


# BUZZ EXTRA

## Fiddler on the Roof

June 15-27  
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### FEATURED ARTICLES

### SPOTLIGHT

## RAISING THE ROOF

"There is really something to be joyful for"...and that is FIDDLER ON THE ROOF, appearing at PlayhouseSquare as part of the KeyBank Broadway Series June 15-27. This classic and timeless musical with its universal themes of tradition, community, persecution, dreams, and family has spoken to audiences for more than 40 years. No wonder it has spawned four revivals on Broadway and been made into an award-winning film. Four-time Tony Award winning actor Harvey Fierstein reprises his Broadway role of Tevye as *The Mercury News* announces, "Harvey Fierstein raises the roof on *Fiddler*."

"It's a powerful story about the making of



**"IT'S AN AMAZING JOURNEY"**

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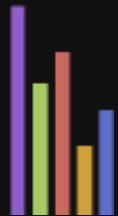
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Photo by Carol Rosegg:

Harvey Fierstein & the Company

Americans...thanks to the enduring magic of Stein's book, Bock's tunes, Harnick's lyrics and the amazing vision of director Jerome Robbins, on whose

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*Photo by Joan Marcus:*

*Matthew Rossoff, Matthew Kilgore, Robbie Roby, Rick Pessagno & the Company*



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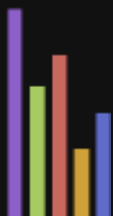


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"It's a powerful story about the making of Americans...thanks to the enduring magic of Stein's book, Bock's tunes, Harnick's lyrics and the amazing vision of director Jerome Robbins, on whose vision this production is based, it's a show that still packs a wallop," sings *The Toronto Sun*.

### Awards

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF has been the winner of 11 Tony Awards including Best Musical, Best Composer/Lyricist, Best Actor, Best Featured Actress, Best Scenic Design, Best Costume Design, Best Choreography, Best Direction, Best Producer, Best Author and it received a special Tony in 1972 for being the first longest running original musical on Broadway with 3,000 performances!

The film version of the show received Academy Awards for Best Cinematography, Best Music, Scoring Adaptation and Original Song Score and Best Sound as well as two Golden Globes for Musical/Comedy in the Best Motion Picture and Best Actor categories.

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF is indeed a "wonder of wonder and miracle of miracles."

*Stark Silver Creek* explains, "This play has tremendous heart. And it's partly the reason I suspect it endures...FIDDLER ON THE ROOF is pure Broadway entertainment, from start to finish."

"The sheer ebullience of his outsize, cosmopolitan persona (this Tevye is

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poor but hardly unsophisticated), as well as by the sound-the-shofar bleat of his famous voice, Fierstein succeeds in making a very mesmerizing manner of milkman,” shouts Lisa Schwarzbaum of *Entertainment Weekly*.

*The Dallas Morning News* broadcasts, “Director Sammy Dallas Bayes is credited with having reproduced the original choreography by Jerome Robbins for this show...hats off to both choreographers, because the production numbers in this show really sparkle.”

### Synopsis

Anatevka, a small village, 1905 on the eve of the Russian revolution.

Tevye is a milkman and the patriarch of a family of women.

His daughters’ dream of love and marriage but tradition demands the papa choose the husband. His wife does not always agree with his edicts but does not challenge him because tradition demands a wife obey her spouse.

As the revolution comes closer to Anatevka, emotions heighten, hearts break, friendships end and a community keeps its balance, just like a FIDDLER ON THE ROOF.

### Did You Know..

Joseph Stein, the playwright of FIDDLER ON THE ROOF, was the son of Polish immigrants who came to the United States. As a child, his father read Jewish folk tales to him, including the stories of Sholom Aleichem. Stein remembered thee stories from his childhood when it came time to write FIDDLER ON THE ROOF.

Sholom Aleichem was a Russian author and humorist, often called the Jewish Mark Twain. He wrote *Tevye the Dairyman* and *Tevye's Daughters* upon which FIDDLER ON THE ROOF is based.

