

# The English Theatre Frankfurt



*Coleman has captured the rhythms and sounds, and Dorothy Fields the vernacular of fun, of the 1960s New York.*

*With a song list that includes, Big Spender, The Rhythm of Life, If My Friends Could See Me Now and many more, Sweet Charity is sure to be a wonderful show.*

## Teacher`s Support Pack

Version for advanced Students (Gymnasium)

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**For booking workshops, talkback appointments with actors, ordering the Word.doc version of this Support Pack** or any other inquiries etc. call 242 316 33or send an Email to [michael.gonszar@english-theatre.de](mailto:michael.gonszar@english-theatre.de) .  
We are looking forward to welcoming you at the English Theatre Frankfurt.

### A Note for the English Teachers at German schools:

Sie können dieses **Teacher`s Support Pack** auf Anfrage auch als Word-Dokument bekommen, um einzelne Texte/Aufgaben vor Ausdruck zu bearbeiten. Das bietet Ihnen die Chance, das Paket in der von Ihnen gewünschten Fassung mit Operatoren an Ihre SchülerInnen digital weiterzuleiten. Das Bild- und Informationsmaterial kann den SchülerInnen dabei helfen, **sich selbständig auf den Aufführungsbesuch vorzubereiten bzw. sich zur Nachbereitung im Unterricht einen Überblick über die relevanten thematischen Aspekte zu verschaffen und eigene Sichtweisen des Stücks zu entdecken.**

Bei allen Fragen bezüglich dieser Materialien oder Interesse an

- **Begleitworkshops zu einem Aufführungsbesuch** für Ihre Lerngruppe
- **Gespräche mit Schauspielern** nach der Vorstellung

wenden Sie sich bitte per Email an uns: [michael.gonszar@english-theatre.de](mailto:michael.gonszar@english-theatre.de)

Das Team von **T.I.E.S (Theatre in Education Service)** wünscht Ihnen viel Freude bei der Arbeit mit dem Teacher`s Support Pack. Wir freuen uns auf einen Aufführungsbesuch mit Ihrer Lerngruppe.

**Lea Dunbar, Karl Guttzeit, Michael Gonszar**



## 1. "How Long Has This Been Going On?" A Brief History of Musical Theatre

The origins of the musicals trace all the way back to story telling ballads. The ballads were stories in songs, passed down orally from generation to generation.

The art of telling stories either through or with songs dates back to time immemorial. We know that the ancient **Greeks** included music and dance in their stage comedies and tragedies as early as the 5th Century B.C. While some Athenian playwrights may have interpolated existing songs, we know that **Aeschylus** and **Sophocles**

composed their own. Staged in open air amphitheatres, these plays featured sexual humor, political and social satire, jugglers, and anything else that might entertain the masses. The songs were often a means for the chorus to comment on the action, but they also took part in the plot, and musical solos were not unheard of. Some evidence of ancient musical notation has been discovered, but the melodies used in the few surviving plays are all long lost. While these musicals had no direct effect on the development of modern musical theater, they demonstrate that showtunes have been around for twenty five hundred years.

In the **Middle Ages**, Europe's cultural mainstays included traveling minstrels and roving troupes of performers that offered popular songs and slapstick comedy. In the 12th and 13th centuries, there was also a tradition of religious dramas. Some of these works have survived, such as *The Play of Herod* and *The Play of Daniel*.



The Greek Amphitheatre near Taormina in Sicily

Intended as liturgical teaching tools set to church chants, these plays developed into an autonomous form of musical theatre.

This reached its apex during the **Renaissance** in the **commedia dell'arte**, an Italian tradition where raucous clown characters improvised their way through familiar stories. These clowns included Harlequin, Pulcinella and Scaramouche – personas that became basic elements in Western stage comedy for centuries to come. Formal musical theatre was rare in the Renaissance, but Moliere turned several of his plays into comedies with songs (music provided by Jean Baptiste Lully) when the court of Louis XIV demanded song and dance entertainments in the late 1600s.

By the 1700s, two forms of musical theatre were common in Britain, France and Germany – **ballad operas** like John Gay's *The Beggars Opera* (1728) that borrowed popular songs of the day and rewrote the lyrics, and **comic operas**, with original scores and mostly romantic plot lines, like Michael Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl* (1845).

Opera has been with us since the late 1500s, but **contemporary musical theatre and film are not direct descendants of grand opera**. However, opera can be called a descendant of classical theatre. When Renaissance writers and composers tried to resurrect the forms of Greek drama, they added music. This eventually led to the birth of grand opera. From its birth in the 1800s, the musical has often spoofed opera, but it traces its main lineage to other sources. Vaudeville, burlesque, and many other forms are the true ancestors of the modern musical -- not opera.

Of course, the melodies of grand opera were part of the popular musical culture of the 1800s and early 1900s, and therefore had some residual effect on the musical theater melodies of that time. However, the so-called "comic operas" that dominated Broadway in the late 1880s and 90s, including **Robin Hood** and the works of Gilbert & Sullivan, are not operas -- at least not as most people use the term. Producers called these shows "comic operas" to make them sound more high-minded, but with extended dialogue and melodies designed for the popular taste of that era, they were clearly musicals. The real irony is that grand opera was invented by Renaissance Italians who were trying to copy Greek drama, which they mistakenly believed was sung-through. So not only are musicals not descended from opera, but **opera is descended from the earliest musicals!**

The greatest revolution in American musical theatre up to that time came in 1927 with **Show Boat**, by Oscar Hammerstein II and Jerome Kern. The show featured popular music, such as jazz and gospel, which separated *Show Boat* from both operetta and all the musicals before it. Here was a complete integration of song, humor, and production numbers into a single and inextricable artistic entity; a musical with a consistent and credible story line, authentic atmosphere, and three-dimensional characters.



Then came the first of the Rodgers and Hammerstein masterworks, **Oklahoma!**, in 1943, with which musical theatre finally became a significant American art form. According to Rodgers, "By opening the show with the woman alone onstage and the cowboy beginning his song offstage, we did more than set a mood; we were, in fact, warning the audience,

'Watch out! This is a different kind of musical.'

The national tour of **Oklahoma!** ran for an unprecedented ten years, playing before a combined audience of more than ten million people.

During the late 1950's and early 1960's, popular music began to change when rock 'n roll became more mainstream. This trend influenced musicals such as **West Side Story** (1957) and **Bye Bye Birdie** (1960) to feature more popular, contemporary music.

**Hair** in 1968 continued this movement by incorporating rock music with storylines based on the hearts of the younger generation.





And setting a pattern that would redefine Broadway, ***Cats*** premiered in 1982, introducing opulent sets, extravagant costumes and makeup, and over-the-top special effects. The visual spectacle was unlike the painted backdrops and simple costumes seen in the past. The trend continued with shows like ***Les Misérables***, ***Miss Saigon***, ***The Lion King*** and ***The Phantom of the Opera***.

Then came ***Rent*** in 1996, which revolutionized the very concept of musical theatre around the world. ***Rent*** blended pop, dance, salsa, rhythm and blues, gospel, and rock music together to tell its moving tale of hopes and dreams, while also addressing the serious

and controversial issues of homelessness, AIDS, and drug addiction. ***Rent*** not only challenged the mainstream, but reinvented it. Shows following ***Rent***, such as ***Ragtime*** (1998) and ***Wicked*** (2003), also contained intricate storylines, unique styles of music, and visual spectacle, while continuing to address social and political issues.

