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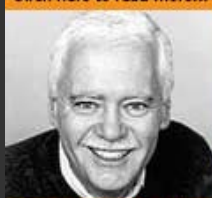


THE STAR OF SPRING AWAKENING

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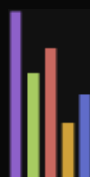


"This is the best job I could ever have asked for"

- Christy Altomare

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SPOTLIGHT

THEATER MAY NEVER BE THE SAME



Photo: Blake Bashoff

"If you have just one night to spend in the theater," the *New York Post* says, "awake yourself with **SPRING AWAKENING**" as the Key Bank Broadway Series continues at PlayhouseSquare March 3-15, 2009.

Awards

Winner of 8 Tony Awards, 4 Drama Desk Awards, a Grammy Award, New York Times Drama Critics Award, a Drama League Award and 3 Outer Critics Circle Awards, **SPRING AWAKENING** has won best musical, best book of a musical, best choreography, best score, best orchestration, best director, best lighting and best featured actor.

"Everything combines for a show that bursts off the stage with heart and

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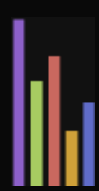


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Photo: Bitch of Living- Anthony Lee Medina, Andy Mientus, Matt Shingledecker, Kyle Riabko, Blake Bashoff, Ben Moss

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"Everything combines for a show that bursts off the stage with heart and vitality," proclaims *The New York Daily News*.

The New York Times states this "brave new musical restores the mystery, the thrill to that shattering transformation that stirs in all our souls."

The San Francisco Examiner pronounces the show to be, "Electrifying...breaks all the rules and dares to be as bold as it is beautiful. This expertly crafted masterwork will go down in musical history as one of the greats."

Synopsis
 Germany 1891. Set to a contemporary rock score, **SPRING AWAKENING** tells the story of teenagers in a small conservative town struggling with school, parents, God, sex, life, and death while trying to "trust my own true mind." For more information, [click here](#).

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Did You Know...

Emmy award winning, Tony and Oscar nominated actor [Tom Hulce](#), (*The Heidi Chronicles*, *A Few Good Men*, *Amadeus*) was the lead producer for SPRING AWAKENING?

In 1973 London, *Equus* was running in repertory with the first uncensored English language version of SPRING AWAKENING. When *Equus* came to Broadway in 1975, Hulce was the understudy for Peter Furth who had played the lead in both *Equus* and SPRING AWAKENING in the West End. This was Hulce's first introduction to what would become best musical of 2007.

25 years later, Hulce began working as a producer and was interested in creating an opera of SPRING AWAKENING.

A few years later, Hulce produced the film, *A Home At The End Of The World*, which was directed by Michael Mayer (the director of SPRING AWAKENING), with score and songs by Duncan Sheik and Steven Sater (composer/writers of SPRING AWAKENING).

Mayer, Sheik and Sater were already working on a new version of SPRING AWAKENING. Hulce joined them in the dream that became the best musical of 2007.

Their new musical, SPRING AWAKENING, opened in London in January. Hulce says the show will also be produced in Germany, Japan, Korea and Scandinavia.

[Click here](#) for more information on Tom Hulce.

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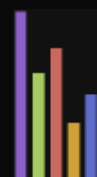
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TALKING WITH Christy Altomare

Christy Altomare portrays Wendla in the national tour of **SPRING AWAKENING**.

At five years old, Christy Altomare began performing. She was often seen acting and singing in her native Pennsylvania community theaters, school productions and choirs. At age twelve, she began writing songs, releasing her first **CD** at age 13. Winner of a **National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts Award**, this talented young woman signed with an agent at age 16 to begin her professional career. Christy joined the national tour of **SPRING AWAKENING** in July 2008.



BUZZ EXTRA spoke with Christy while she was on the road.

EXTRA: How has the tour of **SPRING AWAKENING** been going for you so far?

ALTOMARE: We started in August and it's amazing, it's been a dream. This is the best job I could ever have asked for.

EXTRA: Is this your first time touring with a show?

ALTOMARE: Yes, I just graduated with a BFA from the **University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music**. After graduation, I hung out in New York for three or four weeks, and then got this job. It's the very first professional show I've done.

EXTRA: Had you seen the show before getting cast?

