

CHICAGO

Book by **Fred Ebb and Bob Fosse**

Music by **John Kander**

Lyrics by **Fred Ebb**

Based on the play *Chicago* by

Maurine Dallas Watkins

Script adaptation by **David Thompson**

Directed and choreographed by **Donna Feore**

GRADE RECOMMENDATION 8+

CONTENT ADVISORY

This musical explores mature themes. It contains coarse language, sexual innuendo and the depiction of violence and death. Guns appear onstage.

SYNOPSIS

In 1920s Chicago, convent girl turned vaudeville wannabe Roxie Hart fatally shoots Fred Casely, the lover who has just dumped her. Claiming that the victim was a stranger, a burglar, she initially manages to persuade her hapless husband, Amos, to take the rap, but when Amos discovers the truth, he turns Roxie in, whereupon she is remanded to Cook County Jail to await trial.

Roxie's fellow inmates include half a dozen other murderesses, all of whom insist their victims had it coming. Among them is fading vaudeville star Velma Kelly, who killed her husband and sister after catching them in an act of adultery. Velma has a shady but silver-tongued defence lawyer, Billy Flynn, with whom the corrupt prison warden, Matron "Mama" Morton, offers to put Roxie in touch. Flynn agrees to take on Roxie's case as well, after she persuades Amos to pay his substantial fee.

Flynn artfully re-imagines Roxie's story for the benefit of the press – in particular, the tabloid journalist Mary Sunshine, who's always looking for a sob story – and the public is enthralled. As Roxie's celebrity skyrockets, Velma's declines, driving her in desperation to try to recruit Roxie as her new partner in the vaudeville act she had with her late sister – an offer that Roxie, with her eye on solo stardom, rejects with disdain.

Roxie herself, however, soon discovers how fleeting fame can be, and how grim the reality of her situation. How will she fare at trial? And if she escapes the noose, what kind of future lies ahead of her?



From left – Sandra Caldwell, Chelsea Preston, Jennifer Rider-Shaw. Photography by David Hou.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- Global Competencies
 - ◆ Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, Creativity, Learning to Learn/Self-Awareness
- Grade 8
 - ◆ The Arts
 - ◆ Health and Physical Education
 - ◆ Language
- Grades 9-12
 - ◆ The Arts
 - ◆ English
 - ◆ Health and Physical Education
- Grades 11-12
 - ◆ Social Sciences and Humanities

THEMES

- The Celebrity of "True Crime"
- The Fallibility of Memory
- Greed and Corruption
- Media, Publicity and Journalistic Integrity
- The Perversion of Justice
- Putting On A Show: Truth vs. Performance
- The Roaring Twenties in Chicago, Illinois
- Satire through Vaudeville
- Women in Society and the Performance of Gender

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think people love "true crime"?
- Discuss examples of when mass media and social media could have influenced or manipulated the public's perception of events in 2022. What persuasive tactics or arguments did they use?
- In what ways did the Merry Murderesses use society's view of women to their advantage?
- Why do you think the creators of *Chicago* used the vaudeville genre to tell this story? In what ways was this successful? What might have been lost in using this genre?

STUDY GUIDES

Study Guides for all 2022 productions are available free of charge online on our website:

>> [Link to Study Guides](#)

BOOKING INFORMATION: TICKETS, WORKSHOPS, CHATS AND TOURS

STUDENT MATINEES

You may book any available date, but selected student matinee performances for this show are at 2 p.m. on the following dates:

- Tuesday, April 12th
- Thursday, April 14th
- Friday, April 15th
- Tuesday, April 19th
- Thursday, April 21st
- Monday, April 25th
- Tuesday, May 3rd
- Thursday, May 5th
- Monday, May 9th
- Wednesday, May 11th
- Friday, May 13th
- Monday, May 16th
- Wednesday, May 18th
- Friday, May 20th
- Tuesday, May 24th
- Monday, May 30th
- Wednesday, June 1st
- Wednesday, June 8th
- Friday, June 10th
- Wednesday, June 15th
- Friday, June 17th
- Thursday, September 22nd
- Tuesday, September 27th
- Wednesday, September 28th
- Tuesday, October 4th
- Thursday, October 6th
- Friday, October 7th
- Wednesday, October 12th
- Tuesday, October 18th
- Friday, October 21st
- Thursday, October 27th
- Friday, October 28th

WORKSHOPS, CHATS AND TOURS

Pre or Post-Show Workshops, Chats and Tours (virtual, onsite or at your school/centre) can be booked by calling the Box Office at 1.800.567.1600.

SOCIAL MEDIA



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Production support for *Chicago* is generously provided by Robert & Mary Ann Gorlin, by Sylvia Soyka, and by Riki Turofsky & Charles Petersen