- (This article is based on [Musical Theatre: A History Continuum](#) (2008) by John Kenrick ISBN 0-8264-3013-9 see also:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Kenrick](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Kenrick)

#### Activity 1:

##### Presenting Musicals

What is your favorite musical? Present your choice in class with a brief synopsis and music samples! **Suggestion:** Have you seen any musical at the ETF before? If so, brush up your memory and watch the trailers on:

“The Full Monty” (2009)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBUASsAly9M>

“Spring Awakening” (2010)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iElKW\\_qEaPA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iElKW_qEaPA)

The Who's Tommy (2011)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=WFjW3rq1nuU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=WFjW3rq1nuU)

## 2. Cy Coleman and “Sweet Charity”



Cy Coleman, the **debonair** jazz pianist and composer of legendary Broadway tunes like "Witchcraft," "Big Spender" and "The Best Is Yet to Come," lived in Manhattan and died in 2004 at the age of 75.

A fluent stylist, Coleman produced an impressively varied body of work. His Broadway **scores** touched many styles, from **noirish film** music ("City of Angels") to country ("The Will Rogers Follies") to rhythm and blues ("The Life"), but they always remained firmly anchored in a **razzle-dazzle** show-tune tradition that embraced the spirit of burlesque. His musical signature was the **swaggering** star turn: "Hey, Look Me Over" (from "Wildcat"), "I've Got Your Number" (from "Little Me") and "Big Spender" and

"If My Friends Could See Me Now" (from "Sweet Charity").

Cy Coleman was **prolific** as well, frequently working on three or four projects at once - "one feeds the other" was his explanation - and constantly revising the task at hand. "I don't like to let go," he once said. "I will drain to the last drop." At the time of his death, Coleman was juggling several productions, including a revival of "Sweet Charity"; separate musical biographies of Napoleon, Grace Kelly and Elaine Kaufman, the proprietor of Elaine's restaurant in Manhattan; and "Pamela's First Musical," based on the playwright Wendy Wasserstein's book for children. Coleman's successes rank high on the list of memorable stage musicals.

"Sweet Charity" (1966), an adaptation of Federico Fellini's film "Nights of Cabiria," has a book by Neil Simon and lyrics by Dorothy Fields; it was originally directed and choreographed by **Bob Fosse** (see pp.18/19). Starring Gwen Verdon as a dance hall hostess looking for love, the show ran for more than 600 performances. Adapted for the screen in 1969, with Shirley MaLaîne in the lead role, "Sweet Charity" earned Mr. Coleman an Oscar nomination for best score of a musical.

Have you ever known a girl who wanted something so badly, that she tried too hard to get it? Meet **Charity Hope Valentine**, the girl who wants to be loved so much, that she has lost sight of who she is. Charity sings, dances, laughs and cries her way through romances. Her world is the all too real world of Times Square, and the people who pass through her world are as **deceptively** charming a group as ever swept across any stage. From her cynical, hard-core trio of girlfriends at the dance hall, to the **phoney** evangelists, the Coney Island "fun people", the Central Park "strollers" and the YMHA "self-improvers", every character is interesting.

### Vocabulary Aids

debonair - lässig, elegant

score - Filmmusik

noirish film – „film noire“:  
Filmgenre mit  
pessimistischer Weltsicht  
und düsterer  
Bildgestaltung

razzle-dazzle –effektvoll

swaggering - angeberisch

prolific – fruchtbar,  
produktiv

deceptive -trügerisch

phoney – heuchlerisch,  
verlogen

### 3. The Characters



- **Charity Hope Valentine**

a true original, eternal optimist and an unlucky romantic and she has a heart tattooed on her left arm

- **Charlie**

Charity's "boyfriend" at the beginning of the story

- **Helene, Nickie, Carmen - Fandango Ballroom Dancers**

Charity's cynical co-workers who never believe her farfetched stories



- **Herman**, the authoritarian owner of the Fandango Ballroom; Charity's boss



- **Vittorio Vidal**

An Italian film star who befriends Charity

- **Ursula**

Vittorio Vidal's beautiful mistress

- **Daddy Johann Sebastian Brubeck**

The leader of an unorthodox church which holds its meetings in an underground car park

## 4. The Story Synopsis of Scenes

### ACT I

#### 1: The Park by the Lake

Charity Hope Valentine is meeting her boyfriend. While she tells him how great he's looking, the silent Charlie **preens himself**. Then he grabs her bag, pushes her into the lake and runs off. The passers-by discuss the apparent drowning but do nothing, until a young Spaniard finally hauls Charity out and the police arrive, asking questions.

#### 2: Hostess Room of the Fan-Dango Ballroom

Here Charity works as a taxi-dancer. She explains to the sceptical girls how Charlie tried to save her – 'He made a grab for me but all he got was my handbag.'



#### 3: Fan - Dango Ballroom

The girls **proposition** the audience. Helene and Nickie try to **comfort** Charity about Charlie's absence.

#### 4: New York Street and Canopy in front of the Pompeii Club

On a New York Street, after work, Charity gives to every beggar who approaches her until she realises she has no money. Just then, film star Vittorio Vidal rushes out of the smart Pompeii Club, in **pursuit** of his beautiful mistress, Ursula. He **bowls over** Charity in more ways than one. Ursula refuses to go back inside with Vittorio, who promptly takes the only-too-willing Charity instead.

#### 5: Interior of the Pompeii Club

Inside the Pompeii Club, the dancers are dancing the latest craze - The Rich Man's Frug. To everyone's astonishment, Charity sits down with the famous Vittorio Vidal. She tries to steer him away from the subject of Ursula and, finally, he wants to dance. Not having eaten since breakfast, Charity faints. There is general agreement amongst the dancers that she needs to be 'laid down'. 'But where?' asks Vittorio. Charity opens her eyes, 'Your apartment!'



### Vocabulary Aids

to preen oneself –  
sich mit etwas  
brüsten

to proposition s.o. –  
ein (unsittliches)  
Angebot machen

to comfort - trösten

canopy-  
Überdachung,  
Baldachin

pursuit - Verfolgung

to bowl s.o. over –  
mit jmd.  
zusammenrennen



## 6: Vittorio Vidal's Apartment



Lying down on Vittorio's bed, Charity suddenly isn't hungry any more. She admits she's a dance hall hostess, putting it down to **'the fickle finger of fate'** - a favourite expression of her's. Vittorio is struck by her humour and honesty. Totally starstruck, Charity asks for a signed photograph to prove to the girls she was really in his apartment. While Vittorio fetches props from his old movies for further evidence, Charity sings excitedly one of the show-stopping numbers, "If My Friends Could See Me Now".

Then Ursula arrives to apologise for her jealousy. Charity is **swiftly bundled** into a closet before Vittorio opens the door to his fiancée. The scene switches to farce. Vittorio sings romantically to Ursula while passing a beer to the closet-hidden Charity. Puffing a cigarette, she watches through the keyhole as Vittorio and Ursula make love. 'Gee,' says

Charity, impressed, '... talk about your foreign movies!'

## 7: The Hostess Room

In the Hostess Room, the following night, the girls are disgusted that Charity didn't get more out of Vittorio. Nickie says she's not going to stick this **crummy job** for the rest of her life but Herman brings them back to down to earth. She's going to get some culture from the YMCA on 92nd Street.

