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AUDIENCE INSIGHTS

City of Angels

A JAZZY HOLLYWOOD MUSICAL

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The Max Showalter Center for
Education in Musical Theatre

City of Angels

Audience Insights
TABLE OF CONTENTS

SHOW SYNOPSIS

City of Angels takes place in the glamorous city of Los Angeles, California. Located in Hollywood, Stine, a novelist who is attempting to turn his novel into a screenplay, fights to save his friendships, his career, and his marriage. As he creates the story about Stone, a private detective, the characters in Stine's screenplay come to life on stage.

ACT I

Stone is lying on a hospital gurney with a bullet in his shoulder. He is a tough private eye, but Stone suffers from a bruised heart, due to his weakness for beautiful women. He also suffers from an empty wallet, thanks to his stubborn morality that will not allow him to take dishonest jobs.

Stone has a flashback from a week earlier, when his secretary, Oolie, escorted a rich and beautiful woman named Alaura Kingsley into his office. Alaura claimed that she wanted Stone to find her missing stepdaughter, Mallory. Stone was reluctant, but he decided to take the case.

Suddenly, another man appears on stage. He sits at his typewriter as all other actors begin rewinding and replaying the same scene with a few changes. The man at the typewriter is Stine, author of many popular detective novels starring Stone. He is adapting one of his novels for his first screenplay. The film involving Stone that is unraveling onstage is from Stine's imagination.

Shortly after editing his scenes, Stine's producer, Buddy Fidler, enters. Fidler is a Hollywood mogul who is financing Stine's film. Something about Buddy is disconcerting, but for now, he's still relishing the success.

Back at Stine's hotel, we meet Gabby, Stine's wife, who wishes Stine would stick to writing novels, instead of screenplays. Stine won't listen, though. The mix between "real" and "reel" life begins to introduce itself as Oolie joins Gabby in lamenting frustration in "What You Don't Know About Women."

The show changes back to the film and Stone is approached by Lieutenant Muñoz of the Los Angeles Police Department. Lt. Muñoz was Stone's partner on the force but now holds a major grudge against him. Stone, it seems, was in love with a nightclub singer named Bobbi. She, however, wanted fame more than a marriage with Stone. When Stone caught her with a Hollywood producer, tempers flared, a gun went off, and the producer was dead of a "heart attack" caused by two bullets. Lt. Muñoz has never forgiven Stone for "getting away" with the murder.

Stone, frustrated about his new case, confronts Alaura at her mansion and meets several more unpleasant characters including her stepson, Peter, her much-older husband, Luther, and Luther's spiritual leader. There is disagreement and suspicion in the air, but Alaura's charm and hefty bank account keep Stone on the case.

Stone continues searching for the "missing" stepdaughter, Mallory, only to find her waiting naked in his bed. Stone manages to resist temptation, but the same cannot be said for his creator. While Gabby, Stine's wife, has gone back to New York, Stine takes comfort in the bed of Buddy Fidler's secretary, Donna.

After a photographer breaks in and snaps a picture of him and Mallory in bed, Stone learns that he has been set up. After the picture was taken, Mallory ran off with Stone's gun, and Dr. Mandril, Luther Kingsley's spiritual leader, was shot dead. Stone realizes that he has been framed for murder and Lt. Muñoz arrests him shortly thereafter.

ACT II

Act II opens with a record playing in a bedroom. The room is at first misleading, as we think it is Alaura's bedroom, but it is actually the bedroom of Carla, Buddy's wife, who will be playing Alaura in Stine's movie.

Stine, having troubles of his own, is lonely at a Hollywood party hosted by Buddy. From the party, Stine calls home and finds that Gabby has discovered his affair with Donna. He flies to New York with an elaborately planned excuse, but she does not buy it.

Stone, like Stine, is fighting to clear his conscience. Despite his efforts to stay away from her, he encounters Bobbi. He learns that she shot the Hollywood producer with whom Stone found her in bed and that all this time he had "gotten away" with a murder that he didn't commit!

Oolie, meanwhile, has made a discovery and shares with Stone that Alaura is a fortune hunter who has already murdered one rich husband and planned to do the same to Luther. Stone confronts Alaura, they scramble for her gun, shots ring out, Stone is gravely wounded, and Alaura falls dead.