ALTOMARE: Yes, I had seen it once off-Broadway. But after I was cast, I saw the Broadway show 11 times.

EXTRA: How did you create your role?

ALTOMARE: Well, I didn't want to be just like Lea Michele [the original Wendla] but I also felt that I needed to honor what she did. A lot of my character came from what the creative team wanted, coupled with what I drew from my own life. I could see a lot of myself, when I was 14 or 15 years old, in Wendla. Just like her, I was young, naïve, wide-eyed and curious about a lot of things. I'm only in my twenties now, so it wasn't THAT long ago for me. It's not hard to understand those qualities and then bring them to my performance.

EXTRA: You are also a writer and a composer. **SPRING AWAKENING** is a fairly new

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piece of musical theater. Does your musical background influence how you approach this work?

ALTOMARE: Definitely. I think that is what originally drew me to the show. Many of the songs and music I write are similar to the style of songs and music in this show. Performing the show is a lot like picking up my guitar and singing my own songs. I use my experience as a performer and songwriter in the show each night.

EXTRA: How do you think the ideas brought up in this show relate to what kids go through today?

ALTOMARE: The show looks at love and sexual feelings of youth and what happens when they just start to get those types of feelings. But even though the show is set in the late 1800s, it really speaks to today because what goes on in the show are things that youths still struggle with in 2009. People have told me, "I totally identify with these characters." And older adults are moved to look back to when they were young, just discovering those same feelings for themselves. So, I think it is a universal piece that speaks to all ages.

EXTRA: Do you have any favorite moments in the show?

ALTOMARE: I really love the entire score so much, but there's this one number in the show called "Touch Me." The song is about discovering what sex is. This is really an ensemble show and in this beautiful ballad, everyone sings together with incredible choreography by Bill T. Jones, who won the Tony Award for SPRING AWAKENING. That's my favorite part of the show.

For more information on Christy Altomare or to listen to her original music, go to: www.christyaltomare.com or <http://www.myspace.com/christyaltomare>.

Photo: Christy Altomare, Kyle Riabko

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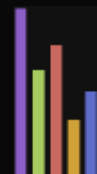
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Photo: Christy Altomare, Kyle Riabko

SPRING AWAKENING has been banned in different places for 70 years because of its controversial subject matter.

When SPRING AWAKENING was first introduced to German society, the script was ordered to be destroyed and performances were to be banned. While the play was eventually performed, it was censored in Germany until 1912.

The first English performance was in New York City in 1917. The New York City Commissioner of Licenses claimed the play was pornographic and wanted the performance to cease and desist. In spite of the author, Frank Wedekind, getting an injunction from the Supreme Court to allow the play to go on, it closed after a single show.

Literature has been banned for many different reasons by many different groups.

Some of the organizations which have banned literature include: The Anti-Defamation League, the CIA, Christian Voters League, NAACP, Roman Catholic Church, Parade Magazine and the National Federation of Decency. [Click here](#) for a list of organizations that ban literature.

QUIZ: Which of the following plays have been banned?

- Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles
- Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare
- Tartuffe* by Molière

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Faust by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
The Marriage of Figaro by Pierre Augustin Caron De Beaumarchais
A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen
The Importance Of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde
The Mikado by Gilbert and Sullivan
The Three-Penny Opera by Bertolt Brecht
Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller
Kismet by Edward Knoblock
Long Day's Journey Into Night by Eugene O'Neill
A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams
West Side Story by Arthur Laurents, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim
A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry
Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf by Edward Albee
Jesus Christ Superstar by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber
Hair by Gerome Ragni, James Rado, and Galt McDermott
Angels in America: Millennium Approaches by Tony Kushner
Fences by August Wilson
Master Harold and the Boys by Athol Fugard
Brighton Beach Memoirs by Neil Simon
Miss Saigon by Alain Boubil, Claude-Michel Schonberg, Richard Maltby, Jr.

If you said ALL of these plays have been banned...you are correct!

The American Library Association celebrates the freedom to read the last week of September each year with a *Banned Books Week*. For more information, check with your local library or [click here](#).

For more banned literature, visit these websites:

http://classclit.about.com/od/bannedliteratur1/tp/aatp_bannedplay.htm

<http://author.forbiddenlibrary.com/>

<http://www.adlerbooks.com/banned.html>

Or read:

Banned Plays: Censorship Histories of 125 Stage Dramas by Dawn B. Sova.