### Vocabulary Aids

'the fickle finger of fate' - der unbeständige Ausschlag des Schicksals

swiftly bundled – schnell verpackt

crummy job – deprimierende Arbeit

tax accountant – Buchhalter

## 8: The 92nd street "Y" Information Booth and Elevator

At the YMCA, Charity gets stuck in the lift with shy, panicky **tax accountant**, Oscar Lindquist. While trying to calm him down, Charity finds out he isn't married. 'Oh, Oscar,' she declares. 'You're gonna be all right.' The lights go out and Act One ends with them yelling for help.

### Act II 1: The 92nd street "Y" Elevator

Charity and Oscar are still in the elevator, but not for long. Finally released, Oscar invites Charity to go to church with him.

### 2: Rhythm of Life Church

It turns out to be *The Rhythm Of Life Church*, which is holding its unorthodox meeting in an underground car park. A police raid breaks up the meeting. Afterwards, Oscar proposes another date.



### 3. Going Crosstown (Limbo then in subway)

On the subway home, he tries to guess Charity's job - it's in a bank. Unlike with Vittorio, Charity lies: 'You guessed it. First National City, Williamsburg Branch.' As they part, another sign lights up 'The First Kiss'. Oscar kisses her hand, and **dubs** her 'Sweet Charity'.

### 4: Charity's apartment

Two weeks later, Oscar and Charity are still seeing each other and she still hasn't told him what she actually does for a living. But now he is the calm one and she is scared - scared that she is starting to depend on him.



### 5: Coney Island

Once again, Charity loses her nerve about telling him what her real job is. It's far too pleasant just listening to Oscar, who has turned manly and protective since meeting her. As the crowd look on, the couple kiss.

### 6: Fan-Dango Ballroom

On a slow night at the Fan-Dango, Charity is beaten to one of the few customers by the new girl. Finally disgusted by the whole business, she **quits**.

### 7: Times Square

But on Times Square she wonders what the alternative is.

#### Vocabulary Aids

to quit - weggehen

to drop a bombshell – die "Bombe platzen" lassen (fig.)

to urge - drängen

### 8: Barney's Chile Hacienda

At Barney's Chile Hacienda, Charity meets Oscar to have it out. She admits that she's a dance hall hostess. But he knows. He followed her one night and watched for an hour. He doesn't care and wants to marry her.

**9: "I'm a Brass Band"** Charity leaves on cloud nine and packs a suitcase on which is printed 'Almost Married'.

### 10: Fan-Dango Ballroom

A farewell party at the Ballroom

### 11: The Park

Charity and Oscar walk in the park when Oscar **drops the bombshell**. He can't marry her. He's been thinking about the men before him. 'Marry me and I'll destroy you, Charity,' he says. 'That's okay,' says Charity, 'I'm not doing much now, anyway.' **Urging** her to run away, Oscar pushes her into the lake. Then he leaves. Charity emerges. 'Did you ever have one of those days?' she asks the audience. But at least she still has her bag. She is just thinking that maybe things are looking up.



From SWEET CHARITY

## The Rhythm of Life

For SATB\* and Piano with Optional Instrumental Accompaniment

Performance Time: Approx. 4:30

Arranged by  
ROGER EMERSON

Words by DOROTHY FIELDS  
Music by CY COLEMAN

Maestoso ( $\text{♩} = 88$ )

Piano

[3] Crisply, with a bounce

[7] Hushed, but with intensity

Unis. *mp*

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

When I start-ed down the street last Sun-day,

feel-in' might-y low and kind-a mean, sud-den-ly a voice said, "Go forth neigh-bor!

\* Available for SATB, SAB, SSA and 2-Part  
ShowTrax CD also available  
Instrumental ePak includes parts for Flute/Piccolo, Clarinet,  
Trumpet 1 & 2, Tenor Sax, Trombone, Synthesizer, Guitar,  
Electric Bass, Xylophone, Drums Set, Conga Drums  
For information on ePaks visit [www.haltonard.com/choral](http://www.haltonard.com/choral)

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## 5. INFO

### Musical Numbers:

- *Baby, Dream Your Dream*
- *Big Spender*
- *Charity's Soliloquy*
- *I Love To Cry At Weddings*
- *If My Friends Could See Me Now*
- *I'm A Brass Band*
- *I'm the Bravest Individual*
- *Rhythm Of Life*
- *Rich Man's Frug (dance)*
- *Sweet Charity*
- *There's Gotta Be Something Better Than This*
- *Too Many Tomorrows*
- *Where Am I Going?*
- *You Should See Yourself*





## 6. Looking at various scenes

### 6.1 Act 1 (Scene 1)

*The stage is in darkness. There is music, a slow mournful version of, "THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING BETTER THAN THIS." The lights slowly come up on the FANDANGO BALLROOM. It has seen better days. The HOSTESSES dance with imaginary partners and sing:*

#### HOSTESSES

THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING BETTER THAN THIS THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING BETTER TO DO  
THERE'S GOTTA BE SOME LIFE CLEANER THAN THIS THERE'S GOTTA BE SOME GOOD REASON TO LIVE  
*One by one the HOSTESSES approach the audience, each with a different sign. The signs read;*

**WILL YOU LIVE OR SIMPLY EXIST?**

**GIVE US MONEY. WE ARE PRETTY.**



**HUG ME AND TELL ME EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE.**

**WHY STOP DREAMING WHEN YOU WAKE UP?**

**DON'T MAKE ME WAIT JUST BECAUSE YOU KNOW I WILL.**

**PEOPLE ARE LONELY BECAUSE THEY BUILD WALLS INSTEAD OF BRIDGES.**

*Finally, CHARITY steps forward. Her sign reads: **WITHOUT LOVE, LIFE HAS NO PURPOSE***

*The FANDANGO BALLROOM fades away as the PARK is created around her. CHARITY begins to look around for someone.  
(CHARLIE) A YOUNG MAN is picked up by the spotlight.*

CHARITY Charlie, don't – say a word. Because I know exactly what you're gonna say... I've been thinking about it all day... You're gonna start off with...

*(She primps her hair, then sniffs)*

... Mmm, that heavenly odor. Is that perfume or is that you?" ... And then you're gonna look in my eyes and say ... (She looks in his eyes, tiger-like) "You drive me crazy, did you know that? Did you know you drive me crazy?... And then – you're gonna take my hand and hold it in yours... (She takes his hand in hers) ... And then \_ and this is the best part -- then you're gonna say, "Honey you are the sweetest, the softest, the prettiest girl in this whole cockeyed crazy wide wonderful world ... (She sighs) Ohh, brother, you sure knows how to talk to a girl. (...)





**Activity 2: Interpretation of the introductory scene.**

- How is Charity introduced as a character in that first scene?
- After having seen the show on stage: describe the action after Charity's monologue and comment on it.
- Do you know examples from reality where people behave similarly in case of an accident?
- The slogans on the signs of the hostesses. Are they meaningful or stupid? Is there one particular statement that appeals to you? Give reasons.

**6.2 Act 1 (Scene 8)**

The elevator has suddenly come to a stop ... but the door does not open. THEY are obviously between floors. It is plain to see from the blanched expression on OSCAR'S face, HE is not comfortable in this situation).

OSCAR What was that?

CHARITY We stopped ... Press the button. It'll start right in again.

(OSCAR quickly presses the button but nothing happens. HE presses it again and again. It doesn't move)

OSCAR Something's wrong. We're stuck.

