Yes dear, that is husband talk if I have ever heard it. Nathan you are trapped! In Adelaide you have the kind of girl that is most difficult to unload." What you will notice about the script is that the writers chose to avoid using contractions whenever possible. This was typical of Damon Runyon's writing style and comes across in this adaptation of his stories.

After about a week of being off book, the actors got a pretty good handle on the blocking and the dialogue. It is important to become consistent as quickly as possible so you can

continue to polish the rest of the show. The most important part of the rehearsal process for any actor is character development. On this level, an actor should be able to have their lines and music memorized so they can focus on creating a character. I enjoyed getting to know the characters of Sky and Sarah, and getting to work on creating them with Katie. The one thing I had observed about these roles before is that they have a tendency to fade into the background amidst all of the other characters and action in the show. It's not that Sky and Sarah are boring; it's that they are the most realistic characters in the show. When you put them up against the energy and charisma of Nathan and Adelaide, they can easily be over looked. The only way to keep this from happening was to make the audience fall in love with Sky and Sarah as they fall in love with each other. We wanted the audience to see the chemistry between them as soon as they were on stage together. In order to do this, Katie and I spent a lot of time talking in rehearsals figuring out what kind of relationship Sky and Sarah would have in the real world. At first it was difficult for Katie and me to get comfortable with each other. I carry a lot of tension in my back and shoulders on stage and that tends to make me appear tenser than I actually am, and that stood in my way. We also had to get comfortable enough with one another to make the kisses we had seem genuine. There were a total of five kisses between Sky and Sarah in this show and it was important for them to each say something different. One could be passionate and another loving and tender. If each kiss was the same, the audience wouldn't get anything out of it, and the story wouldn't progress.

We spent the week after blocking running the show in halves, doing act one in one rehearsal and act two the next evening. By the third week of rehearsal we were running the

show in its entirety. This was helpful in the sense that it gave us a much better idea of what the show would look like. It helped us to see the big picture much sooner than usual.

Throughout the rehearsal process we would also spend time checking in with the costume shop to get fitted for costumes. This process begins with taking the measurements for each cast member. These measurements are crucial to designing, building, and ordering the correct costume pieces. *Guys and Dolls* is a large cast show with a lot of different characters, many of which needing several costumes. Adelaide alone had seven different outfits to work with.

After the initial measurements are taken and a costume has been created, the actor will go in for a fitting. For example, I went in and tried on my suit, my shoes, and my hat. During this time Louise made sure the sleeves on the jacket and the length of the pants were correct. She made alterations to make sure the costume fitted the way she wanted it to. To put this into perspective, the costume shop had to do this with 42 cast members. As you can imagine this part of the rehearsal process takes a lot of time so it was important for cast members to arrive to their appointments on time.

The costume shop built several costumes for this show including the mission band and the Hot Box girls. The rest of the costumes were either pulled from our own inventory or ordered from a supplier. I believe the show was very well costumed and stayed true to the period and image we intended for the show.

Technical rehearsal for *Guys and Dolls* began on Thursday March 7<sup>th</sup>. (Appendix F) This is a very exciting time for any show because it's the first time the actors start to see the finished

product. For us, this is the first time we are rehearsing in the performance space and there were a lot of adjustments to make.

During "tech week", actors are being introduced to several new distractions. Before, all they have to worry about is the action and dialogue, but now they have to deal with costumes, blinding lights, musicians, microphones, and hair and make-up. These rehearsals tend to be longer, but it is also a time where the cast can put the finishing touches on the show. Technical rehearsals for *Guys and Dolls* ran very smoothly. Other than occasionally stopping to fix a spike or fix a scene issue, I don't recall any major issues.

Finally after ten weeks of rehearsal, it was time to open our show. At the time it seemed like the process took forever, but when the show arrived it seemed like it all went by so fast. Personally I was feeling a combination of excitement and sadness. Having done so many shows at Lindenwood, and beginning the performance run of my final production I couldn't help but feel nostalgic. But I decided to put those feelings aside until after the show so I could enjoy every moment of this one. On the day we opened I spent some time alone reading the Damon Runyon stories again, particularly the *Idyll of Miss Sarah Brown* from which most of the musical is adapted from. It was my personal goal to capture the character that Mr. Runyon had created and to bring him to life, and re-reading that story on opening night helped me check myself as an actor.

The show ran for four performances, March 14-17. Working in the Box Office gives me access to sales information for the production (Appendix G). The Thursday performance sold 684 tickets, Friday sold 1003 tickets, Saturday sold 960 tickets, and Sunday sold the most with

1106 tickets. The show ran just under three hours long with a fifteen minute intermission. Show week is always exhausting since you have just gotten out of tech week and by the time the show was over, we had run it every night for nine days. This is when an actor relies on their experience and adrenaline to help them keep both focus and energy.

### **Chapter Four**

### <u>Evaluation</u>

Guys and Dolls is considered by many musical theatre professionals to be one of the most perfect musicals of all time, making it a tall order to fill for any group. Overall I think we did an excellent job with this show. I felt like we had ample rehearsal time, qualified and competent leadership, and a hardworking and talented cast. The thing about educational theatre that you cannot ignore is that everyone involved also has a hundred other things going on in their lives besides the show. Students have class, work and learn, and homework. Our directors have to spend time teaching, grading, and working on other projects. What this does is minimizes the quality of work done in that ten week rehearsal/production process. When we got to tech week there was almost a sense of "how did we get here so fast?" But we used our time wisely and fixed any remaining trouble spots during tech week.

From a technical standpoint the show was spectacular. The set pieces we designed in house were fantastic. Some felt that the news stand and phone booth used in the show were a little over built, but being on such a large stage I think they worked out pretty well. The news stand was equipped with newspapers, comics, magazines, and even fake candy and cigarettes. It added a great sense of realism to the set which was set against cartoonish back drops. While I

appreciated the contrast between the back drops and the physical set pieces, some found the drops to be too cartoonish thinking that they didn't fit in with the rest of the design. I was very impressed with how the side walk pieces came on and off stage. They were equipped with a light post as well as a fire hydrant and trash bin. These pieces gave a realistic feel to the show, helping transport the audience and performers to 1950's New York.

