



BART'S BLOG – FEBRUARY 2025

3 minutes ago Bart Lovins http://bartlovins.com

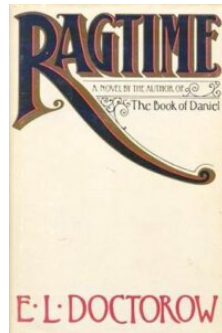
Part 1: Adapting History—From Novel to Musical

Welcome to the first installment in a four-part series exploring the journey of bringing the musical *Ragtime* to the stage as the PAC's 2025-2026 season opener.

E.L. Doctorow's *Ragtime*, published in 1975, paints a vivid portrait of America at the dawn of the 20th century. The novel weaves together the lives of three families—a white upper-middle-class family, an African American couple and their baby, and a Jewish immigrant and his daughter—alongside historical figures like Henry Ford and Booker T. Washington, reflecting the social and cultural tensions of the era.

In 1981, the novel was adapted into an Oscar-nominated film directed by Milos Forman (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*), featuring James Cagney, Mandy Patinkin, and Debbie Allen. However, the 1998 Tony award-winning stage musical brought its themes to life with greater emotional depth. With a book by Terrence McNally (*Kiss of the Spider Woman*) and lyrics and music by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty (*Seussical*), the musical blends ragtime rhythms with elements of jazz and klezmer to reflect the story's diversity. Songs like "Wheels of a Dream," "We Can Never Go Back To Before," and "Make Them Hear You" became iconic anthems, conveying messages of hope and resilience.

Ragtime explores the American Dream while addressing racial and class injustices, themes that continue to resonate today. For me, directing this musical is an opportunity to investigate how our lives intersect and evolve through shared struggles and aspirations. As we bring this story of our nation to life, we invite you to join us onstage, backstage, or in the audience this September. Let's make history together!



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Video Links

The links below provide a video version of this month's blog and a link to HCECTV's **The Monthly Marquee**, an interview program hosted by Bart focused on performing arts activities in our region.

- BART'S BLOG
- THE MONTHLY MARQUEE

Audience Survey Winners

Congratulations to Sarah Holley, Garyon Judon, Kendra Skeeters, and Russell Wright, each the lucky winner of a \$20 PAC gift certificate for completing an audience survey in November, and thank you for helping us learn how to serve our audiences better!

Audience Survey

Share your thoughts on your recent PAC visit and get entered into the next drawing.

- AUDIENCE SURVEY

PAC Spotlight

The February PAC Spotlight shines on North Hardin High School's Xjanea Ware, starring as "Goldilocks" in NHHS Drama's *Goldilocks on Trial* this February.

What do you want to do when you grow up?

I would like to be a veterinarian and own my own practice and, hopefully, be able to perform on the big screen or on Broadway.

What have you participated in at the PAC?

I have been in *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Frozen*, *Cinderella*, *Alice and Wonderland*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Camp Rock*, and *The Little Mermaid*.

What have been your most rewarding PAC experiences?

My most rewarding PAC experiences are being a PAC aid, as well as signing my first autograph for two little girls, and having a little girl who remembered me from when I played young "Elsa in *Frozen*.

What did you learn from your PAC experiences?

What I've learned from my PAC experiences is that there are multiple ways to be yourself and that it is okay to enjoy theatre and not like what everyone else likes.

How have you benefited from the PAC?

How I've benefited from the PAC is that I have grown into a true performer and learned how to work with people regardless if I know them or if I like them or not.

Why is the PAC important to you?

The PAC is important to me because it helped me develop the personality that I have now and it allows me to be more myself and not pretend to be anyone else just because I feel like I need to.

Why should the PAC be important to others?

The PAC should be important to others because you can help you to branch out and find things that you never would have known you would have enjoyed before going to the PAC.





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IN REVIEW



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