CHARITY (*Cheerfully*) These old elevators. You never can trust them.

OSCAR (*Nervously wipes forehead*) Oh, boy.

CHARITY I had a friend who was stuck in one for eight hours. With two German shepherds and a delivery boy.

OSCAR (*Getting extremely tense. HE loosens his tie*) It's kind of stuffy in here, isn't it? Isn't it stuffy?

CHARITY You think so?

OSCAR (Unbuttons his top shirt button) ... You want to try pressing the buttons?

(Nervously)

56CHARITY No, that's alright. I'm sure you pressed them very well.

OSCAR (Nods) I did. I pressed them very well. I gave them a very good press ... Soooo ... I guess we're stuck.

CHARITY I guess so ...

(SHE looks at the INSPECTORS' CARD on the wall and reads ... ) "Maximum weight in pounds ... one thousand three hundred."

OSCAR (*Looks at her*) ... What do you weigh?

CHARITY A hundred and twenty-eight.

OSCAR We're alright.

CHARITY Sure.

OSCAR Yeah, we're fine ... Fine ... We're just stuck in the old elevator ...

(HE forces a little laugh)

CHARITY Are you alright?

OSCAR (Quickly) Me? Me? Yes. Yes. Fine. Yes, I'm fine. Fine. Just have to get used to it, that's all ... It's my first time trapped in an elevator ... Trapped, Trapped, Trapped.

CHARITY Hey! ... You don't have claustrophobia., do you?

OSCAR (*Scoffing*) No. No, nothing like that. Claustrophobia? ... No... I just don't like to be in small, tight places that I can't get out of.

CHARITY Oh, I understand. I used to have that with zippers. I was once trapped in a dress for twenty minutes. I screamed all over Orbachs.

OSCAR That is claustrophobia. You've got to watch out for that. No, I can handle this because I know we'll get out of here in a couple of minutes.

CHARITY Sure we will.

OSCAR (Hopefully) You really think so?

CHARITY I do. I really do.

OSCAR But if you thought we were really trapped in here, what would you say?

CHARITY But we're not trapped.

OSCAR But if you thought we were, what would you say?

CHARITY I'd say we were really trapped.

OSCAR Oh, my God, I knew it, I knew it!

CHARITY But we're not. You really shouldn't get so excited.

OSCAR Isn't this awful? I never act this way. I'm really a very calm person. Highly organized.

I can promise you that if it really comes down to it, you can depend on me ... You understand that?

CHARITY I do.

OSCAR I just hope it doesn't come down to it ... Maybe I should yell for help?

CHARITY Why not.

OSCAR I'm alright, you understand. But I know that you suffer from claustrophobia and I realize you're very uncomfortable and I wouldn't want you to be stuck in here any longer than I have to be.

Help - Help -- Hel --



(CHARITY touches him - HE jumps violently)

CHARITY My name is Charity Valentine. Hey, you're shaking.

OSCAR All over.

CHARITY Let me rub your wrists.

(She rubs them)

OSCAR ...You know what I feel like doing now? What my impulse is? To take off my clothes.

CHARITY Oh, well I don't think that would do much good.

OSCAR (*Snappy*) You'd think they'd have a telephone in here, wouldn't you? Never again. I'll never go in an elevator without a telephone. I'll always check for a telephone.

CHARITY We really should change the subject. You wanna play actors and actresses?

OSCAR (*Yells down*) Hey, come on... We don't think it's funny anymore.

CHARITY Try not to think of it. Play the game. Alright, what actress was in "Sabrina Fair? You get three guesses. Ready? Julie Andrews ---

OSCAR I don't want to play. I really don't feel like playing. It's a stupid game for two people trapped in an elevator to play ... No offense.

CHARITY I'm just trying to pass the time.

OSCAR If I could just get out for a few minutes. Just a few minutes outside and I'd be alright. Then I'd come back inside.

CHARITY The best thing to do is to keep talking. Then you won't think about it... What's your name?

OSCAR (*Looks blank.*) CHARITY Your name? What's your name? You know, like Frank, Harry, Sidney, Bruce. That's a name.

OSCAR Oh ... Oscar. My name is Oscar ... Whoo, it's stuffy. ... stuffy, stuffy, stuffy.

CHARITY Now let's keep our clothes on, Oscar. What's your second name?

OSCAR My what?

CHARITY Your second name. Don't you have a second name?

OSCAR No, I don't think so.

CHARITY Sure you do. Like Oscar Minetti or Oscar Greenspan.

OSCAR Greenspan -- No ... Lindquist. Oscar Lindquist ... Look how quickly I'm breathing. You notice how quickly I'm breathing? What is that? What is that quick breathing?

CHARITY That's quick breathing. Don't think about it ... Where do you live?

OSCAR ... Who?

CHARITY You! You! Where do you live?

OSCAR In an elevator.

CHARITY No, you don't, Oscar. You live in a house.

OSCAR Oh. Yes. 411 East 14th street. I gotta stop breathing so much. I'm gonna use up all the air.

CHARITY We got plenty, Oscar. Now keep talking. How old are you? Where do you work?

OSCAR Heh? Yeah. Yeah. I work at 38 years old ... and I was a Tax Accountant for Gallagher and Perlmutter on my last birthday ... Oh, boy, that's very quick breathing.

CHARITY Keep talking. Oscar, what else?

OSCAR It's not fair. You should breathe some of the air.

*(HE gallantly scoops some toward CHARITY)*

CHARITY Are you married, Oscar? Do you have a wife?

OSCAR What?

CHARITY Married? Married? *(Losing control)* For God's sakes, are you married??

OSCAR No. No, I'm not married.

CHARITY *(Big smile)* Oh Oscar. You're gonna be alright.

OSCAR Don't leave me.

CHARITY Oh -- I won't leave you. I'm gonna stay right here in the elevator with you. And you're gonna be alright, Oscar because I'm gonna help you ...

OSCAR How? What should I do?

CHARITY Just do what I do.

OSCAR *(Excited)* Good. Listen, I have an idea. What do you think of this? Climbing out the top of the elevator, shimmying up the cable and forcing the door open on the floor above.

CHARITY I think it could work, Oscar, but gee, it sounds a little dangerous.

OSCAR Then don't try it. Stay here with me.

### **Activity 3: Improvisation and Creative Writing.**

- Read the "Elevator scene" in class and improvise a new ending.
  - "Stuck in an elevator". Make up a scene or write a short story!
- Be very considerate with your choice of characters and what you make them do!

### 6.3 ACT TWO (SCENE 11)

The Park HOSTESS with a sign: "IF YOU WANT TO MAKE GOD LAUGH, TELL HIM ABOUT YOUR PLANS."

OSCAR and CHARITY hand in hand. The rest of the stage is dark. Park trees can be seen. CHARITY is glowing and speaks rapidly, filled with emotion. There is music under.

CHARITY ... Oh, Oscar. I didn't like the first half of my life much but the second half sure is getting good.

*(Snaps fingers, remembering something.)*

Ooh, I knew I had something to show you.

*(Fishes through her purse. Takes out card.)*

A joint bank account .... I deposited the entire can of Chase and Sanborn ... So that's my entire dowry ... The point I'm trying to get across, Oscar Lindquist, is that I'm very happy.

*(Music Fade out.)*

OSCAR *(Uncomfortably)* Charity ... there is something I have to tell you.