The costumes were wonderful and well received by the audience overall. Each costume looked like it was given the attention it deserved as everything seemed to fit and match the artistic design of the show. The costumes were also complimented by wonderful lighting that gave a finishing touch to the scenic design. These combined physical aesthetic aspects of the production helped create an atmosphere for our characters to live in.

In the weeks following the shows, I was able to get feedback from a wide variety of sources including the head of the Theatre Department Emily Jones. Emily gave me very positive feedback about my performance. From a previous discussion, she had known that I wanted to make strong and distinct choices for Sky Masterson. Portraying a role that is done so often can be difficult. On one hand you don't want to play the typical stereotype, but on the other hand you don't want to change the author's intent for the character. I chose to give Sky more of a playful personality rather than the typical "cool guy" attitude. I wanted to make sure Sky and Sarah's story got the attention it deserved. Some however saw this as a role reversal between Sky and Nathan. Chris played Nathan very cool and relaxed while I played Sky more energetic and playful. Overall however I think this worked for our production.

The largest complaint we received about the show was the length. Guys and Dolls was originally produced in 1950. Largely due to advances in technology and the advent of the motion picture industry, modern audiences don't have the attention span that they did sixty years ago. As a result, theatre tends to seem slower paced to most people than it really is but having said that, I do believe that our production was a little longer than it needed to be. The length of our show was a result of two things: The length of the script and the presence of air in the show. As I said before, Guys and Dolls was written in 1950. People would spend money on a show and expect to spend three hours enjoying it. Television was very new and the other alternative was radio. Going out to a Broadway show was a treat for most families and they didn't mind spending a little extra time in a theater. This attitude allowed for scripts to be longer and shows to be lengthier. In our production we added little vignettes that gave a new life to one of the most produced shows in the history of American musical theatre. I felt like this was a fresh and unique approach, but some thought it added un-necessary length to an already long show. Looking back, I think what would have helped would have been pulling the excess air out of several scenes. The scenes that had the most trouble were the crap shooter scenes. I believe the air present in these scenes was a result of inexperienced actors and dropped cues. If we had even an extra week I am sure we would have shaved off another five or ten minutes from the show.

Overall I have received positive feedback from faculty, staff, and fellow students.

Everyone seemed to enjoy the show citing that it was one of the best they had seen here in years and the Box Office has received several phone calls from patrons giving the show wonderful reviews.

#### Conclusion

I am proud to have been allowed to be a part of this production. This is my final show as a student with Lindenwood University and I am extremely pleased with the product we produced. Sky Masterson is a role that I have dreamed of playing as long as I have been performing, and it was a challenge. Through the direction and leadership of my mentors and directors, as well as the support of my friends and family I was able to adequately and healthily rehearse and perform ten weeks of grueling rehearsals and productions. Looking back of course there are certain things I would have chosen to do differently, but that's not how theatre or life works. We can only move in one direction, forward. I will use the knowledge and experience that I learned while working on this thesis to continue to grow as a student and professional in this industry.

## Appendix A: Proposal Form

## ACTING PRODUCTION PROPOSAL

Title: Guys and Dolls
Playwright: Abe Burews + 50 Swerling, Frank Losser
Rights/Royalties Estimated Cost:
Rights/Royalties Company: Music Theatre International (MTL)
Director/Designer: Director Carry Quissias
Production Level Requested: Wain Stage
Catagory
Category:  Modern Contemporary Comedy Musical
Period Style Contemporary Drama Other
Children's/Family
Casting Requirements:
Male Leads A Male Supporting O Total number of Male Roles: d d
Female Leads 2 Female Supporting 1 Total number of Female Roles: 20
Total number of Roles: 42
Please describe any special casting requirements or considerations:
13:9 Jule Should be large in Stature. Micely Should also be
al: He heavier.
K. H.C KIROLEI,
Production Requirements:
1. What role would you like to be considered for in this production?
I wish to be considered for Sky Masterson.
2. Why do you want to play this part? How will it assist in your education?
SKY is a difficult role toplay at first it seems
Pro Hy Simple Cleading man Kind of things. But very
fuickly Sky + Saran can Fade into the background. I would
like the challings of giving new life to a chascic rate.
3. Describe your vision for the development of this character. Who is this person?
SKY Masterson is a man who is scarching for
Something more. He such dore n't realize this outil
He meets Miss Sarah. The only constant thing in
his life has been himself, I want the audience to be
able to see him enange. His desile needs to enange from
winning about, to winning Swah's heart for hinself.

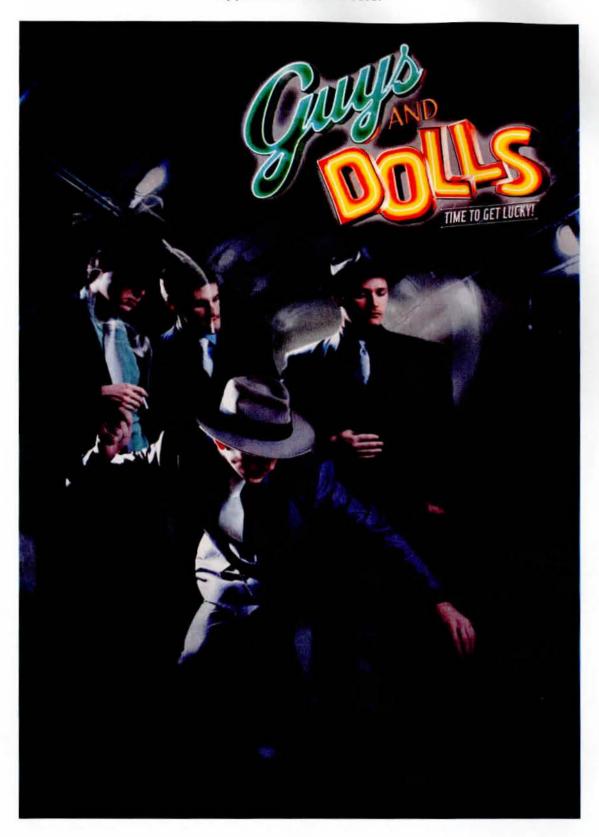
Number of rehearsal weeks requested: \( \frac{\f

Other Considerations:

# Appendix B: Cast List

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		****	200	

Peter Colombatto	"The Sky" Masterson
Katie Paszkiewicz	Sarah Brown
Chris Strawhun	Nathan Detroit
Nicole Cuneo	Adelaide
Mark Saunders	
Cal Dummerth	Benny Southstreet
Kurtis Heinrich	Rusty Charlie
Nolan McCoy	Arvide Abernathy
Tanya Sapp	General Matilda B. Cartwright
Don Krull	Big Jule
Joe Bayne	Lt. Brannigan
Adam Martinez	Harry the Horse
Derick Featherston	Angie the Ox
Benjamin Wegner	Joey Biltmore
Christian Hake	Society Max
Brandon Elliot	Brandy Bottle Bates
Sean Murry	Midget Jones
Morgan Jimmy Albertson	Liver Lips Louie
Amelia Morse Kolkmeyer	Agatha
Billy Walkenhorst	Calvin/Prizefighter
Katie Ritter	Martha
Nick Marquart	The Greek/Manager
Jane Schleipman	Mission Folk
Taylor Poore	Mission Folk
Lisa Frichtl	Mission Folk
Kaitlyn Bailey	Mimi (Hotbox Girl)
Katherine Welborn	Hotbox Girl
Ashley Davis	Hotbox Girl
Ashley Meyer	Hotbox Girl/Havana Dancer
Yumeho Asai	Hotbox Girl
Taylor Palmer	Hotbox Girl
Katelyn Bowman	Tourist
Erin McRaven	Tourist
Ethan Isaac	Tourist
Christopher Vaught	Newsvendor, Tourist
Brittney Freeman	Tourist
Kimberly Byrnes	Tourist
Kidasa Karung	Waiter/MC
Marissa Bioni	Streetwalker
Susie Evans	Streetwalker
Josh Wolk	Cop
Alejandro Fonseca	Havana Dancer



Appendix D: Show Program





#### MISSION & HISTORY

#### MISSION

Lindenwood is committed to

- Providing diverse apparamities for students to engage the arts within an integrative liberal arts curriculum.
- Affording coltural enrichment to the surrounding community.

#### HISTORY

Lindenwood's J. Scheidegger Center for the Arts spened in the fall of 2008 with two sold-out performances by legendary star. Liza Misroelli and has been entertaining the St. Lovis region ever since. With such names gracing the stage of the 1,200-seat Bezemer Family Theater or Hall Holbrook, Ed Arnor, Debby Boane, Marriel Hamilish, and Debbie Reynolds, as well as national tours of CATS, Jesus Christ Supership, Legalify Blanck, Amie, and the Ravision National Ballet, the 1. Scheidegger Center for the Arts provides an unpassible of experience in the arts and emercialment.

the Ars provides an unspecialised experience in the arts and entertainment. Home to Lindewwood University's School of Fine and Performing Arts, the 1. Scheidegger Center for the Arts features regular performances and exhibits by students in the fleature, dance, art, fashion, technical theatre, and music department. Venues include the Broadway-style Bezenter Family' Theater, the Emerson Black Bon Theater, and the Boyle Family Callery. Also included are two dance tudios, a costume shop, the Charter Communications High-Definition Television Studio, several plano studios and private make aroms, separate chard and archestra halfs, and many other amenities for the students and constrainty.

#### PRINCEAMS OFFERFIN

Programs available to the St. Louis Metropolitus Area include the Bezemes Family Theater Make Stage Season, University Theater Department productions, music and dance concerts, art exhibits, and fashion shaws.

Degrees are offered in a variety of areas of interest within the fine and performing arts and are available to both undergraduate and graduate students.

For the 2011-2012 academic year, over \$560,000 in scholarship aid was awarded to fine and performing arts majors.

#### MUSICAL NUMBERS ACEL

FUGUE FOR THISHORMS
TOLLOW THE FOLD
THE CUIDST ESTABLISHED
TOLLOW THE FOLD REPRISE
THE KNOW
"BUSHEL AND A PECK
ADHLED'S LAMINE"
COPS AND DOLES
"HAWARK

TE I WERE A BEET.

'MY TIME OF DAY/EVE NEVER REEN IN LOVE BEFORE.

ACTH

"TAKE BACK YOUR MINE."
[ADELAIDES 2ND LAMENT!"
MORE I CANNOT WISH YOU."
"CRAPHIDOTER! BALLET" SUS ME.
SIT DOWN, YOU'RE ROCKING THE BOAT.
'MARK! THE MAN TODA'S.

THE HAPPY ENDING

Nicely, Bermy, Rusty Sarah, Arvide, Mission Band Nathan, Nicely, Benny, Crapshooters Sarah, Arvide, Mission Band ah, Arvide, Mission Band Sky, Sarah Adelaide, Hat Box Girls

+

Adelaide Nicely, Benny Sky, Sarah Sarah Sky, Sarah

Adelaide, Hot Box Girls
Adelaide
Arvide
Craphhoaters
Sky, Craphhoaters
Nothou, Adelaide
Nicely, Company
Sarah, Adelaide, Female Chans
Company