The Wit and Wisdom of Aleichem:

“A bachelor is a man who comes to work each morning from a different

direction.”

“The rich swell up with pride, the poor from hunger.”

“Gossip is nature's telephone.”

“Life is a dream for the wise, a game for the fool, a comedy for the rich, a tragedy for the poor.”

“No matter how bad things get you got to go on living, even if it kills you.”

For more information on the national tour, visit: [fiddlerontour.com](http://fiddlerontour.com)




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### FEATURED ARTICLES

#### TRADITION



*Photo by Joan Marcus:*



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*Jessica Scholl, Rena Strober, Katie Babb & the Company*

Tevye, the central character in FIDDLER ON THE ROOF, addresses the audience, "you may ask, how do we keep our balance? That I can tell you in one word...tradition. Without our traditions, our life is a FIDDLER ON THE ROOF, trying to scratch out a pleasant, simple tune without breaking his neck."

Tradition is defined by the *Merriman-Webster Dictionary* as "the handing down of information, beliefs, and customs by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another without written instruction."

Every family, community, religion, culture and holiday have traditions that have been passed down.

Some traditions are set in stone; others seem to adjust with time. Some traditions seem to be silly and others actually are helpful.

Look over the following traditions and decide which you agree with, which have changed over time and which need to change:

- Fathers rule the household and should be obeyed.
- Mothers are in charge of the house and the children.
- Fathers work outside of the home.
- Children should be seen and not heard.
- Friends and neighbors look out for the community.
- Marriage should only occur between people of the same race and religion.
- Only men wear pants; women must wear dresses or skirts.
- Children live at home until they get married.
- Elders are to be respected and cared for.
- Divorce is not acceptable.
- When people get married, they must have children.
- Women do not vote or own property.
- People do not wear revealing clothing.
- Plant flowers Memorial Day weekend.
- See fireworks and have a barbeque on the 4th of July.
- Halloween is a time to get dressed up in costume and go trick-or-treating.

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- Sunday dinner is always family.
- Brides must wear white, something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue on their wedding day.
- The groom must carry the bride over the threshold.
- On birthdays, there must be a cake with candles to blow out and make a wish.
- A funeral must have an open casket.
- Turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes and apple pie are required for the Thanksgiving meal.
- At the end of the graduation ceremony, graduates toss their mortarboards up in the air.

What Are Your Traditions?


Now make a list of your own family traditions and reevaluate them, perhaps creating some new ones to pass down to future generations.

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## EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

The people in Tevye's village of Anatevka are forced by the Tsar Nicholas II to leave their homes because Jews were believed to be responsible for the economic problems of Russia.






**THE WISDOM OF FIDDLER**

**"IT'S AN AMAZING JOURNEY"**

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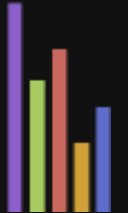
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Of course the Jews were not responsible, but nevertheless, they often suffered pogroms. Pogrom is a Russian word meaning “to wreak havoc, to demolish violently.” These are brutal attacks, often organized by the government, on Jews in not only the Russian Empire but in other countries as well.

A description of a pogrom was printed in *The New York Times*, April 1903:

"It is impossible to account the amounts of goods destroyed in a few hours. The hurrahs of the rioting. The pitiful cries of the victims filled the air. Wherever a Jew was met, he was savagely beaten into insensibility. One Jew was dragged from a streetcar and beaten until the mob thought he was dead. The air was filled with feathers and torn bedding. Every Jewish household was broken into and the unfortunate Jews in their terror endeavored to hide in cellars and under roofs. The mob entered the synagogue, desecrated the biggest house of worship and defiled the Scrolls of the Law.

"The conduct of the intelligent Christians was disgraceful. They made no attempt to check the rioting. They simply walked around enjoying the frightful sport. On Tuesday, the third day, when it became known that the troops had received orders to shoot, the rioters ceased."

It has been estimated that during the years 1881 to 1914, a total of 2.5 million Jews emigrated from Russia.

Many Jewish immigrants came to American through Ellis Island.