CHARITY Oh, I've been doing all the talking. OK, it's your turn, Oscar.

OSCAR Charity, ... I'm very fond of you, you know that. And I find you unique --

CHARITY That's me!

OSCAR -- and different and sweet and wonderful and tender -- and I just can't marry you. Did you hear me, Charity?

CHARITY *(Quickly)* Yeah, I heard you. I heard you.

OSCAR I can't Charity -- I can't go through with it.

CHARITY Alright, Oscar, I know this isn't a joke because you certainly wouldn't joke about a thing like that at a time like this. It couldn't be a joke because it would be a very rotten joke. But I can't figure what else it could be ... Oscar -- is it a joke?

OSCAR This is not easy for me, Charity. Not easy at all.

CHARITY I know it's not easy, Oscar ... but is it a joke?

OSCAR *(Irritated)* It is not a joke ... It is no joke!

CHARITY *(Mumbles)* It's no joke.

OSCAR I thought this time it would be different. But it's not. It's the same... It's always the same.

CHARITY What's the same?

OSCAR The other men. I always get this far and then and then I start thinking about the other men ...

CHARITY What other men?

OSCAR *(Gently)* You know what other men!

CHARITY *(Pause)* But Oscar, you said ...

OSCAR Oh, I know I kept saying it didn't matter because I thought if I said it enough I could convince myself it was true.

CHARITY That certainly makes sense to me, Oscar.

OSCAR It's not your fault, Charity. You're a wonderful girl.

CHARITY *(Hopeful)* I am?

OSCAR But it's my problem, Charity. I have this neurosis ... a -- mental block.

CHARITY There's a lot of that going around.

OSCAR *(With self-anger)* But I have this childish, incomprehensible, idiotic, fixation about purity. In this day and age? It's laughable, isn't it? *(SHE laughs)* It's not funny. But every time I think of you -- with all those other men --

CHARITY Oscar, you're making a mountain out of a couple of guys.

OSCAR How many? CHARITY What?

OSCAR *(Shouts)* HOW MANY? I want to know exactly how many.

CHARITY Gee, when you yell like that, I can't think. *(SHE starts to count on fingers)* Frank, Harry, Sidney -- How far back do you want me to go?

OSCAR *(Covers eyes in agony)* Oh, my God, don't tell me. I don't want to hear.

CHARITY Oscar, I know I'm not very bright. I could go to a night school. We could be so happy in that gas station, I know it. On the days you felt 'sick', you could stay in bed and I'd work the pumps ... I've



got so much to give ... Let me give it to you.

OSCAR You're too good to be on your knees to me.

CHARITY (*Weak smile*) Give the little girl a break, heh?

OSCAR Together, I'd destroy you. Sooner or later it would start again and I'd hound you day and night "What were their names?" How long did you know them before?" "How did you feel when they ---"

CHARITY You could ask me anything. I won't hide a thing. I'll tell you everything you want to know.

OSCAR You'd like that, wouldn't you? ... I'd get all the pretty details, wouldn't I? Give you quite a thrill, heh?

CHARITY You won't get one word out of me, not a word -- Don't you see, Oscar, I'm very flexible. I can go either way.

OSCAR There's only one way to go with me. To destruction. Marry me and I'll destroy you, Charity.

CHARITY That's okay. I'm not doing much now, anyway.

OSCAR But the one shred of decency left in me won't let me destroy you. I must save you from me. I'm doing this for your own good, Charity. Run. Run. I'M SAVING YOU, CHARITY ... SAVING YOU!!

(*HE has forced her down to the edge of the lake. Now HE pushes her into it..*)

OSCAR Woops.

(*HE starts running in all different directions ... then back to the pit. Starts to run again, then back to pit. Into pit.*)

Charity, I feel sick about this. You may not believe that, but I feel just terrible. (*OSCAR is backing away from the lake.*) A wonderful girl -- so understanding -- they don't make them like that anymore.

(*He's off. The stage is empty for a moment. One of CHARITY's hands emerges from the lake. Then the other. Finally SHE lifts herself on the edge of the stage, her legs dangling into the pit. SHE is wringing wet.*)

CHARITY ... Did you ever have one of those days? ...

(*SHE wrings some water out of her hair and her clothing. SHE sighs again*) At least I didn't get tattooed again.

(*SHE picks herself up, and starts to pull herself together... then SHE notices SHE still has her purse. SHE opens it up, looks inside and smiles*)  
... And I still have my dowry ... (Optimistically)  
... Maybe things are beginning to pick up for me.

## SONG

### "I'M THE BRAVEST INDIVIDUAL"

WHEN I'M SO JITTERY MY KNEES BUCKLE ICE  
WATER TICKLES MY SPINE I'M TRAPPED LIKE A  
BUTTERFLY IN A NET THEN I SAY TO MYSELF:  
I'M THE BRAVEST INDIVIDUAL I HAVE EVER  
MET! THIS GAME MAKES VERY GOOD SENSE I  
GET RESULTS

OSCAR ISN'T THAT GREAT?

CHARITY GET BACK MY CONFIDENCE AND AN  
EVEN PULSE SEVENTY-EIGHT SO WHEN I  
PANIC AND FEEL EACH DAY I'VE COME TO BE  
END OF THE LINE THEN I SAY THAT FEAR  
HASN'T LICKED ME YET! I KEEP TELLING  
MYSELF I'M THE BRAVEST INDIVIDUAL I HAVE  
EVER MET!

## THE END



#### **Activity 4: The Ending and a word about Oscar!**

There are multiple endings to the show. In some a fairy godmother appears and reassures her all will be well soonish, in another Oscar returns, apologizes and helps her out of the lake. In yet another a soldier appears and helps her out of the lake - it is love at first sight.

- What do you think should happen to Charity? Write down your suggestions and discuss them in class!
- Comment on the ending of the ETF production !
- A word about *Oscar*:  
He says: ***"I just can't marry you. Did you hear me, Charity?"***  
What are the reasons he gives? Is he honest? If not, why can't he make a commitment?
- What's your experience with making a commitment in a relationship? Is it particularly a male problem? What is your opinion on the 10 reasons? Read and discuss the following article in class!

### **7. Why are Men Scared of Commitment? 10 Reasons**

Men love their freedom. For many guys, the very thought of making a commitment to one woman for the rest of their lives is enough to send them sprinting for the hills. The dreaded "C-word" implies compromise, loss of independence, the sacrifice of sexual variety and the looming specter of financial devastation.

And the statistics bear this out -- the U.S. Census reports that, over the past four decades, the rate of marriage has definitely been on the decrease. According to the National Marriage Project, a study undertaken at Rutgers University, men today are overwhelmingly apprehensive about getting married.

**Cohabitation** -- commitment with an escape hatch -- is on the rise. So what is the explanation for this phenomenon? Just why are men so afraid of commitment these days? Here are a few of the reasons:

#### **1. She applies pressure**

For a lot of women, commitment is the finish line for their adult lives. They want to get married and they want to do so now. So they exert increasing pressure on us to settle down -- pressure that can cause us to pack up and leave.

#### **2. Can't trust a woman**

We learned pretty fast that some women can't be trusted -- it seems like they're looking to upgrade, to latch onto a man with more money, more status and more stuff to sex-ploit. Commitment to a relationship means putting your heart on the line, and none of us want a sharp stiletto heel spiking us in the back as our ex-girlfriend scrambles over us to get to the next guy.