Stine's real life and "reel" life are both crumbling before him as his wife rejects him and his characters are falling apart. As he faces the collapse of his two worlds, Stine becomes fragile and emotional. He later arrives on the movie set and finds that Buddy's name appears above his on the cover of the screenplay, and that the shallow crooner Jimmy Powers will play Stone. At this point, Stine boils over, but finally makes the right choice. He throws a fit, gets himself fired, and is about to be escorted out by two security guards when Stone somehow appears at Stine's typewriter and tacks on a "Hollywood ending."

CHARACTER SUMMARY

HOLLYWOOD CHARACTERS

STINE: A successful novelist who has been given the chance to turn one of his works into a screenplay. He spends the play battling the powerful Hollywood elite, trying to stay true to his ideals and his loyal wife, while remaining envious of the fictional hero that he has created.

GABBY: Stine's wife and the love of his life . . . if only he could remain faithful to her. She is beautiful, wise and doubtful about the faithfulness of her talented husband.

DONNA: Buddy Fidler's wise-cracking secretary who takes a liking to Stine.

CARLA HAYWOOD: Buddy's wife who is a beautiful and successful actress. Carla plays the role of Alaura Kingsley in Stine's film.

BUDDY FIDLER: A movie producer/director in charge of Stine's screenplay.

WERNER KRIEGLER: A Hollywood actor who appears in Stine's film as Luther.

GERALD PIERCE: A Hollywood actor who appears in Stine's film as Peter.

AVRIL RAINES: A lovely young starlet who will do anything to get the part of Mallory Kingsley.

PANCHO VARGAS: A jovial actor who plays Lt. Muñoz in the film.

Kay McClelland as Gabby and Randy Graff as Oolie in the Broadway cast of City of Angels

MOVIE CHARACTERS

STONE: The hero of Stine's novel and film. He is a tough ex-cop who became a private eye. He is irresistible to women, but only has room in his heart for the woman he has lost.

BOBBI: A nightclub singer who is the lost love of Stone's life. She has a troubled past and present.

OOLIE: Stone's perfect secretary who cares so deeply for her boss that she fights not to fall in love with him.

ALAURA KINGSLEY: The femme fatale of the story who is as alluring as her name and twice as dangerous.

IRWIN S. IRVING: Buddy Fidler's film counterpart. Stine creates the character of Irwin S. Irving, an unpleasant movie mogul, to reflect his frustration with Buddy.

LUTHER KINGSLEY: Alaura's older husband who spends his life in an iron lung.

PETER KINGSLEY: Alaura's stepson who is good-looking, callow, and appears to be under Alaura's thrall.

MALLORY KINGSLEY: Alaura's troubled and highly sensual stepdaughter. She has many secrets.

LT. MUÑOZ: Stone's partner from when they were both starting out as cops. Their friendship and partnership ended over a woman. Now all Muñoz wants is to put his old friend behind bars.

BIG SIX: A big thug and Sonny's partner in crime. Sonny is the brains of the duo, and Big Six is the muscle.

SONNY: A small thug and Big Six's partner in crime. Big Six is the muscle of the duo and Sonny is the brains.

JIMMY POWERS: A young crooner whose presence turns up both in Hollywood and in the film. He is good-looking, popular and hopes to make his debut as a movie star.

ANGEL CITY FOUR: An accomplished jazz quartet that guides us through Stone's world. They also sing back-up to Jimmy Powers.

4

MEET THE WRITERS

CY COLEMAN was a classically trained child prodigy and concert pianist in his younger years. He later became a popular songwriter and Broadway tunesmith. He made his Carnegie Hall debut at the age of seven and by his late teens he had become a well-known musician, performing jazz piano in sophisticated New York nightclubs. By the 1950s, he turned to composing pop standards like "Witchcraft" and "The Best Is Yet To Come" for many talented singers, such as Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole. He also ran his own New York nightspot, The Playroom. In 1966, Coleman matched his rhythmic, upbeat jazzy scores with the words of lyricist Dorothy Fields for the score to *Sweet Charity* and in 1973 for *Seesaw*. Coleman subsequently used a variety of styles from country western to blues for the musical *I Love My Wife*. He composed the circus musical *Barnum*, which also marked his debut as a Broadway producer. Coleman won three Tony Awards: for the comic operetta *On the Twentieth Century*; for his brilliant jazz-inflected score to *City of Angels*; and for the folksy score to *The Will Rogers Follies*. Coleman also wrote the music for *Grace, The Musical*, a fictionalized biography of actress Grace Kelly.

Visit http://youtu.be/eMQdXgUSx0o to watch a short film Coleman shown at the 2009 Grammys.