Jews were not the only group to come to America seeking refuge.

Some scientists believe people have been migrating to America for 11,000 years when there was a land bridge between Alaska and Siberia.

America has always been a haven for immigrants, and according to the Emma Lazarus poem, printed on the Statue of Liberty:

“Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand



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A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name  
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand  
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.  
"Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she  
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

*Photo by Carol Rosegg:*


*Harvey Fierstein*

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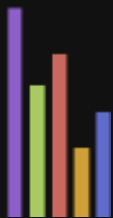


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*Photo by Joan Marcu:*

*Eric Van Tielen & Alison Walla*

Buzz Extra spoke with Kaitlin Stilwell who portrays Tevye's oldest daughter, Tzeitel, in FIDDLER ON THE ROOF. A Musical Theater graduate from Ithaca College, Kaitlin has appeared off-Broadway in *Romeo and Juliet: the Musical* and received critical acclaim for her one-woman show, *Miss White House*. Her regional theater credits include *The Crucible* and *Sweeney Todd*.

While Ms. Stilwell has wanted to be an actress ever since she was a little girl singing along with the opera on PBS, she also has been a Literary Associate for The Mint Theater, Urban Stages in New York. About to pursue a graduate degree in dramaturgy in London, Kaitlin is a member of the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas.

EXTRA: After this tour, you are headed to London?

STILWELL: Yes, in October. I love London. I spent a year there when I was attending Ithaca College and right now, I am making my decision between two universities over there for graduate school.

EXTRA: For performance?

STILWELL: I will be going more of literary route, performance research that will help me pursue a career in dramaturgy.

EXTRA: What exactly do dramaturgs and literary managers do?

STILWELL: Literary managers and dramaturgs help the theater plan its mission, find plays, cultivate relationships with writers, workshop new plays, help the education role of the theater, research the playwright, the time period, other works by the writer, images, historical contexts, anything that might help the director or the designer before the production process begins, the actor once the rehearsals begin or the community understand the play.

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They also address what groups in a community the theater wants to reach out to? How do we bring new audiences into the theater and what kinds of plays will do that? How do we encourage the next generation of new play goers? How do we make what we produce resonate and connect with our community and allow the theater fulfill its cultural responsibility?

I believe having that thoughtfulness, these little details that will be broadcast to an audience will help someone connect to the play on a different level and be more affected by it.

EXTRA: What got you interested in dramaturgy?

STILWELL: I've always loved the theater and performing without really knowing, as most people don't, what dramaturgy was and that there was a career as a Literary Manager or Dramaturg. I have always been an avid reader and I have what I call my 'library' where I collect plays and reference books about theater. I also have antiquarian dictionaries that I look through to see how, in various time periods, were words pronounced and their meanings. So, it just made sense to find this career combining all the things that interest me already.

EXTRA: Dramaturgically speaking, what would you say about FIDDLER ON THE ROOF?

STILWELL: I actually did research on the historical context of FIDDLER ON THE ROOF. What was happening in Russia at that time, what were the Jewish and gentile communities like? What would people actually be speaking, the language? We see the show in English, obviously, but in the little community of Anatevka, the people would actually have been tri-lingual. They would be speaking in Yiddish, and yet the men would have known enough Hebrew for religious purposes, and the women would have known prayers by rote at the very least. Most people would have known some Russian to communicate with the peasants to sell their wares and make a living.

Obviously there is a lot of history. A lot of thought was given to all the characters in the show. All of the ensemble members are given character names and professions. You might not know that Avraham is the bookseller, but he is and he has a family.



One of the amazing things about FIDDLER is that it stands so well on its own. The extraordinary thing about it is that it has incredible universal humanity, a story that everyone can connect to.

EXTRA: Well, we look forward to connecting with FIDDLER ON THE ROOF in Cleveland.


STILWELL: It's an amazing journey.

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#### THE WISDOM OF FIDDLER

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF has universal appeal because it addresses many of the stages everyone goes through in life: birth, romance, marriage, financial woes, parental disagreements, generation gaps, rumors, hopes, dreams.