#### **3. Not ready for it**

These days, there are fewer societal pressures to marry and we can weigh our options instead of just jumping directly from school into marriage. We can afford to wait for that perfect woman while we concentrate on getting our careers off the ground, save to buy a house or actively play the field.



#### 4. Loss of free time

Serious relationships suck up an enormous amount of time and energy -- they can entirely take over our lives. The pressure is always on to do something, be it wine and dine her, interact with her family, remember her birthday or pick her up from work. For some of us, it's just too much work.

#### 5. Lack of compromise

Commitment implies the ability to compromise - ideally a marriage should be a 50/50 partnership in which each half contributes and shares equally. But to a woman, "compromise" often means "do it my way or you're cut off from sex."

#### 6. The emotional baggage

Many women look at marriage through Cinderella eyes -- for them, putting a ring on their fingers means that we will magically solve all their problems, from childhood issues with their fathers to huge shopping debts incurred on credit cards. Women often submerge their true

personalities and agendas until the knot is tied -- but when the truth comes out and we find ourselves legally bound to a woman who's not right for us, it's too late.

#### 7. We've been burned before

When we've been divorced and run through the wringer of the court system, many of us are reluctant (read: "terrified") to risk a second commitment. Nowadays, we aren't exactly chomping at the bit to sign a contract legally allowing a woman to clean us out financially. Successful achievers -- those of us who have built companies and high-powered careers from the ground up -- are especially afraid of being forced to hand over all the fruits of our hard labor and may make the decision never to get involved in a serious relationship again.

#### 8. One sex partner, forever

We naturally crave sexual variety. When we commit -- either in marriage or cohabitation -- we willingly volunteer to cut ourselves off from any other sexual pursuits. Sexual boredom can set in, followed by a total lack of desire. For a lot of us -- even guys who weren't getting a lot of action anyway -- this can be the scariest consequence of all.

#### 9. Loss of space

We like guy things -- we need "**guy space**" for stuff like cars, tools and watching kick-ass action flicks. But women want to take over, to "female up" what used to be exclusive male territory with frilly drapes and paintings of flowers. Suddenly you find the bathroom buried in female products, your leather couch has been reupholstered in pastel paisley and the spot where you kept your tools has blossomed into an indoor herb garden.

#### 10. No more freedom

We men are extremely **independent by nature**. We like to make our own decisions and run our lives by our own rules. We want to do what we want when we want. But when a woman enters the picture, all the choices a guy simply used to take for granted -- going out for a beer with his buddies, buying a big screen TV, playing golf on Saturday afternoon -- suddenly have to be cleared with her first. And her answer is almost always no. Almost overnight, we find ourselves trapped, doing what she wants to do, regardless of our own wants or desires.

Read More <http://www.ivillage.com/>

## 8. Federico Fellini's film “Nights of Cabiria”

The American musical and movie *Sweet Charity* is based on Fellini's screenplay *Le notti di Cabiria*.

„Nights of Cabiria“ is a 1957 Italian romantic drama film directed by Federico Fellini and starring **Giulietta Masina**, François Périer, and Amedeo Nazzari. Based on a story by Fellini, the film is about a **waifish** prostitute who wanders the streets of Rome looking for true love but finds only heartbreak. In 1998 the film was rereleased, newly restored and with a **crucial scene** that censors had cut.

The name Cabiria is borrowed from the 1914 Italian film *Cabiria*, while the character of Cabiria herself is taken from a brief scene in Fellini's earlier film *The White Sheik*.

It was Masina's performance in that earlier film that inspired Fellini to make this film. But no one in Italy was willing to finance a film which featured prostitutes as heroines. Finally, Dino de Laurentiis agreed to put up the money. Fellini based some of the characters on a real

prostitute whom he had met while filming *Il Bidone*.

For authenticity, he had Pier Paolo Pasolini, known for his familiarity with Rome's criminal underworld, help with the dialogue.

### Vocabulary Aids

waifish - heimatlos

a crucial scene –  
eine schwierige  
Szene

to root for sb –sich  
identifizieren mit

a treat - ein  
Hochgenuss

Giulietta Masina shines in Federico Fellini's 1957 film about a prostitute in Rome looking for real love and being disappointed at every turn, and the film (titled *Le notti di Cabiria* in its native Italian) has arguably one of the best endings in movie history. It is simpler than many of Il Maestro's other movies, but *Nights of Cabiria* is just as satisfying and beautiful. Despite the main character being a prostitute, the film easily gets a PG rating and is relatively tame compared to many of Fellini's other movies. And for a main character who is a prostitute, which is a profession usually spit upon and darkened in films, Cabiria is lovely and sweet. She is a character viewers **root for** and like instantly.

Masina, Fellini's real life wife, actually originated the role of Cabiria in the 1952 film *The White Sheik*. With her expressive face and amazing acting talent, she brings a naiveté and sweetness to Cabiria not usually written for prostitutes in films. But, it works, and the audience hopes for Cabiria to find love just as much as she wants to fall in love.

We learn quickly that Cabiria's naiveté is also her biggest disadvantage. During the film she is used, left by people she loves, and incredibly hurt. Throughout all of this, however, she admirably keeps moving on. The film once again earned Fellini an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.





Fellini won the previous year for *La Strada*, as well as in later years for *8 1/2* and *Amarcord*.

### Best Ending in Movie History?

But what transforms *Nights of Cabiria* from a wonderful film into a masterpiece is the last scene of the movie, quite possibly one of the best movie endings in the history of cinema. Without spoiling it for viewers, the scene is full of hope and a unique kind of happiness, letting the audience know that Cabiria will be okay, much to viewers' relief.

For fans of Fellini, this is a welcome ending. In other works, such as *La Dolce Vita* and *La Strada*, the final notes were melancholy and bitter, but viewers will feel that Cabiria needs a happy ending more than any of Fellini's other creations. Critics have also given *Nights of Cabiria* almost universal praise, and it is easy to see why. With one of Fellini's most likable main characters and her hopeful spirit, *Nights of Cabiria* is **a treat** for Fellini fans and for audiences looking for an introduction into Italian cinema.



#### Activity 5: Character and Ending. Further Points for Discussion

- The author of the article maintains that usually “a prostitute is a profession usually spit upon and darkened in films, (whereas) *Cabiria* is lovely and sweet. She is a character viewers root for and like instantly.” Do you agree?
  - Can this also be said about *Charity*?
- He calls the ending “possibly one of the best movie endings in the history of cinema”. Why?
  - What, in your opinion, does a good ending need?
- Compare the ending of this film to the ending of the Musical “Sweet Charity”!

## Vocabulary Aids

a vintage Broadway musical  
- ein Oldtimer  
Musical vom Broadway

good-natured – gutmütig

a contrived episode – eine gekünstelte Szene

deft wit – geschickter Witz

louche and tawdry – zwielichtig und billig

kookiness – Verrücktheit

to radiate – ausstrahlen

cameo – small part in a play

## 9. REVIEWS

### 9.1 “Sweet Charity” in London

The Menier Chocolate Factory has discovered a winning

#### seasonal formula

by Michael Billington, **The Guardian**, Thursday 3, December 2009

Tamzin Outhwaite, Mark Umbers in **Sweet Charity**.

Photograph: Tristram Kenton

You take a **vintage Broadway musical** based on a European movie, cast and choreograph it **to the hilt**, and invest it with a wild humour. It worked with La Cage aux Folles and it pays off just as handsomely with this joyous revival of a 1966 show, with a score by Cy Coleman, drawn from Fellini's *Nights of Cabiria*.