The Wicked Stage: A History of Theater Censorship and Harassment in the United States by Abe Laufe.

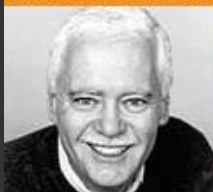
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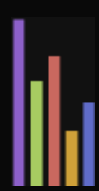
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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SPRING AWAKENING



Photo: *And Then There Were None*- Anthony Lee Medina, Ben Moss, Blake Bashoff, Matt Shingledecker, Andy Mienus

Frank Wedekind, the author of the original 19th century play *SPRING AWAKENING* called the show "a tragedy of childhood." He dedicated it to parents and teachers, hoping the script would open their minds and hearts to the thoughts, struggles, trials, tribulations, sorrows, despairs, hopes and dreams of youth.

Wedekind said in 1891, "parents and teachers are, in relation to the child's needs, the most ignorant and mentally indolent class." *SPRING AWAKENING* was his effort to open the eyes of the repressive 19th century middle-class by bringing sexual freedom and problems of puberty, to the foreground.

Sater and Sheik continue opening eyes with lyrics such as these from their musical *SPRING AWAKENING*.

ON LOVE:
"They walk with my heart - I'll never let them go."

ON LIFE:
"My whole life's, like, some test."

ON ANXIETY:
"Pulse is gone and racing - all fits and starts...you try and look into this brave new you that you are."

On SADNESS:
"Just don't need it in my life - don't want any part of it. I don't do sadness."

ON MUSIC:
"Music's like the only thing I can ever get at all."

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ON FREE THINKING:

"Still I know to trust my own true mind...to wonder and to learning."

ON PARENTS:

"They're not my home, not anymore, not like they so were before."

ON DEATH:

"Those you've known and lost, still walk behind you."

ON AUTHORITY:

"You doubt them but soon they bark and hound you."

ON TEACHERS:

"Blaa, blaa, blaa, blaa, blaa."

ON RELIGION:

"Nothing is OK unless it's scripted in their Bible."

ON EDUCATION:

"All they say is 'trust in what is written'."

ON CRUSHES:

"I spend the day wonderin' what you do, where you go ...We've all got our junk, and my junk is you."

ON FRIENDS:

"Without them, the world grows dark around you."

[Click here](#) for more lyrics from the show.

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SPRING AWAKENING

A NEW MUSICAL

March 3-15 at PlayhouseSquare
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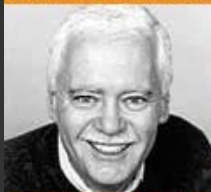


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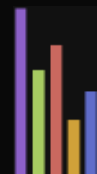
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RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES

(WARNING: this article contains plot spoilers!)



Photo: Henry Stram, Matt Shingledecker, Andy Mientus, Anthony Lee Medina, Kyle Riabko, Ben Moss, Blake Bashoff

Art imitates life.

The pervading society of 19th century SPRING AWAKENING is bourgeois and repressed. Consequently, the teen characters in the musical are kept in ignorance of their bodies. A 2005 *US News and World Report* headline speculates, "Are We Teaching Our Kids Way Too Much About Sex? Or Not Nearly Enough?"

SPRING AWAKENING deals with sex and its consequences, subjects adults don't always like to discuss with teens. While the play was originally written and set in 1891, these topics resonate today. In fact, headlines mirror the events of the characters in SPRING AWAKENING. Here are some examples, with links to the actual 2008 headlines.

Wendla asks her mother how babies are made in "Mama Who Bore Me." The *BBC News* asks, "Are Better Sex Lessons the Key to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy and Disease?"

Otto sings of the disappointment of unrequited love. The *Star Tribune's* headline tells how "Adolescent Love: It Can Make Teens More Depressed."

Melchior counsels Moritz about sex in the song "Touch Me." "Effectiveness Of Peer-Led Sex Education Questioned" in *The Vancouver Sun*.

Marta sings of abuse in "The Dark I Know Well." *New York Times* conveys "Pediatrician Is Accused of Sexual Abuse Of Boy, 13."

