



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Playbill for Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

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Notes From THE LEAGUE

A FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Everyone will remember the experience: sitting for the first time in a theatre when the houselights dimmed and the curtain went up and the stage was ablaze with lights.

Confirmed theatregoers testify to the experience of being taken to the theatre, usually at a very early age, and for the first time seeing actors move on the stage, as leading to their lifelong enjoyment of live entertainment. So the answer to the question, "Is theatre a family experience?" is a resounding yes.

Not to leave this to chance, The League of American Theatres and Producers, *The New York Times*, the Newspapers in Education Foundation, Theatre Development Fund and the United Federation of Teachers, among others, have united to create a program in May to show what a pleasurable, possible, instructional and entertaining activity theatre can be for the whole family to embrace.

For on thing a special 24-page color tabloid supplement in *The New York Times* on May 1 entitled "Stages of Discovery: Exploring the World of Theatre With Your Children" will demonstrate how theatre can be made affordable, educational and of enduring value for families. It will describe student outreach programs that already exist and are ongoing and offer suggestions as to how shows can be presented in schools.

In addition to the supplement, a week-long series of events, seminars and workshops will be held for parents, teachers and students. The League, in concert with the above-named organizations, is anxious to demonstrate the abiding attractions and stimulations of theatre-going and show that its central home in Times Square is no longer the vilified place it used to be.

[image]

Instead, thanks to the efforts of its core theatre organizations and other neighbors, and the visibly ameliorating two-year influence of the energetic Times Square Business Improvement District, it has become a more welcoming and vastly cleaner and safer place to visit.

To further point up the educational uses and advantages of theatre-going, The League and the Newspaper Association of America Foundation have collaborated in producing a 40-page teacher's curriculum guide - *Celebrate Theatre!* - which demonstrates how newspapers and theatre separately reveal realities of our live and express our passage through time. Newspapers chronicle our present and our past - our peaks, our valleys, our conflicts and our reconciliations. Theatre reaches into the stream of our existence, plucks a moment in time and distills the essence of the issues of that time.

Celebrate Theatre! builds study guides around 18 well-known Broadway or touring productions, offering a synopsis of each

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show. The guide indicates the newspaper connection to the subject matter or material of the show and lists activities suggested by the production. It is a thorough and carefully thought-out introduction to the interconnectedness of the reportorial and the dramatic approaches to the world around us and is also a structural approach to the particularized enjoyment of a theatre event.

All in all, the efforts of The League, combined with those of many collaborating organizations, confirm that theatre is for the family, theatre is for everyone.

PLAYBILL is pleased to make this space available to The League of American Theatres and Producers. The opinions expressed herein are those of The League and not necessarily those of PLAYBILL.

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