

The 2026 All-Ohio Production

The Ohio Thespians presents the 2026 All-Ohio Production



Dan Knechtges, *Director/Choreographer*

Kate Mickey, *Music Director*

Amanda Betz, Zach Gerhardt, *Technical Directors*

Kristy Rodriguez & Jennifer Ludwig, *All-Ohio Coordinators*

Prescreen Auditions due by 11:59pm, Oct. 12, 2025

In-Person Callbacks & Technical Interviews

November 1st @ Olentangy Liberty HS

REHEARSAL & PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

All Rehearsals & Performances are at Chillicothe HS

October 12, 2025	Prescreen Audition due to Audition Classroom
October 19, 2025	Callbacks Announced
November 1, 2025	Callbacks & Crew Interviews during Ohio Thespian Expo at Olentangy Liberty High School
November 9, 2025	Final Cast & Crew Announced
December 19-21, 2025	Read-Through, Table Work, Blocking, Music, & Design Weekend
January 16-19, 2026	Rehearsals & Tech Meetings/Builds
February 19-22, 2026	Rehearsals
March 20-22, 2026	Early Tech

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April 7, 2026	Load-In
April 8, 2026	Tech & Dress Rehearsals
April 9, 2026	Dress Rehearsals & Public Performance (7:00pm)
April 10, 2026	Open the Ohio Thespian Festival (Two Performances) & Strike
April 11, 2026	All-Ohio Talkback Session during Ohio Thespian Festival

The Audition/Interview Google Classroom

All information regarding the prescreen audition process and materials are in the [Ragtime 2026 All-Ohio Audition and Interview Materials Classroom](#).

Class code: vq2dljxh

Content Disclosure

Please be advised this production contains racist and offensive language, physical violence, and murder. The presentation and discussion of systemic racism and historical inequities for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), immigrants, and females during the early 1900s may be difficult and traumatic to experience.

We will follow the pillars of Intimacy Direction for the Stage: context, consent, communication, choreography, and closure. Please reach to the All-Ohio Coordinators for more information or if you have any questions.

A Quick Director Statement

Ragtime first premiered on Broadway in 1998, just down the block from where I was living. I was a young, aspiring director in New York, and I still remember walking into that theater full of curiosity. What I witnessed that night astonished me—the craftsmanship of the writing, the mastery of the storytelling, and the way history, music, and humanity intertwined into something bigger than the sum of its parts.

Back then, I naively believed that the struggles at the dawn of the 20th century—were relics of the past. Surely, I thought, we had moved beyond the poison of racism, the battles over immigration, and the unchecked cruelty of unfettered capitalism.

I was wrong.

If anything, *Ragtime* speaks just as urgently today—perhaps even more so—about the American soul and the promise and contradictions that live within it. That is the power of theatre: events

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from the distant past, written in the recent past, can be reborn in the present and illuminate truths we continue to grapple with.

Returning to Ohio to direct this production is deeply personal. This is where I grew up, where my journey as a theatre artist began. As a young member of the Ohio Thespians, I found not only a community but the courage to chase a life in the arts. Now, to be back here—telling this story with these artists—is a gift beyond measure.

I believe *Ragtime* changes people. Whether you're in the audience or on the stage, its music and characters burrow into your heart. They challenge you. They inspire you. And, if we do our job right, they leave you seeing the world just a little differently.

If you audition and interview and become a part of the company, I assure you we will “give the nation a new syncopation.” One called RAGTIME.

Dan Knechtges

Synopsis

Written by the award-winning composer/lyricist team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens (*Once on This Island*, *Seussical* and *Lucky Stiff*), noted playwright Terrence McNally, and based on E.L. Doctorow's distinguished novel, *Ragtime* is the winner of the 1998 Tony Awards for Best Score, Book and Orchestrations, and both the Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards for Best Musical and Best Score. Called by TIME Magazine "A triumph for the stage," and by the International Herald Tribune "the best musical in twenty years," this acclaimed musical is filled with pageantry, emotion and hope, bursting onto the stage like no other musical.

At the dawn of a new century, everything is changing... and anything is possible. Set in the volatile melting pot of turn-of-the-century New York, three distinctly American tales are woven together – that of a stifled upper-class wife, a determined Jewish immigrant and a daring young Harlem musician – united by their courage, compassion and belief in the promise of the future. Together, they confront history's timeless contradictions of wealth and poverty, freedom and prejudice, hope and despair... and what it means to live in America.

Characters

Ragtime weaves together the stories of three distinct groups: an upper-class white family in New Rochelle, a Black ragtime musician in Harlem, and a Jewish immigrant family at Ellis Island. This allows the musical to explore themes of social class, race, and immigration within the context of a rapidly changing America at the turn of the century. We also invite actors of all gender expressions to audition for any role they feel comfortable playing.

Coalhouse

A proud and talented pianist. A Black man who believes that he can take part in the new America and will be treated fairly.