Neil Simon's book is actually an improvement on the film. Instead of a **good-natured prostitute**, Simon's protagonist is a dance-hall hostess named Charity Hope Valentine who, as one of her colleagues observes, runs her heart like a hotel: "You got guys checking in and out all the time." After a **contrived episode** in which

Charity is picked up by an Italian movie star, she finally meets a possible match in a neurotic loner named Oscar. But Simon's **deft wit** reminds us that Oscar is hardly likely to make it to the altar. Even though he attends a therapy group to cure his painful shyness, he tells Charity: "I never had the nerve to bring it up in class."

The real motor for this production is the choreography of Stephen Mear, which frees itself from the **Bob Fosse** stage and screen prototypes. You see this in a number like *Big Spender*, for which Fosse provided a famous image of the dance-hall girls leaning on a barre with knees turned in at angles. Mear gives us something far more **louche and tawdry** as the dancers provocatively caress every curve of their arched bodies as they compete for male customers. Even better is *Rhythm of Life*, where Charity and Oscar visit a druggy underground cult whose members dance and jive while preserving a look of spaced-out dopiness.

Tamzin Outhwaite makes the role of Charity her own. Instead of seeking to imitate the **kookiness** of Shirley MacLaine in the film, she **radiates** a sunny, cheerful innocence, and, even if you wonder how Charity has preserved this after eight years as a hostess, Outhwaite dances with a whirling energy that becomes the outward expression of the character's essential purity. She is well supported by Mark Umbers as both the preening movie idol and the panic-stricken Oscar, and Matthew White's strongly cast production boasts two striking **cameos** from Tiffany Graves and Josefina Gabrielle, wistfully dreaming of the glamour of the secretarial life. Under Nigel Lilley's musical supervision, a half-forgotten 1960s show is **dusted down** and given a captivating vitality and freshness.



### Activity 6a: Understanding a review

What made the author like this production?

- actors
- choreography
- presentation of the music

What does he mean by: the show is “dusted down”?



### INFO

#### Bob Fosse and the Film

The 1969 film, *Sweet Charity*, featuring Shirley MacLaine and the great Chita Rivera, is conceived with a choreographer's eye. You can see this in the perpetual sense of movement, the acutely rhythmical shifts of camera angle, the way that actors' bodies are timed to cross the screen in symmetrical and harmonious patterns. It is a film in which there is a sense of perpetual motion, of actors and dancers whipped up into a storm of constant movement which never lets up until the final credits roll. Of course, the film is directed by the legendary **Bob Fosse**, who conceived the 1966 Broadway hit, and even in moments of pure drama he never loses sight of his role as choreographer.

**More on Style of Dancing and Bob Fosse > see p. 22**

## 9.2 INFO: Robert Louis “Bob” Fosse (1927 –1987)



Bob was an American dancer, musical theater choreographer, director, screenwriter and film director. He won an **unprecedented** eight Tony Awards for choreography, as well as one for direction. He was nominated for an Academy Award four times, winning for his direction of ***Cabaret***. He was closely identified with his third wife, Broadway dancing star **Gwen Verdon**. She was both the dancer/collaborator/muse upon whom he choreographed much of his work and a significant guardian of the Fosse **legacy** after his death. Fosse was born in Chicago, Illinois, to a Norwegian father and Irish mother, the second youngest of six children. Fosse moved to New York with the ambition of being the next Fred Astaire. His appearance in *Call Me Mister* brought him to the attention of Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. His early screen appearances included ***Give A Girl A Break***, ***The Affairs of Dobie Gillis*** and ***Kiss Me Kate***, all released in 1953. Although Fosse's acting career in film was cut short by premature balding, which limited the roles he could take, he was reluctant to move from Hollywood to theatre. Nevertheless, he made the move, and in 1954, he choreographed his first musical, ***The Pajama Game***, followed by George Abbott's ***Damn Yankees*** in 1955. It was while



working on the latter show that he first met the red-headed rising star whom he would marry in 1960, Gwen Verdon. Fosse performed a memorable song and dance number in Stanley Donen's 1974 film version of ***The Little Prince***.

In 1960, Fosse was, for the first time, both director and choreographer of a musical called simply ***Redhead***. With ***Redhead***, Verdon won her third Tony Award for Best Actress in a Musical, the show won the Tony for best musical and Fosse carried off the award for best choreography. Fosse would partner star Verdon as her director/choreographer again with ***Sweet Charity*** and again with ***Chicago***. Fosse developed a jazz dance style that was immediately recognizable, **exuding** a stylized, cynical sexuality. Other notable distinctions of his style included the use of turned-in knees, sideways shuffling, and rolled shoulders. With Astaire as an influence, he used props such as bowler hats, canes and chairs. His trademark use of hats was influenced by his own self-consciousness. According to Martin Gottfried in his biography of

Fosse, "His **baldness** was the reason that he wore hats, and was doubtless why he put hats on his dancers." He used gloves in his performances because he did not like his hands. Some of his most popular numbers include "Steam Heat" (***The Pajama Game***) and "Big Spender" (***Sweet Charity***). The "RichMan's Frug" scene in "***Sweet Charity***" is another example of his **signature style**.

### Vocabulary Aids

unprecedented -  
beispiellos

legacy – Erbe,  
Vermächtnis

to exude -  
ausstrahlen

baldness –  
Kahlheit, Glatze

Rich Man's Frug –  
Bedürfnislosigkeit  
des reichen  
Mannes

signature style-  
künstlerische  
Handschrift



### 9.3 “Sweet Charity”

Aurora Theatre Atlanta



BOOGIE NIGHTS: Rebecca Simon (left), Jevares C. Myrick, Caroline Freedlund, Taryn Bryant in “Sweet Charity” . Aurora Theatre Atlanta 2012

“Valentine Hope flirts with questions about the sex industry”  
by Curt Holman Aug 6<sup>th</sup> 2012

#### Vocabulary Aids

concept – Begriff

tamer approach -  
vorsichtigerer Ansatz

taciturn cad – schweigsamer  
Schurke

to serenade – eine geliebte  
Person besingen

moxie – Mut, Tatkraft

effervescent –  
überschäumend

hard-boiled – hart gesotten

sardonic – bitter, höhnisch

Charity Hope Valentine, the title character of the musical *Sweet Charity*, identifies her career as "social consultant at the Fandango Ballroom." But "dance hall hostess" or "taxi dancer" more accurately describes her profession. An antiquated-sounding **concept** that still exists today, taxi dancers rent out their bodies as dance partners for men, usually charging by the song. *Sweet Charity* implies such work can be a gateway to prostitution, although Charity's just a hoofer, not a hooker.

*Sweet Charity*'s creators drew inspiration from Federico Fellini's film *Nights of Cabiria*, about an actual prostitute with a heart of gold, although book writer Neil Simon, composer Cy Coleman, and lyricist Dorothy Fields took a **tamer approach**. Featuring the famous come-on "Hey Big Spender," *Sweet Charity* offered Broadway of the 1960s a musical that's kind of about the sex industry, but not really. Aurora Theatre brings an enormous level of energy and invention to its production of *Sweet Charity* without resolving some of its internal contradictions and dated qualities.