DAVID ZIPPEL's lyrics have won him a Tony Award, two Academy Award nominations, two Grammy Award nominations, and three Golden Globe Award nominations. His songs have appeared on many albums which have collectively sold over twenty-five million copies around the world and have been recorded by many great singers including Stevie Wonder, Christina Aguilera, Mel Torme, Ricky Martin, Cleo Laine, Barbara Cook, and Nancy LaMott. He made his Broadway debut with *City of Angels*, for which he received the Tony Award, the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, the Drama Desk Award, the Evening Standard Award, and the Olivier Award. Zippel also wrote the lyrics to the Broadway musical *The Goodbye Girl*, for which he received an Outer Critics Circle nomination. With eight-time Oscar winning composer Alan Menken, he wrote the songs for Disney's feature film *Hercules*. With Matthew Wilder, he wrote the songs for Disney's animated feature *Mulan*, which earned him his second Academy Award nomination. With composer Andrew Lloyd Webber, he wrote the songs for the Broadway musical *The Woman in White*. He additionally has worked on *Buzz!, a musical extravaganza*; *Pamela's First Musical*; and *Lysistrata: Sex and the City State*. A graduate of Harvard Law School, David Zippel is "delighted not to practice law."

LARRY GELBART achieved great success in film, television, and theater. He was one of the select few writers who wrote successful comedies. Gelbart's first Broadway credit was the libretto for the short-lived musical *The Conquering Hero*, followed by his first stage success as co-writer of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Gelbart also won the Tony Award for writing the musical hit, *City of Angels*. In television, Gelbart helped produce, develop, and write the hit series "M*A*S*H," which became one of the longest running series in television history. In film, Gelbart wrote the screenplay for *Oh God!* and the award winning *Tootsie*. Gelbart won and was nominated for several Emmy, Oscar, and Tony Awards for his work in theatre, television, and film. His autobiography, entitled *Laughing Matters*, was published in 1998.

Visit http://www.emmytvlegends.org/interviews/people/larry-gelbart to watch an in-depth interview with Gelbart.
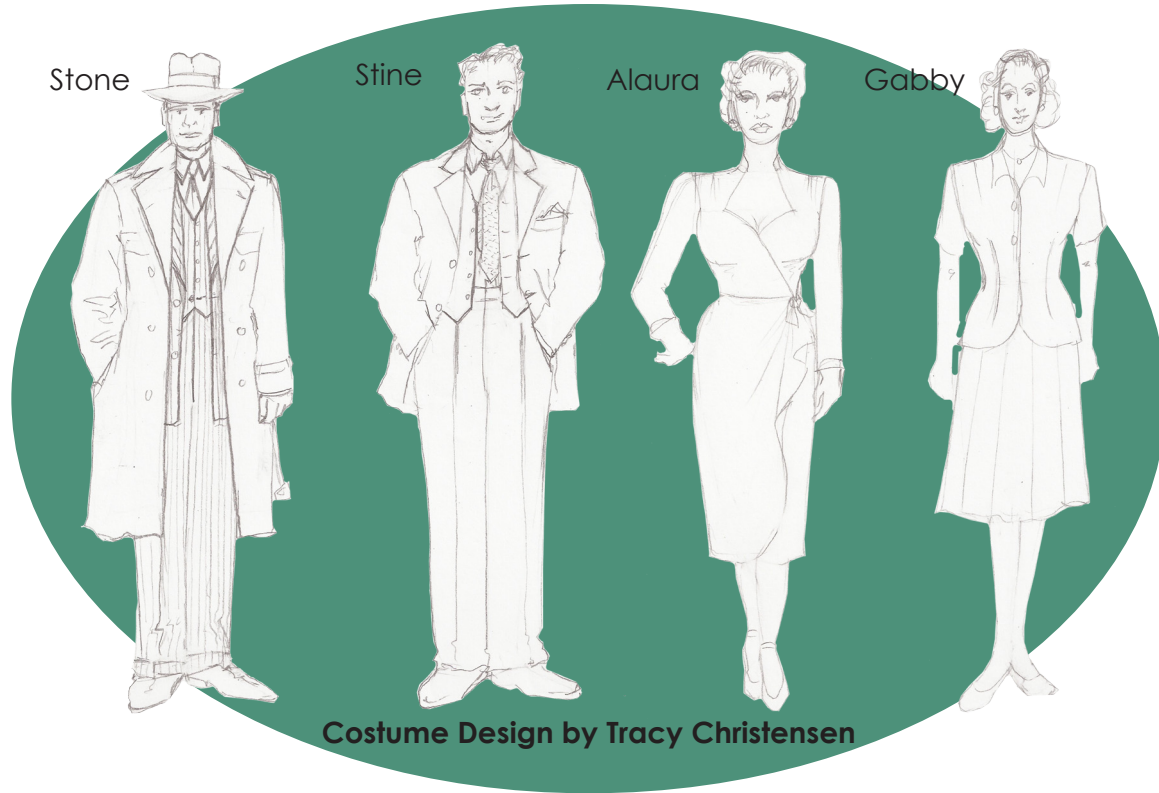
1940s Fashion