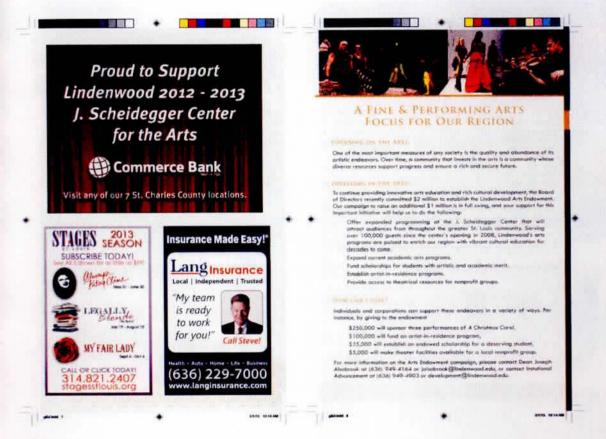
\*CHORLOGRAPHED BY JANET STREET,

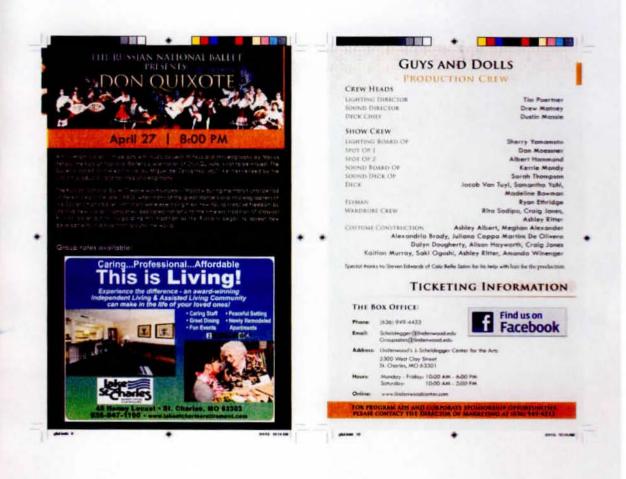
# CAST LIST

PITTLE CONOMINATED	"The Sky" Mosterson
	Soruh Brown
CHRIS STROWNERS	Nathan Detroit
NICOLI CONTO	Adelaide
MARK SAUNDERS	Nicely Nicely Johnson
CAL DUMMERTH	Benny Southstreet
KURTH FRENKICH	Rusty Charlie
NOTAN MICE OV	200 200 200 200 200 200 200 200 200 200
	General Matilda B. Cartwright
Don Entit	
	Big Jule Lt. Bronnigan
ADAM MARTINEZ	4477.7048094307450
DERICE FLATHERSTON	
BENJAMINE WHENER	
CHRISTIAN HAXX	Society Max
BRANDON FLIROT	
MORGAN DIMMY ALBERTSON	
AMELIA MORT ECLENICIES	

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## Appendix E: Rehearsal Journal

J-Term

## Monday January 7, 2013

This is the first rehearsal for Guys & Dolls! We are starting the J-Term session which is a brilliant combination of rehearsal time and class credit for most. We will spend the next three weeks or so primarily working on music and choreography. I have to admit, I am a little nervous. It has been almost a year since I have been in a musical and over a year and a half since I have sung on a large scale at all. I am surrounded by new faces and much of my "support structure" from years past has since moved on. This will be a challenge for me. Since I have always worked almost exclusively at Lindenwood, it was always comfortable, but now my comfort zone has changed. This is a good preparation experience for entering the real world.

Rehearsal started on time with an introduction to the production staff. This includes Larry

Quiggins (Director), Pam Grooms (Musical Director), Jordan Smith (Stage Manager), and several

other team members. After introductions we began working on a read/sing through to get

everyone somewhat familiar with the structure and substance if the show.

We end rehearsal by talking about what is up ahead for rehearsals. We will focus on music and memorization, to make sure music is all learned by the end of J-Term.

## Tuesday January 8, 2013

I am sick today with the flu! I have been up all night and couldn't get any real sleep. Since I am not going into the box office, I will also not be attending rehearsal. The last thing we need is a cast-wide flu epidemic on our hands.

Colombatto 55

Since I can't be at rehearsal, I will continue working on memorization of music and dialogue. It is my personal goal to be off book for the first blocking rehearsal.

## Wednesday January 9, 2013

Today we focused on a lot of the chorus songs. This is the biggest challenge of a large musical.

Guys & Dolls has a surprisingly challenging score, especially for those new to musical theatre
and singing harmonies. The cast is working hard and seems to be getting the hang of it. While
everyone is working, I have time to continue working on memorization and character work. At
the end of rehearsal I got a chance to sing Luck Be a Lady with the Crap Shooters Chorus. This is
the climax of the show for Sky. Where is praying the only way he knows how, to luck!

### Thursday January 10, 2013

We did another day of chorus work today. The group held onto much of what we learned yesterday but needed to be refreshed on "Sit Down You're Rocking The Boat" and "The Oldest Established". We also got to run "Luck Be a Lady" again, with more confidence this time.

We discussed our plan for the next week. Sky and Sarah (Katie and I) get to work our duets and solos with Grooms on Wednesday. I am really looking forward to getting into these songs. Right now I feel like we are just signing what is written on the page and nothing else. Find the character!

## Monday January 14, 2013

In rehearsal we continued with memorization on chorus numbers. I didn't do much work today with the group so I used the extra time to continue going over my lines. I am suddenly very

aware of how insanely busy I am about to get after J-Term is over. I am having trouble focusing on one thing because I know there are so many things ahead. I need to focus on memorizing for the time being.

## Tuesday January 15, 2013

Today we worked the crapshooter's numbers "Oldest Established", and "Luck Be A Lady". I was added to the "Oldest Established" baritone part to help fill out the harmony from offstage. I'm happy to help! "Luck Be a Lady" went well. Since we have run through it a few times I went ahead and recorded it today so I can really start working on it.

The song to me is like a straight line. It has a very pushed tempo but the melody doesn't change that much. My challenge is going to be keeping it interesting. I need to try different tactics to make sure the audience stays in the moment along with me. With these classic musicals it is too easy to just stand up there and sing, while moving around every now and then. I want to use what I learned in my acting the song class last semester to give the audience a glimpse into a real moment. A real inner monologue Sky is having with himself.

I am excited to start working on character development and solo/duets with Katie.

## Wednesday January 16, 2013

Today was a big rehearsal day for me and I loved it! It has been over a year and a half since I have been a featured vocalist in a musical and I was so excited to get into the work. To start off rehearsal we ran "Sit Down", "Oldest Established", "Luck Be a Lady", and "Happy Ending". After this, I was able to sit down with Katie, Grooms, and Larry to start discussing character and

backstory in reference to Sarah and Sky. It felt so good to start breathing life into these characters. It was nice to get some input from the two directors, on both dialogue and song. On a side note, I feel like I'm getting sick... AGAIN. Shocked face.

### Thursday January 17, 2013

Not much for "Sky" today. I got to go over "Luck Be a Lady" with the crapshooters as well as focus on cleaning up the baritone parts I'm helping out with on The Oldest Established. I'm having fun. © I spent the rest of the time re-reading the Runyon stories as well as going over my lines and music.

