



**Smithsonian Institution**

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

## **Playbill for The Piano Lesson**

Extracted on Apr-23-2024 03:41:37

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## BROADWAY BABIES

Tony-winning choreographers who have devoted their careers to creating specifically for the musical theatre  
[male and female dancing]

PHOTO: FRED FEHL

Michael Kidd's Tony Award-winning choreography for Can-Can (1953) made Gwen Verdon a Broadway star overnight and brought her the first of four Tonys

### MICHAEL KIDD

When Finian's Rainbow first opened on Broadway in 1947, Brooks Atkinson wrote in The New York Times "... If notes of music could leap across the stage, they would be no lighter or lovelier than (the) joyous ballet of a young and free people." The man responsible for Finian's dances, winner of the first Tony Award for choreography in 1947 (tying with de Mille), was Michael Kidd, who would go on to win an additional four Tony Awards between 1947 and 1960.

Kidd made a strong choreographic contribution to one of the greatest musicals of the American theatre, Guys and Dolls.

The 1950 show opened not with a conventional chorus number but with a ballet of pantomimed, frenetic movement that introduced the audience to the milieu of Damon Runyon's Broadway. He also brought Gwen Verdon from California to lead the "Garden of Eden" ballet in Cole Porter's 1953 musical Can-Can.

continued

[in a outlined black box]

### MASTER THEATRE QUIZ - #4

Who was the first to have a credit for a B'way musical which read "choreography by"? (a) Tune (b) Balanchine (c) Robbins  
by Ken Mandelbaum

Page 2 (25)

Minolta has given new meaning to the term "Orchestra Seats."

[pictured a conductor leading an orchestra while being viewed by a man with binoculars]

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