After the fall of France in 1940, Hollywood drove fashion in the United States almost entirely, with the exception of a few trends coming from war torn London in 1944 and 1945. America's own rationing hit full force, and the idea of fuction began to overtake fashion. Fabrics shifted dramatically as rationing and wartime shortages controlled import items such as silk and furs. Floral prints dominated the early 1940s, with the mid to late 40s also seeing what is sometimes refered to as "atomic prints" or geometric patterns and shapes. The color of fashion referred to the war, with patriotic nautical themes and dark greens and khakis. Trousers and wedges slowly replaced the dresses and more traditional heels due to shortages in stockings and gasoline.

BEHIND THE SCENES
Real to "Reel"

Stone   Stine   Alaura   Gabby

Costume Design by Tracy Christensen

Scenic Design by David P. Gordon

THE HISTORY OF JAZZ

The Styles of Jazz

1800s-1900s: Ragtime
1910s: Blues
1920s: Boogie Woogie and Dixieland
1930s: Swing
1940s: Bebop
1950s: Cool Jazz and Rock 'n' Roll
1960s: Latin Jazz
1970s: Jazz Fusion

Since the early 1900s, Broadway and jazz have had a very close relationship. George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* included jazz-influenced tunes such as "Summertime," and Leonard Bernstein's music for *West Side Story* utilized bold jazz rhythms and horn arrangements. Musicals like these paved the road to Broadway for jazz shows like *City of Angels*.

Since its birth, jazz has had a significant impact on the Broadway stage. Early musicals contained elements of jazz and ragtime, and notable jazz singers and instrumentalists interpreted several well-known productions. Many of these memorable Broadway jazz tunes came from jazz's roots dating back to the 1700s and are now some of the most popular songs of our time.

THE 1700s
During the 1700s, when slavery was commonplace, many Africans were forced to work for Caucasian landowners. Slaves were required to perform manual labor and were often ordered not to speak. Since they were unable to speak with each other, slaves created work songs. When singing work songs, they would communicate messages that could not be shared in regular conversation. These work songs, often expressing religious beliefs and the desire for freedom, became the predominant form of communication for slaves.

THE 1800s
The 1800s welcomed many new cultures to the United States. Immigrants from numerous European countries were arriving at a rapid rate and their musical traditions came with them. African American composer, Scott Joplin combined these European music traditions with African music, such as work songs, and introduced America to a new style of jazz known as ragtime. Ragtime is up-beat, but not speedy. When Scott Joplin was advising young jazz musicians, he would tell them "...don't play this piece fast. It is never right to play ragtime fast."

Scott Joplin

THE 1900s-1920s
The 1900s marked a new century and a new perspective on music. In New Orleans, new cultures were arriving and jazz was beginning to change. Ragtime still reigned as one of the most popular music styles of the time, but just as the 1920s approached, New Orleans was introduced to a new style of jazz. Small bands, with tubas, trombones, saxophones, clarinets, and basses, began to play the more expressive style, known as dixieland.

Dixieland Ensemble

THE 1920s-1930s
In the 1920s, jazz spread to the northern United States. Racism escalated in New Orleans and many famous musicians, including Louis Armstrong, had to flee the city. These musicians mostly ended up in New York or Chicago. Northern cities began to adopt the sounds of New Orleans, thus causing the infectious spread of jazz.

Glossary

swing: jazz that is played, typically by a big band, with a steady beat and that uses the harmonic structures of popular songs and the blues as a basis for improvisations and arrangements

bebop: jazz characterized by harmonic complexity, convoluted melodic lines, and frequent shifting of rhythmic accent

cool jazz: a style of jazz that emerged by the early 1950s, characterized by rhythmic and emotional restraint, extensive legato passages, and a reflective character

jazz fusion: a musical fusion genre that developed in the late 1960s from a mixture of elements of jazz such as its focus on improvisation with the rhythms and grooves of Rock and Blues and the beats and heavily amplified electric instruments and electronic effects of rock

THE HISTORY OF JAZZ

THE 1930s & 1940s

The Great Depression, occurring between 1929 and the early 1940s, caused significant distress on America's economy and significantly reduced the amount of money that could be spent on the arts. Revenue from jazz clubs and record label sales declined significantly and thus resulted in jazz's greatest lull.