Rebecca Simon plays Charity, a hopeless romantic with lousy judgment. In the opening scene she **serenades** her latest boyfriend, Charlie, who promptly steals her purse and pushes her into a lake. Trent Blanton portrays all of Charity's boyfriends, from **taciturn cad** Charlie to Italian movie star Vittorio to neurotic nice guy Oscar. Blanton brings both a resounding singing voice and a graceful physical presence to each of his roles, but also meets the characters' comedic demands. Simon generates plenty of **moxie** as Charity, emitting little squeals and coos when in the arms of her latest fellow. But Charity seems **hard-boiled**, like her more **sardonic** friend Nickie (Caroline Freedlund). Charity's solos such as "If My Friends Could See Me Now" should come across as **effervescent**, but feel a little forced and desperate, as if Charity's trying to convince herself that she's happy.

The story's heart, however, lies in numbers like "There's Gotta Be Something Better Than This," when Charity and her fellow dancers express their desires to escape their disheartening job. In such scenes, as well as the emotionally honest finale, *Sweet Charity* hints at the social stigma of and difficulties in leaving the sex industry — or a profession that's very similar. Mostly, however, ***Sweet Charity*** dances around the issue.

## Vocabulary Aids

### Hooker's Dictionary of Terms

**Hooper** – taxi girl, dancer for rent (Revuegirl)

**Hooker** - prostitute

**Pimp Mafia** : 1.) an underground network of pimps that all communicate and all work with each other. 2.) a circuit of pimps that the police don't even know about.

**The Game** : 1.) the lifestyle where a pimp gets paid by a prostitute to be with him. 2.) a set of rules that is followed when you're a pimp or a prostitute. 3.) a code of ethics established to keep everyone in line with each other. 4.) the law of the land when it comes to pimps and prostitutes. If you don't play by the rules of the game, you'll fail.

**The Bottom Girl** : 1.) the girl who has been with the pimp the longest. She runs the show when he's not there. 2.) the girl that lives with the pimp. 3.) the girl that sleeps in the main bedroom with the pimp and is the most respected.

**Fresh Turnout** : 1.) a new girl that enters the "stable" of a pimp and prostitute and would be considered "fresh turnout." 2.) the girl who's brand new to the game and must be trained.

**Grooming** : 1.) the training process for a brand new girl in the game. 2.) the act of winning and dinnning the new girl by the pimp, usually the pimp tricks her to thinking she's special and she's the main girl.

**Choosey Suzy** : a girl who can't make up her mind and she jumps from one pimp to another pimp. In the game, the girl that does this, doesn't get any respect, because she doesn't stay with a pimp long enough to get that respect.

**Down Ho** : 1.) the woman that pays her pimp. She follows all the rules of the game. 2.) a woman who will do whatever it takes to make her pimp happy. She is in love with her pimp.

**Stripping** : gateway to prostitution.

### Activity 6 b: Controversial discussion of a review

- How does the author assess the Atlanta production ?
- What does he mean by "the show dances around the issue"?
- Curt Holman maintains that "Sweet Charity" implies such work can be "a gateway to prostitution, although Charity's just a hooper, not a hooker". Is "Sweet Charity" a musical about the loneliness of prostitutes?

### Activity 7: Topics for essays

- How can the topic of prostitution properly be dealt with in works of fiction (novels, stage plays and films)?
- Write a review of the "Sweet Charity" show at the ETF. What is the focus issue of this production?

## 10. The Reality of Prostitution

### 10.1 Dolly: Faith & Prostitution in Surabaya by Jacobus E. Lato



#### ***Dolly by day, just another Indonesian street***

The nightfall **shields** the day and transforms it in different ways, particularly in Dolly, Surabaya. In an approximately 5 meter wide 150 meter long alley, the night brings an extremely different atmosphere. Walking passed the alley that morning, I hardly noticed that beautiful girls flocked the area. Some sleepy girls were hanging around some food vendors and *warung* (eateries). There was no sign of any hospitality; no greetings and bright smiles followed by whispers ones ear and tender caresses. No **soaring** music, bright lights, quasi-dancing, sensual wriggling. Various parking lots contained only some motorcycles and mobiles. Some passersby peeping into a house seemed disappointed and rushed to the end of the alley. The call of the prayer amplified by speakers of the nearby mosques. It's ten minutes to six and dusk, time to go to the mosque. A couple of hours ago no one in Dolly had that holy place in mind.

#### ***Dolly by Night***

"In the morning, most prostitutes spend their time sleeping. They have been working till midnight the night before," Yudhis of Yayasan Abdi Asih, Surabaya told me then continued; "It is their special time with their *kiwir-kiwir* or *gendakan*. At three they assume their activities; take a bath, get dressed and get themselves ready for their customers by sitting in their booth."



*Dolly by night, business as usual*

**Kiwir-kiwir** is the local slang for prostitutes' boyfriends; usually called *brondong*, young boys. **Gendakan** denotes the older or illegal **spouses**. In a special relationship these men spend time with the prostitutes when they're not working; some of the prostitutes even look after them.

Dolly from five to the middle of the night is another world. Its real character surfaces, only to resume an air of normal life during the day. Night time changes the atmospheres as well as the people. Girls seem to change in appearance in minutes. Clad in their dresses, legs and shoulders bare, eyelashes curled, lips painted, they sit on exclusive couches of a **pane booth**. Male costumers watch, spy and select the girl to their liking from the outside. Sometimes busy managing recruiters **boost** the services the girls offer.

### Sex and Lust Trade on Tombs

Surabaya has more prostitution areas besides Dolly; Kremil, Kembang Kuning, Dupak Bangunsari, Jarak and Moroseneng and some street prostitute hangouts. About 2,321 prostitutes work in Surabaya under the power of their 534 pimps. As the most visible and the most **prestigious localization**, Dolly is flanked by two other locations of a different class, 'service' and price.



*Dolly prostitutes hiding their faces*

### Vocabulary Aids for 9.1 and 9.2

to shield - beschirmen

soaring - schwebend

prestigious localization -  
repräsentativer Ort

illegal spouses –  
ungesetzliche (Ehe)Partner

to boost - antreiben

pane booth - Glaskabine

sting operation –  
Durchsuchung, Razzia

gateway - Übergang

assignation - Verabredung



## 10.2 More than 30 Arrested in Prostitution Sting

The sting was conducted in five College Park area hotels over two days.

By Jenni Pompei Washington, August 3, 2012



More than 30 people were arrested this week in a prostitution **sting** conducted at College Park hotels, according to Prince George's County police.

The operation was carried out in conjunction with the FBI Human Trafficking Unit.

"Prostitution is a **gateway crime**," Capt. Leigh Mints said in a statement. "We want to let everyone know this kind of activity is not something we want in this county and we're doing all we can to prevent it."

### Activity 8: Creative Writing

- Prostitutes as Heroines

Write a short story based on the documentary material given in chapter 9.

Take the photos as a starting point for your imagination and try to use phrases from "Sweet Charity".



*WITHOUT LOVE, LIFE HAS NO PURPOSE*

Prince George's County Police say female officers posed as prostitutes and engaged the suspects over the phone after posting fake solicitation ads online. When the suspects showed up for the erotic services, they were arrested.

On Wednesday, 13 men were arrested on a charge of **assignation**—the act of meeting up with the purpose of exchanging sex for money—and six women were arrested on prostitution charges in five College Park hotels, according to police. On Thursday night, police said 11 more men were arrested and charged with assignation and six more individuals for prostitution. All involved were adults.