## Monday January 21, 2013

As much as I enjoy these J-Term rehearsals, so much work is spent on the chorus. I totally understand it, but I wish I had some more one-on-one time with Grooms to work on solo stuff and some more time to work with Katie to get ready for blocking and character work. Today I got to go through "Luck Be a Lady" which is by far my most prepared song.

## Tuesday January 22, 2013

A good day for Sky and Sarah! We were able to work with Grooms on "My Time of Day", "I've Never Been in Love Before" and "Luck Be a Lady". It's going to be interesting to see how everything starts to change and take shape over the next several weeks. I know what our challenge is going to be. Katie and I can both be stiff performers. We have to find a way to be comfortable with each other on stage. Both physically and with how we interact with each

other. I'm sure after a few weeks of character work and blocking rehearsals we will be in a more comfortable place.

## Wednesday January 23, 2013

I didn't do too much today, so I took an opportunity to keep going over my music on my own. I was also able to step into the dance studio to sit in on the choreography rehearsal for the Havana sequence. Since this is my thesis I asked Mrs. Jan to give me a little bit of a challenge when it comes to the dancing in this scene. I'm nervous but excited to step out of my comfort zone a little. I've always felt that our weakest point when it comes to musicals at Lindenwood is our dancing. Usually the dancers are too busy to be involved, and not all of our theatre majors are necessarily the best dancers. I've noticed this cast has several very good dancers. I think this is going to add a new level of professionalism to this show.

## Thursday January 24, 2013

FINAL DAY of J-term! Today we had to do all of our music memorized... And we did it ③. I don't know if it's just that I haven't been in a show in a while or what but everyone seems to be doing a pretty good job of keeping their eye on the ball. The male chorus is a little green but I think they'll pull it together. So so so excited to start blocking the show on Monday!

## Monday January 28, 2013

Tonight was our first night of blocking, very exciting but tedious. It's difficult to get myself back in the mindset of an actor and not just a member of the production staff. Tonight we blocked two of my scenes. The first was the scene where Sky first enters the show (through the house)

and interacts with Nathan Detroit. Tomorrow we will start on the scene that immediately follows where Sarah and Sky first meet in the mission. All in all a fun rehearsal, but a little dry... as is blocking.

## Tuesday January 29, 2013

Tonight was a good Sky and Sarah night. We blocked the second scene. This is the most important scene for our young couple. Even though we were just blocking I couldn't help but really start to dissect the scene. When does this become more than just a bet to sky? And when does this become something other than trying to help the mission for Sarah. The way this musical is, we have to see almost an instant attraction between the two to make the audience believe they are falling in love. This is tricky and it is difficult to keep it from looking cheap and rushed. The goal for me is to find that moment when Sky looks at Sarah and realizes, wow she's got me. I don't care about anything else. Now whether it's in this scene or not is the question.

The thing I enjoy most about this scene is how relationship between Sky and Sarah is being defined. Sky loves how she challenges him but without being truly judgmental. She's not just going to melt in his arms and be putty in his hands. He has had too many women like that and it's time for something different, a new challenge. I think Sky is bored with his life, and meeting Sarah and seeing how she lives makes him realize that.

### Wednesday January 30, 2013

I didn't have rehearsal tonight. Instead I did some work on my actual thesis paper and relaxed.

This will be my last M-TH weeknight off so I didn't really want to do too much.

## Thursday January 31, 2013

Tonight was a lot of fun! We blocked the Havana scene and experimented with some choreography and spacing. Actually one of the best things about the night was just getting to sit and talk to Katie during our downtime. It's going to be important for us to be comfortable with each other on stage and being comfortable with each other off stage is the first step toward making that possible. The Havana scene is going to be a lot of fun. Most schools cut a lot out of it. They do this either to save time or simply because it is too hard, I'm really glad we aren't shying away from the challenge.

After Havana we continued into the next scene that includes "If I Were a Bell", "My Time of Day", and "I've Never Been in Love Before". This is kind of a marathon section of the show for Sky and Sarah. It will be important to preserve our voices and energy through this section so the audience stays connected. We ran a little over our time so some things will have to be done a little later nut that's alright. It seems like we are in pretty good shape and we are right where we are supposed to be.  $\odot$ 

#### Monday February 4, 2013

Loooong night. Tonight we blocked what I call the connecting scenes that are very important to the story. We have Sky confronting Sarah and Arvide where he tries to convince Sarah to let him help. Arvide lets Sky know that if he welches on his bet, he will tell the whole town. We also have the scene where Sky finds Nicely who leads him to Nathan. Sky has a very revealing conversation with Adelaide that makes him really how much he loves Sarah.

## Tuesday February 5, 2013

Tonight we blocked "Luck Be a Lady". It's been awhile since I've rehearsed a show like this, so at times I feel my energy dropping. I have to remind myself to focus and stay energized. I'm excited for "Luck Be a Lady" though it presents some challenges. Larry has me winding back and forth between crap shooters for a large part of the song. This will provide a cool visual effect if I can get the timing and movement down perfectly.

## Wednesday February 6, 2013

We finished blocking bits and pieces of the show tonight. We're all ready to get the scripts out of our hands and start running chunks of the show. We were able to block the ending scene of the show. This is important because it is the first time we see Sky since he walks out of the mission. My question is how much time has passed? Nathan and Adelaide are just now getting married and Sky and Sarah have been married. Is it a few weeks or months? If I had to choose right now I would say it's been a few weeks.

## Thursday February 7, 2013

Tonight we got to work on "If I Were a Bell" and the Havana scenes. I'm excited to do a little dancing in this show, but Havana is most likely the most difficult part for us. The dancing will be easy enough, but the syncopation in the music leading up to and during the Havana scene is really tricky. We were able to run it a few times, and it got much better. It will just take time and practice.

I'm glad we were able to put some time into "If I Were a Bell". Acting drunk is one of the hardest things to do on stage, and it can be uncomfortable. Katie and I have to find that comfortable place if we are going to make the audience believe that our relationship has changed from a proposition to a romance. We ran the song a few times and I could tell Katie was getting frustrated, so we have to find a way to make it naturally fun. I have UPTA's this weekend, and I'm bringing my script down with me. I really need to start getting off book with dialogue, song, and blocking. The blocking at times is the most difficult part to remember, but hopefully after a few weeks it gets easier. We also were able to take the promo shots today, and they look great!