Swing Dancing

As the Great Depression was coming to a close, however, the United States needed a more uplifting sound. Swing moved jazz away from its slower rhythms and brought night clubs back into society. Swing also caused bands to include a singer and grow in size, as it required more instruments to enhance its quick speed.

World War II

World War II created increased turmoil and stress for jazz musicians and promoters. African Americans were facing racial discrimination as they tried to continue playing music during the tough times. But as the war continued from 1930 and 1945, the draft began to take away many of America's musicians. As the population of jazz instrumentalists dwindled, so did the production of records.

The 1950s

In the 1950s, in response to the fast and complex rhythms of bebop, a slower form of jazz, named cool jazz, was becoming popular. Smaller bands that played a smoother style were performing at the clubs. But just as cool jazz arrived, so did the television and with it came a new style of music. When Elvis Presley appeared on the screen, most Americans heard rock 'n' roll for the first time and they fell in love.

The 1960s-1970s

As jazz struggled to compete with rock 'n' roll, musicians like Miles Davis realized that they had to do something to make it just as accepted. Composers began to mix the sounds of jazz with rock 'n' roll, thus creating jazz fusion. Jazz fusion used the traditional jazz instruments while incorporating the instruments of rock 'n' roll, such as the electric guitar and the piano synthesizer.

Miles Davis

The 1980s - Today

In 1987, the United States House of Representatives and Senate passed a bill which defined jazz as a unique form of American music. It was stated in the bill by Democratic Representative John Conyers, "...that jazz is hereby designated as a rare and valuable national American treasure to which we should devote our attention, support and resources to make certain it is preserved, understood and promulgated."

Since then, jazz has been an unwavering force in American music and can be found all over the United States to this day.

Check it Out
For a great video introduction to jazz, visit:
http://youtu.be/ITbuFIG4Xvc

To learn more about the history of jazz, visit:
http://youtu.be/ITbuFIG4Xvc

Dutch Camera Angles:
A camera shot in which the camera angle is deliberately slanted to one side. It is used from dramatic effect and helps portray unease and disorientation

Bogart and Bacall:
Humphrey Bogart, nicknamed Bogey, starred in many of the most popular films of the 1940s. After playing the lead role in blockbusters like *Casablanca*, he became one of the most famous actors of his time. In 1944, Bogey was partnered with Lauren Bacall, a new and youthful co-star, for the film *To Have and Have Not*. At the time Bogart was forty-five and Bacall was nineteen. While filming *To Have and Have Not*, Bogey and Bacall fell in love and were married a year later. The pair continued their movie-making success while co-starring in *The Big Sleep*, *Dark Passage*, and *Key Largo*.

Check it Out

To learn all you need to know about film noir in 2 minutes, visit:

http://www.videojug.com/film/film-noir-explained

For a more in-depth look at the film noir genre, watch clips and interviews here:

http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/best_of_film_noir/

In the 1940s, a new film style was introduced that brought popular appeal and artistic merit to Hollywood. Lasting until about 1960, film noir manifested out of the pessimism and suspicion that still lingered from World War II. It was not characterized as a genre, but rather a style of film with a particular mood, point-of-view, or tone. Often based on crime fictions and detective stories of the 1920's, film noir followed a hardboiled (tough on the outside, but soft on the inside) detective who challenges danger and solves a grand mystery.

THE CHARACTERS
The protagonist of a film noir story was often a detached, cynical, and disenthralled male detective. After some deceitful trickery, a seductive femme fatale would often manipulate and double-cross the story's protagonist and leave him betrayed. Due to her own faulty planning, however, the femme fatale frequently also met her own demise.

Villainous characters in film noir often included conflicted private eyes, gangsters, government agents, killers, or crooks. These characters often lacked a sense of morality and came from the gloomy, corruption-filled world of crime.

THE STORYLINE
The complicated and entangled storylines of film noir movies often used mysterious background music to enhance the plot. Also, the storylines commonly incorporated flashbacks, wit, and voice-over narration provided by the protagonist.

As a common plot device, a murder or other crime would be committed. The hardboiled detective was somehow involved with the crime and his attitude was necessary in setting the dark, often harrowing, tone which carried through the entire film.