If you listen to the music, you will find many of Sheldon Harnick's lyrics give us excellent ideas on how to live. His lyrics tell us we are not alone in our trials and tribulations.

On being poor:  
"I realize, of course, that it's no shame to be poor.  
But it's no great honor either!"





**"IT'S AN AMAZING JOURNEY"**

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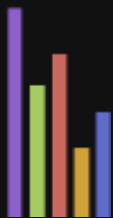


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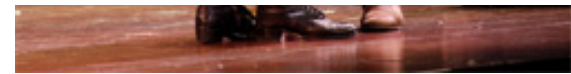
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On marriage:

“Matchmaker, matchmaker, you know that I'm Still very young. Please, take your time. Up to this minute, I've misunderstood That I could get stuck for good.”

On knowledge of the wealthy:

“The most important men in town would come to fawn on me! They would ask me to advise them, Posing problems that would cross a Rabbi's eyes! And it won't make one bit of difference if I answer right or wrong. When you're rich, they think you really know!”

On watching your children grow up:

“Seedlings turn overnight to sunflowers, Blossoming even as we gaze.”

On leaving home:

“Once I was happily content to be As I was, where I was, Close to the people who are close to me, Here in the home I love. Who could see that a man could come Who would change the shape of my dreams? Helpless now I stand with him, Watching older dreams grow dim. Oh, what a melancholy choice this is, Wanting home, wanting him, Closing my heart to ev'ry hope but his, Leaving the home I love... Yet there with my love, I'm home.”

On love:

“For twenty-five years I've lived with him, Fought him, starved with him. Twenty-five years my bed is his, If that's not love, what is?”

On rumors:

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“What is this about your daughter marrying my husband?”

On differences:

“How can I accept them?

Can I deny everything I believe in?

On the other hand

Can I deny my own daughter?

On the other hand

How can I turn my back on my faith?

My people?

If I try and bend that far

I will break.

On the other hand...

No. There is no other hand.”

On poverty and happiness

“Even a poor tailor is entitled to some happiness.”

On possessions:

“I used to tell myself,

That I had everything,

But that was only half true,

I had an aim in life,

And that was everything,

But now I even have you.

I have,

Something that I would die for,

Something that I would live for too.”

On being rich:

“If I were rich, I'd have the time that I lack

To sit in the synagogue and pray.”

On life:

“Life has a way of confusing us,

Blessing and bruising us.”

The words of Sheldon Harnick indeed give us,

“Something to think about,

Something to drink about,



Drink l'chaim, to life!"

[Click here for more FIDDLER ON THE ROOF lyrics.](#)