## Monday February 11, 2013

This was a good rehearsal! Apparently things are going well enough that Larry felt comfortable moving the off book dates up some to this Wednesday and Thursday. I am nervous for that but it really is a good thing and the best way to force us to do the work.

Tonight we ran the first scene and it felt really good. I'm almost off book and Chris and I are developing some fun moments.

## Tuesday February 12, 2013

Tonight we were able to spend some time with Havana and "If I were a Bell", as well as "I've Never Been in Love Before". Katie and I are definitely getting more comfortable with each other, which is going to be the key for us. We need to make the audience fall in love with how we are falling in love.

We choreographed the fight scene, and it looks great! It feels like it is a good balance, and everyone is taking it seriously and getting it done. The trick with Havana is to keep it from being too choppy. Since it is a lot of little vignettes, it is easy to make it that way. We need to keep the energy up, and stay engaged to keep the audience's attention with us.

#### Wednesday February 13, 2013

Tonight was our first off book night for Act One. We moved up the date by a week and a half, but Larry thought we were ready, and the motivation is helpful. The run went really well actually. I was surprised by how close we actually are to off book for some scenes. I need to work on remembering the blocking better. Usually we have the books in our hands for a few weeks after blocking, but we aren't taking that approach so I'm finding I have to focus more. Overall this was a good rehearsal; it gave us a good idea of what we need to do next.

# Thursday February 13, 2013

No Rehearsal

# Monday February 18, 2013

Tonight we worked the Havana scene. We needed to work in Alejandro since he has been busy with the dance concert. He picked up the fight pretty quick and already knew the dance.

After Havana we decided to do an impromptu rehearsal of the second scene in Act One (Sky and Sarah in the mission) The only problem with moving the schedule around like that is that I wasn't prepared to run that scene last night. If it were farther along in the rehearsal process I

could understand that, and be expected to be prepared for anything we need to do. But since we moved up the off book date, I was really caught off guard.

I found myself so frustrated with myself. I was getting really flustered trying to remember the dialogue, the blocking, and all the little moments and direction I was being given. On top of it we were stopping and starting which made it difficult for me to keep everything together.

On a positive note, working through off book, and stumbling through it will help solidify the dialogue and ultimately push us forward. I shouldn't have gotten so frustrated; it was unfair to Katie and Larry. I was upset for some personal reasons and I let it affect my work, which I shouldn't have done. But tonight is a new night and we are working with the orchestra...

AMAZING! I'm so excited for that.

# Wednesday February 20, 2013

Tonight we worked more on Havana. We've started running a fight call before rehearsals. This is important to make sure we are being safe while we are performing the fight. Also, the more we practice the fight the more realistic it will be. After we worked Havana we ran the rest of Act One, which is the longer of the two Acts.

# Thursday February 21, 2013

No Rehearsal – Snow Day

# Monday February 25, 2013

We worked Act One again tonight, as well as a few numbers from Act Two. I've noticed that Katie and I are really beginning to hit our stride with these characters. I'm anxious to get into the space and get into costume. This will help us take it the rest of the way.

#### Tuesday February 26, 2013

We ran the whole show tonight, and specifically spent a lot of time on "The Oldest Established" Since we do have a more inexperienced cast, it has become a priority to reinforce these vocal parts as much as possible. I am trying to think of different tactics that I can use in Scene Two.

This is the mission scene where Sky and Sarah first meet. I don't want it to seem like they are just bickering, I want it to seem playful and flirtatious when Sky is picking on Sarah.

#### Wednesday February 27, 2013

We ran the show from beginning to end. This is will be common for the rest of the rehearsal process. This is beneficial because it is helping us get a big picture of what the show will be like. Also it is helping us connect the dots. There is a lot of air in this show, and running it should help take care of that problem.

#### Thursday February 28, 2013

We were able to run individual numbers tonight. While this was going on, Katie and I ran our lines and went through our blocking.

# Tech and Dress Rehearsals March 7-13

Tech week is the most exciting part of the rehearsal process. We have moved into the Bezemes and started using our show props, costumes, hair, make-up, and microphones. The cast is seeing the set, backdrops, and lighting for the first time and it really helps us get a feel for the show. We will spend about a week running the show in the theatre with all of the technical crews on hand. The point of these rehearsals is to smooth out the show and to get everyone on the same page. We will run light cues to make sure the lighting is appropriate, we will run songs with the pit orchestra to make sure the sound and volume is balanced, and we will run scene changes to cut back to show length.

The Tech for *Guys and Dolls* ran very smoothly. Everything seemed to be working as it should. In years past we would still be waiting on set pieces or various other aspects of the show to be finished while in tech week, for this show that didn't seem to be a problem. The only issue I had personally during tech week was "Luck Be a Lady". During the song I would weave in between the crap shooters throwing down "thousand dollar bills". The problem is that a single bill is very light and catches any breeze making it hard to throw down. It took us a few days and several tried to find a solution. We ended up using several pieces glued together that had a similar look but more weight.

During the last two tech rehearsals we were able to shave some time off the show. Prior to opening we were just under three hours. If you ask me, this is the only problem with the show.

We had a preview night on the last night of Dress Rehearsal, March 13. There were several local schools in attendance as well as a group of Lindenwood students and faculty. It gave us an

opportunity to see how the show stands on its own and gives it an "opening night" feeling without the added pressure of a 1,200 person audience.

Guys and Dolls opened on March 14th and ran for four performances. An impressive 3,753 tickets were sold; making it one of Lindenwood Universities most viewed productions.