Age: 25 to 35

Vocal range: A4 - G2

Sarah

Washwoman. Sarah is a young Black woman, beautiful and filled with a strong will to live, fueled by an innocent spirit. Falls deeply in love with Coalhouse after much resistance.

Age: 18 to 25

Vocal range: F5 - G3

Mother

The consummate wife and mother. A kind woman with incredible moral fiber. Refined, intelligent, graceful and open minded.

Age: 25 to 35

Vocal range: E5-G3

Father

Mother's professionally successful husband. Fancies himself an amateur explorer, he is commanding and attractive. Enjoys being the family breadwinner, a traditionalist.

Age: 30 to 45

Vocal range: F5- A3

Younger Brother

Mother's younger brother. He is an erratic and passionate soul, a firework waiting to be lit. Influenced greatly by Goldman's teachings.

Age: 20 to 30

Vocal range: F5-B3

Little Boy

Mother and Father's son. He is open-hearted and curious with inexplicable clairvoyance. Never passes judgement on others.

Age: 8 to 12

Vocal range: D5-E4

Grandfather

Mother's patrician father. He is a retired professor, and easily irritated by nearly everything.

Age: 50 to 65

Tateh

A Latvian immigrant. He wears the trials and tribulations of his past on his sleeve, but remains optimistic that he will be successful. Full of genuine drive and heart. He lives for his little daughter.

Age: 30 to 40

Vocal range: F5-A3

Little Girl

Tateh's daughter. A vulnerable child in a brand-new home, she has lost her mother and is guarded and shy. She clings to her father.

Age: 7 to 10

Vocal range : D5-C4

Booker T. Washington

Brilliant Black social activist. He is an eloquent and articulate gentleman with no patience for Black Americans leading less than exemplary lives.

Age: 45 to 55

Vocal range: Eb4-D3

Emma Goldman

Social activist. Originally from Russia, she is a leader, a fearless advocate for the oppressed.

Age: 30 to 40

Vocal range: D5-B3

Evelyn Nesbit

the beautiful vaudeville performer, famous for the murder of her high profile lover by her rich husband

Age: 18 to 25

Vocal range: D5-B3

Henry Ford

an American industrialist and founder of the Ford Motor Company

Age: 35 to 45

Vocal range: F5-D4

Harry Houdini

The famous magician, originally from Hungary. With notable physical ability, he stands as a symbol of the 'American Dream.'

Age: 25 to 35

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Vocal range: G5-C4

J.P. Morgan

The rich, famous financier.

Age: 60 to 65

Sarah's Friend

A friend of Sarah's who attends her funeral

Age: 18 to 25

Vocal range: D5-D3

Willie Conklin

A racist volunteer fireman who destroys Coalhouse's car

Age: 25 to 40

Vocal range: F5-D4

Ensemble

Baseball Fans; Coalhouse Supporters; Firemen; Immigrants To America; New Rochelle Citizens; Reporters; Vacationers.

Played by Black actors: Coalhouse's Lawyer, Harlem Citizens, Henson

Crew Needs

We want to place as much trust in the students as possible! We would love the following positions to be all students who will be advised by our Technical Directors:

- Stage Manager & Assistant Stage Manager
- Lighting Design
- Sound Design
- Costume Design
- Wig, Hair, and Makeup Design
- Set & Props Design
- Marketing and Publicity Design
- General Run Crew

Also, we are looking for anyone interested in being an Assistant Director for the production. They would report to the Director.

Auditions, Interviews & Callback Expectations

Prescreen Auditions - please choose one audition side and one music selection from the list in the audition classroom to submit. **Submissions will be accepted through 11:59PM on October 12th.**

Actors invited to attend callbacks on November 1 will be notified by October 19th.

On November 1 at Olentangy Liberty High School, dance call & Interviews will happen in the morning. Music and scene selections will occur in the afternoon.

For Actors

We will look for three things during auditions and callbacks:

1. YOU. Show off your personality and creativity through your choices.
2. Command of the language (know what you're saying, why you're saying it, fully memorized is great, but don't let that struggle to be memorized overtake your work)
3. Commitment & Connection to the material.

For the prescreen audition, please submit a headshot, resume, and video to the classroom. Choose one of the sides and one of the song selections from the lists in the classroom.

For the callback, all students will participate in a dance call. Each person will sing from the selections noted in the audition classroom and will perform sides from the lists.

For Creative Team & Crew

We will look for four things during interviews:

1. YOU. Show off your personality and creativity.
2. Connection to the material.
3. Professionalism
4. Goals for your time during All-Ohio (what do you want to work on? What is an exciting challenge for you?)

For your submission, please submit a resume, a headshot, and a portfolio or example of your work.

****PLEASE NOTE** if selected to the cast or production team, there is a \$250 fee to cover meal costs for rehearsal weekends. Scholarships are available, covering up to the full cost. Company members will also receive a reduced State Conference registration fee.**