THE SETTING
Film noir films were often marked visually by low lighting, deep-focus camera work, skewed and disorienting visuals, shadows, cigarette smoke, and murky weather. To compliment the visual aspect of a film noir film, the settings were often interiors with low lighting, covered windows, and gloomy rooms. They were usually set in low-rent apartments, hotel rooms in big cities, or abandoned warehouses. Although used rarely, the outside scenes often featured wet asphalt with deep shadows, dark alleyways, rain-slicked streets, and flashing neon lights.

Since most film noir movies are from the black and white era of Hollywood, using dark colors to create contrast on the screen was a common practice. Directors executed low-angle shots and **Dutch camera angles**, which were used to portray tension and psychological uneasiness. These visual styles were used to add to the dark and gloomy nature of the film's plot.

HOLLYWOOD IN THE 1940s

Hollywood film production hit its financial high between 1943 and 1946. This caused advances in film technology including sound recordings, lighting, special effects, cinematography, and the use of color. These technological advances resulted in films becoming more modern and popular. They distinguished the 1940s as Hollywood's Golden Age. During this period, many new film genres were created and they began to peak the interests of moviegoers.

PROPAGANDA

In the mid-1940s, World War II was beginning to significantly affect United States citizens. Movie producers, directors, and film stars were being drafted and enlisted into the armed forces to help defend their country. The U.S. government's Office of War Information (OWI) was a major advocate in showing America's war-time activities through propaganda films. Due to the work of OWI, films made during World War II were focused on showing America from a more realistic point of view rather than Hollywood's more common imaginative point of view.

One of the most well-known propaganda films made during World War II was called *Casablanca*. Based on the play *Everybody Comes to Rick's* by Murray Burnett and Joan Alison, the story follows two former lovers, Rick Blaine and Ilsa Lund, after circumstances during World War II forced them to separate. It is still considered to be one of the greatest films of all time.

MOVIE MUSICALS

In the 1940's, movie musicals were one of the most popular and sought out movie genres of the decade. Since moviegoers needed breaks from the nightmarish reality of World War II, movie musicals became the much needed escape. They included elaborate musical numbers, simple plots, and comedy. In 1945, the same year that World War II came to an end, six of the top-ten box office films were movie musicals. They included *Thrill of a Romance*, *Anchors Aweigh*, *The Harvey Girls*, *State Fair*, *The Dolly Sisters*, and *Up in Arms*. Many major actors fought in battle and others who could not enlist pitched in by providing entertainment. Almost every important musical screen star performed in military camps. At the same time, Hollywood musicals provided many favorites on the pop charts and a much needed morale boost during the war.

In 1946, Hollywood had its greatest financial year. With an all-time high in annual box office revenue of $4.5 billion, Tinsel Town was shining its brightest. Stars such as Judy Garland, Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, and Lucille Ball were showing up on the silver screen in movie-musicals.

Popular movie musicals from the 1940s include: *Meet Me in St. Louis, Cabin in the Sky, On the Town, The Barkleys on Broadway,* and *The Phantom of the Opera*

ROMANTIC COMEDIES

Romantic comedies were popular in the 1940s as well. They often introduced two silly and zany protagonists that would begin as bantering adversaries and finish falling head-over-heals for each other. Their journey included quick dialogue with flirtatious undertones and interactions with many vibrant characters. After a battle of wit and cleverness ensued, the story typically ended with the two protagonists feeling very much in love and walking away as giddy equals.

TECHNICOLOR

After the releases of *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) and *Gone with the Wind* (1939), Technicolor became the newest trend in movie making. In its early stages, the use of color in motion pictures was most commonly seen in movie-musicals and

animated feature films. This was because Technicolor in the 1940s used colors at their heightened spectrums. They were used to depict fantastical worlds such as Oz and the cartoon worlds created by Walt Disney.

THE END OF THE DECADE

At the close of the 1940s, Hollywood suddenly found itself struggling with many forces including, the arrival of television and the decline of moviegoing audiences, increased film production costs, and a labor union strike by film studio employees.

To adapt to the changing times, Hollywood discovered a new genre which exponentially raised ticket sales. In the late 1940s, young people were the most common moviegoers and they wanted to see new and exciting symbols of rebellion. Hollywood gave them exactly what they were looking for. At the end of the 1940s audiences saw the rise of the anti-hero and met actors such as James Dean and Marlon Brando. Between the late 1940s and early 1950s Hollywood films had shifted from war-related nostalgic films to youth-oriented rebellion and comedy.