*Photo by Carol Rosegg:*


*Harvey Fierstein & Rena Strober*

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Some *Fiddler on the Roof*

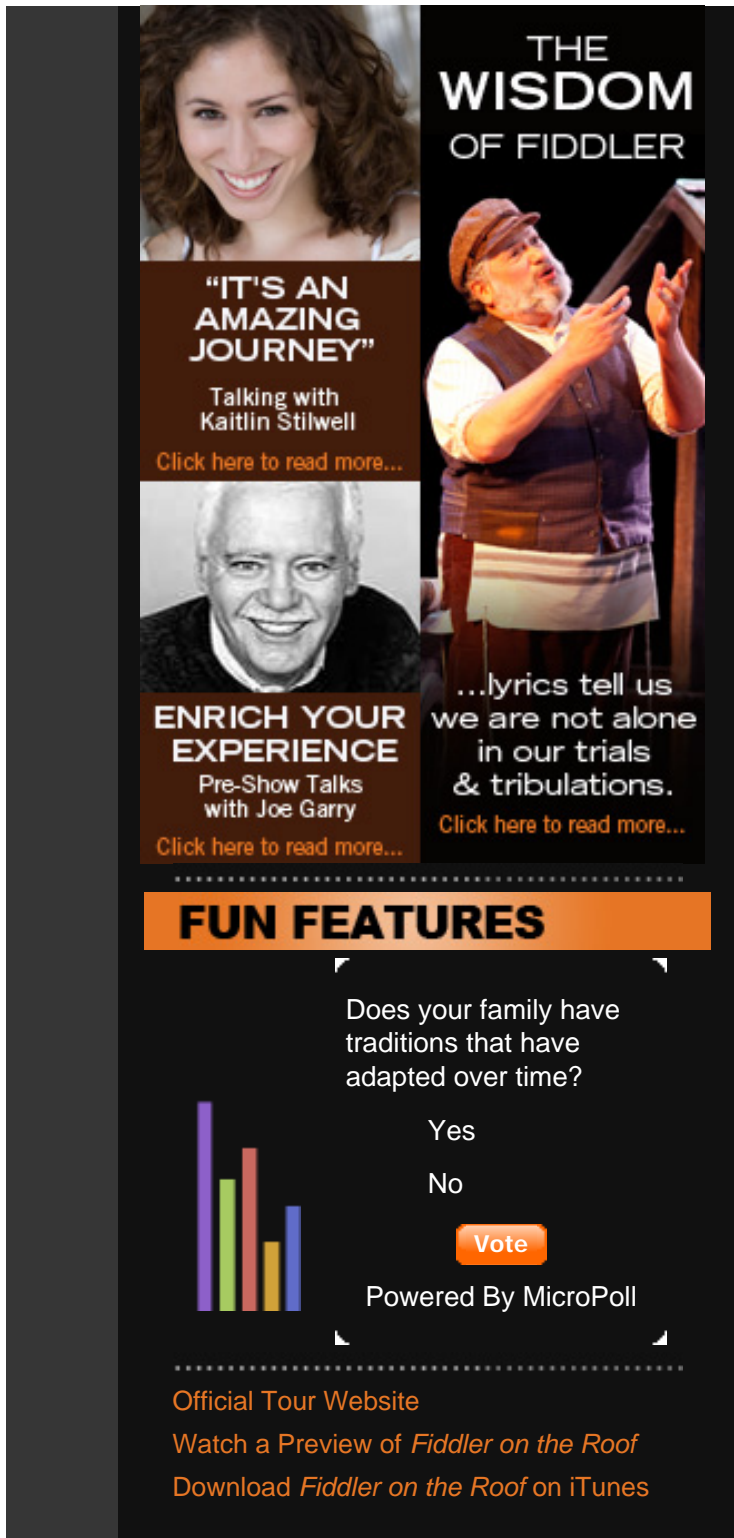
Trivia

Jerome Robbins, as the original director /choreographer of *Fiddler*, was so relentless in cutting and trimming the original show that he cut his own brilliant 10 minute ballet, taking away the female dancers' major moments. The best female dancers on Broadway never got to dance but did have the honor of appearing in a ground-breaking show that redefined the musical.

Hand in your questions at the Broadway Buzz Pre-Show Talks, or email them to



artseducation@playhousesquare.org.