# Appendix F: Rehearsal Schedule

# **GUYS AND DOLLS TENTATIVE REHEARSAL SCHEDULE**

# Monday, January 28

6:30-10:00 Block Act I, Scenes 1 and 3 (pp. 1-23, 34-37)

Opening, Fugue, Follow the Fold, Oldest Established, Follow Reprise Characters:

- All but Big Jule and the General
- Includes: Prizefighter (Billy Walkenhorst)
   Manager (Nick Marquart)
   Blind Man (Morgan Albertson)
   Pickpocket (Ethan Isaac)

Choreography: The Hot Box Girls w/ Ms. Jan 7:30

### Tuesday, January 29

6:30-8:30 Block Act I, Scenes 2 and 6 (pp. 23-31, 53-56)

The Mission, I'll Know, The General Characters:

- Sarah
- Sky
- Arvide
- All Mission Folk (Called at 7:15)
- The General (Called at 7:15)

8:30-10:00 Block Act I, Scene 4 (pp. 37-48)

The Hotbox, Bushel and a Peck, Nathan and Adelaide, Adelaide's Lament Characters:

- Adelaide
- Nathan
- Hotbox Girls
- Tourists: Katie Bowman, Brittany Freeman, Erin McRaven, Ethan Isaac, Kim B.
- Waiter/MC (Kidasa Karung)

### Wednesday, January 30

# 8:00-10:00 Block Act I, Scenes 5 and 7 (pp. 49-53, 56-63)

Guys and Dolls, Crapshooters

Characters:

- All Crapshooters
- Big Jule
- Brannigan
- Adelaide

# Thursday, January 31

# 6:30-8:30 Block Act I, Scenes 8 and 9 (pp. 63-70)

Havana, If I Were a Bell Characters:

- Sky
- Sarah
- Havana Dancers (Ashley M., Alejandro)
  - Tourists: Katie B., Brittany Freeman, Chris V., Erin McRaven, Ethan Isaac, Kim B.
  - Waiter (Kidasa Karung)

# 8:30-10:00 Block Act I, Scene 10 (pp. 71-76)

The Mission, My Time of Day, I've Never Been in Love Before, The Raid Characters:

- Sky
- Sarah
- Adelaide
  - Hotbox Girls
  - All Crapshooters (Called at 9:00)
  - Brannigan (Called at 9:00)
  - Cop (Josh W.) (Called at 9:00)
  - Arvide (Called at 9:00)

#### Monday, February 4

# 6:30-8:00 Block Act II, Scene 1 (pp. 77-83)

Fanfare, Take Back Your Mink, Adelaide's 2<sup>nd</sup> Lament Characters:

Sky

- Adelaide
- Nicely
- Hotbox Girls
- · Tourists: Katie B., Brittany, Erin, Ethan, Kim
- Waiter/MC (Kidasa Karung)

# 6:30-9:00 Choreography--Crapshooters w/ Ms. Jan

# 8:00-9:00 Block Act II, Scene 2 (pp. 83-87) Mission, More I Cannot Wish You Characters:

- Sarah
- Arvide
- Sky
- Nicely

# 9:00-10:00 Block Act II, Scene 6 (p. 118-126) Sarah and Adelaide, Marry the Man Today Characters:

- Sarah
  - Adelaide
  - Society Max (Drunk)

# Tuesday, February 5

# 6:30-9:00 Block Act II, Scenes 3 and 4A (pp. 87-105) Crapshooter's Ballet, Luck Be a Lady Characters:

- All Crapshooters
- Big Jule
- Sky

# 9:00-10:00 Block Act II, Scene 4B (pp. 105-108) Sue Me Characters:

- Adelaide
- Nathan

# Wednesday, February 6

# 6:30-10:00 Block Act II, Scene 5 (pp. 109-118)

Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat, Finale Characters:

- Sky
- Sarah
- Arvide
- General
- All Crapshooters
- Brannigan
- All Mission Folk
- EVERYONE ELSE at 8:45

# Thursday, February 7

6:30-10:00 Finish Blocking (TBA)

# Monday, February 11

6:30-7:30 Work Act I, Scene 5 (pp. 49-53)

Guys and Dolls
Characters:

- Nicely
- Benny

# 7:30-8:00 Work Act I, Scene 3 (pp. 34-37)

The Garage Characters:

- Joey Biltmore
  - Nathan
    - Tourists: Katie Bowman, Erin
    - Streetwalker (Susie)
    - The Cop (Josh W.)

#### 8:00-10:00 Work Act II, Scene 3 (pp. 87-102)

Crapshooter's Dance, Luck be a Lady, Nathan and Adelaide, Sue Me Characters

- Sky
- Big Jule
- All Crapshooters
- Adelaide (Called at 8:45)

### Tuesday, February 12

# 6:30-7:00 Work Act II, Scene 2 (pp. 83-87)

More I Cannot Wish You, Sky's Marker Characters:

- Sarah
- Arvide
- Sky
- Nicely

#### 7:00-7:45 Work Act I, Scene 7 (pp. 56-63)

Crapshooters Characters:

- Nathan
- Adelaide
- All Crapshooters
- Brannigan

#### 7:45-9:00 Work Act I, Scene 1 (pp. 1-23)

Opening Scene, Fugue, Follow the Fold, Oldest Established, Follow Reprise Characters:

· All except Big Jule and the General

#### 9:00-10:00 Work Act I, Scene 4, and Act II, Scene 1 (pp. 37-48 and 77-83)

Hotbox, Bushel and a Peck, Adelaide's Lament, Take Back Your Mink, Adelaide's 2<sup>nd</sup> Lament

Characters:

- Adelaide
- Nathan
- Nicely
- Sky
- Tourists: Katie B., Brittany, Erin, Ethan, Kim B.
- Waiter/MC (Kidasa)
- Hotbox Girls

# Wednesday, February 13

# 6:30-7:30 Work Act I, Scenes 2 and 6 (pp. 23-34 and 53-56)

The Mission, I'll Know, The General Characters:

- Sarah
- Sky
- Arvide
- All Mission Folk
- The General (Called at 7:00)

# 7:30-10:00 Work Act II, Scene 5 (pp. 109-118) and 7 (pp. 31-32)

Sit Down, You're Rocking the Boat, Marry the Man Today, Finale Characters:

- Sky
- Sarah
- Arvide
- General
- All Crapshooters
- Brannigan
- Nathan
- All Mission Folk
- Adelaide (Called at 8:15)
- All other ladies in cast may be called at 8:15 (TBA)
- EVERYONE ELSE at 8:45

# Thursday, February 14

# 6:30-8:00 Work Act I, Scenes 8-10 (pp. 63-76)

Havana, If I Were a Bell, My Time of Day/I've Never Been in Love, The Raid Characters:

- Sky
- Sarah
- Havana Dancers (Ashley M., Alejandro)
- Havana Tourists
- Waiter
- Adelaide (Called at 7:30)
- All Crapshooters (Called at 7:30)
- Big Jule (Called at 7:30)

- Brannigan (Called at 7:30)
- Cop (Called at 7:30)
- Hotbox Girls (Called at 7:30)
- Arvide (Called at 7:30)
- All Mission Folk (Called at 7:30)

#### 8:00-10:00 Character Work

- All Crapshooters
- Nathan
- Sky
- Big Jule
- Brannigan
- Cop

### Monday, February 18

6:30-TBA: Choreography w/ Ms. Jan: Crapshooters

6:30-8:00: Character Work

Nathan

Adelaide

8:00-10:00 Character Work

Sarah

Sky

### Tuesday, February 19

6:30-10:00 Work Act I (Off Book)

Wednesday, February 20

6:30-10:00 Work Act II (Off Book)

Thursday, February 21

6:30-10:00 Work Trouble Spots (TBA)

Monday, February 25

6:30-10:00 Character Work (TBA)

Tuesday, February 26

6:30-10:00 Run Act I

Wednesday, February 27

7:30-10:00 Run Act II

Thursday, February 28

6:30-10:00 Run through all music with the Pit

Monday, March 4

6:30-10:00 Run Show

Tuesday, March 5

6:30-10:00 Run Show (No Line Call)

Wednesday, March 6

6:30-10:00 Run Show with Pit

Thursday, March 7

6:30-10:00 Run Show

Sunday, March 10

TBA Wet Tech

Monday, March 11

6:00-10:00 Dress Rehearsal

Tuesday, March 12

6:00-10:00 Dress Rehearsal

Wednesday, March 13

6:00-10:00 Dress Rehearsal

Thursday, March 14 OPENING NIGHT!!!

# Appendix: G

# **Lindenwood University**

**Sold Out Status** 

Report Generated: 18 Apr 2013 12:46 PM CDT

**Event:** GUYS & DOLLS

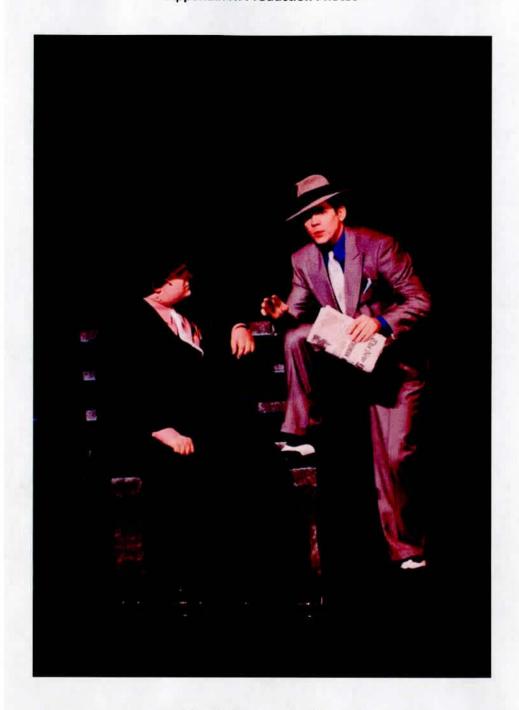
Performance Dates: All

Venue: All

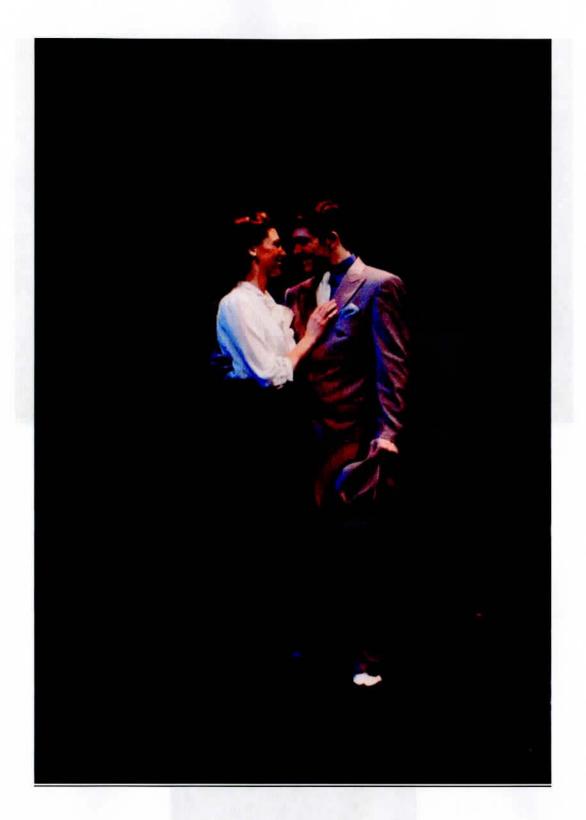
Category: All

Venue	Event Code	Categories	Event	Event Day	Event Time	Seats Sold	Seat Avail	% Sold
BEZEMES	ACADEMIC (Academic Show)	M. Stage Season (2012/13), Theatre (2012-2013)	G_DOLLS	Thu.	14 Mar 2013 07:30 PM CDT	684	491	58.21 %
BEZEMES	ACADEMIC (Academic Show)	M. Stage Season (2012/13), Theatre (2012-2013)	G_DOLLS	Fri.	15 Mar 2013 07:30 PM CDT	1003	173	85.29 %
BEZEMES	ACADEMIC (Academic Show)	M. Stage Season (2012/13), Theatre (2012-2013)	G_DOLLS	Sat.	16 Mar 2013 07:30 PM CDT	960	217	81.56 %
BEZEMES	ACADEMIC (Academic Show)	M. Stage Season (2012/13), Theatre (2012-2013)	G_DOLLS	Sun.	17 Mar 2013 02:00 PM CDT	1106	68	94.21 %
Total						3753	949	79.82 %

Appendix H: Production Photos



Sky and Nathan, Act One



Sky and Sarah Staged Photo



The Mission Folk, The General, and Sky, Act One



Sky and Sarah, Act One

Colombatto 80



Sky and Sarah, Act One



Sky and Sarah, Back Stage

Colombatto 81



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