The boys in the musical suffer from nervousness, anxiety and worry when dealing with school and authority. *Winona Daily News* suggests "Parents' Early Intervention Key to Helping Children with School Anxiety."

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Moritz fails out of school and the *Kennebec Journal Morning Sentinel* discusses "Dropping Out In Maine. No Easy Solutions."

Pregnancy is explored in "I Believe." The *Chicago Tribune* writes about "Teen Pregnancy and Too Much Spin."

Moritz threatens suicide in "And Then There Were None." *The Los Angeles Time* notes "Teen's Suicide Prompts Effort to Monitor Bullying in Acton Schools."

Hanschen and Ernst question homosexuality in the song "The Word of Your Body." According to the *Los Angeles Times* headline, "Teenagers Have Mixed Views On Gays."

Wendla's mother thinks about abortion. *The Times* reports "Rise in Teen Abortions Prompts Call for Reform of Sex Education."

The girls in the show talk about Ilse running away from home. Mortiz writes of running away to America and Melchoir dreams of escape to start a new life. "Runaways Draw National Attention" in *The Flint Journal*.

Melchoir is sent to reform school. *The Atlanta-Journal Constitution* records how "Teens Learn To Face Consequences At Reform School."

Melchoir and the students remember their friends in "Those You've Known." *Volunteer TV* reports "E. Tennessee Teen's Death Shakes Town."

These headlines show how far we have come from 19th century Germany. Subjects that were taboo then are discussed today, to help our children transition into adulthood.

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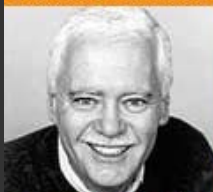


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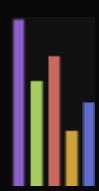


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BROADWAY BUZZ EVENTS

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 SPRING AWAKENING 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 (Mar. 5th and 12th).

Music director Jared Stein and four cast members from SPRING AWAKENING will lead a vocal master class on Wednesday, March 11 from 3-4:30 p.m. Ages 14 and up only, please.

There is no charge for admission to Broadway Buzz events. Reservations for the master class are requested; please call 216-348-7909 or email reeds@playhousesquare.org.

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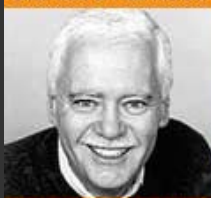
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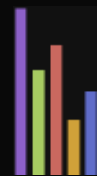


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SPRING AWAKENING TEEN NIGHT

Saturday, March 14; Following the evening performance of Spring Awakening



Photo: Full Company Shot Photo

Join us for a special Teen Night on Saturday, March 14 following the evening performance of Spring Awakening. Teens will enjoy pizza, DJ and karaoke after the evening performance of Spring Awakening.

Parents can join in a panel discussion on the issues raised by the show, hosted by [Your Teen Magazine](#). Admission to both is **FREE** with your March 14 show ticket. Parents can also learn more about Spring Awakening at parents.springawakening.com.

Quote promo code STARS when you order.
Call 216-241-6000 or [click here to order online](#).

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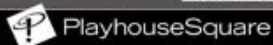
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SPRING AWAKENING A NEW MUSICAL

March 3-15 at PlayhouseSquare
[Click here for tickets](#)



FEATURED ARTICLES



BANNED!

What other great pieces of literature have been banned too?

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COME GET BUZZED!

Pre-Show Talks with Joe Garry

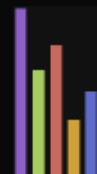
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"This is the best job I could ever have asked for"
- Christy Altomare

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FUN FEATURES



Should sex education be a mandatory part of high school curriculum?

- Yes
- No

- [Spring Awakening Videos, Photos, Music](#)
- [Spring Awakening on Facebook](#)
- [Spring Awakening Parents Guide](#)

ALL ARTICLES

Discover Our Story...

To help share the story of how the not-for-profit PlayhouseSquare is enriching our community, we have created an exciting video and website. Please take a look and share it with others.



Visit the website playhousesquare.org/ourstory to discover more.

How can you can become involved? See a show. Take a class. Volunteer your time. Or make a financial donation. Each deeper level of participation helps PlayhouseSquare further utilize the arts in order to strengthen our entire region.

We thank you for your ongoing support of PlayhouseSquare.

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