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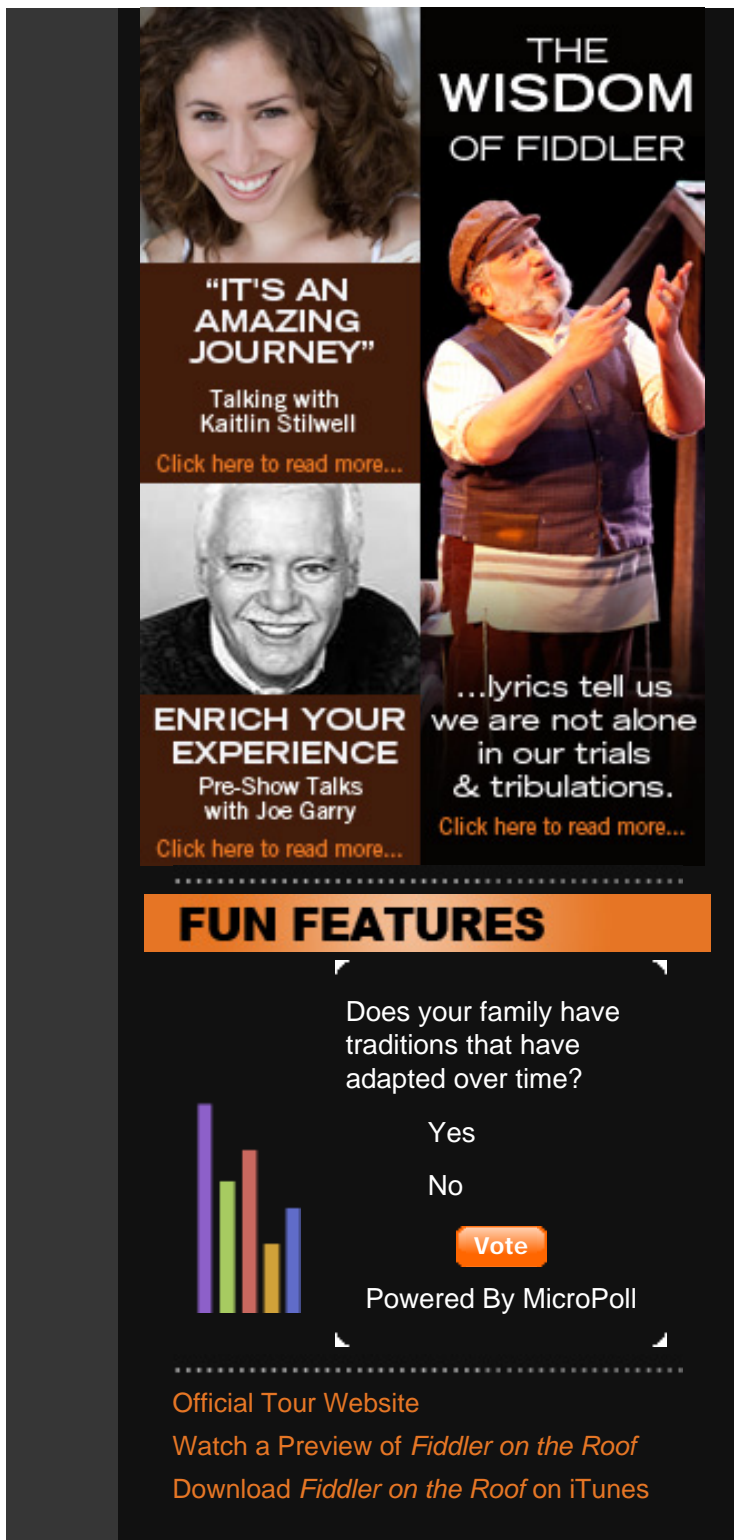
#### ENRICH YOUR EXPERIENCE

Want to find out even more about the show? Come get “buzzed” with host Joe Garry at the Broadway Buzz Pre-Show Talk! Join us one hour before the curtain of each performance of FIDDLER ON THE ROOF in the Idea Center® at PlayhouseSquare.



The Idea Center is located just two doors west of the Allen Theatre at 1375 Euclid Avenue. You can enter the Idea Center quickly from the PlayhouseSquare parking garage by taking the elevator or stairs to Level 1. Exit through the red doors and cross at the crosswalk which will lead you directly into the rear entrance of the building. You also may enter the Idea Center from Euclid Avenue.

Catch our Post-Show Chats with the Cast following Thursday evening performances (17th and 24th).



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- [Xanadu](#) (March 2-14,  
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- [In The Heights: A New  
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- [Chicago](#) (January 12-  
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- [Young Frankenstein](#)  
(October 13-25, 2009)
- [Mary Poppins](#) (July 17-  
August 9, 2009)
- [An Evening With Patti  
LuPone & Mandy  
Patinkin](#) (May 5-17,  
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- [Spring Awakening](#)  
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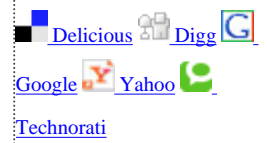


- [Legally Blonde](#)  
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