

Alliance

Theatre at the Woodruff



Study Guide

Grades 6-12

The Comedian Harmonists, a singing ensemble of six young men in 1930's Germany, took the world by storm until the group's religious composition—a mixture of Jews and Gentiles—put them on a collision course with history.



Music by Barry Manilow

Book and Lyrics by Bruce Sussman

Directed by Ton Speciale

Co-production with Center Theatre Group



The Comedian Harmonists lived and performed during a critical time in European history. *Harmony—A New Musical* follows the group on their journey through Pre-WWII Germany, as told through the memory of one of their members, Josef Roman “Rabbi” Cykowski.

This Study Guide contains a detailed glossary which will contribute to a deeper contextual understanding of the play. You are welcome to copy any contents of this Study Guide.

Reflection questions found on page 12 provide discussion and/or writing prompts for your students to prepare to see the play and reflect afterwards.

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Social Studies Curriculum Connections

Grades 6-8

SS6G11 The student will describe the cultural characteristics of Europe.

SS6H7 The student will explain conflict and change in Europe to the 21st century

Grades 9-12

SSWH17 The student will be able to identify the major political and economic factors that shaped world societies between World War I and World War II.

c. Describe the rise of fascism in Europe and Asia by comparing the policies of Benito Mussolini in Italy, Adolf Hitler in Germany, and Hirohito in Japan.

Language Arts Core Curriculum Anchor Standards

CCRR.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCRR. 3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Theatre Standards

TAES.1 Analyzing and constructing meaning from theatrical experiences, dramatic literature, and electronic media

TAES.8 Examining the roles of theatre as a reflection of past and present civilization

TAES.10 Engaging actively and appropriately as an audience member in theatre or other media experiences

Music Standard

The **Comedian Harmonists** were the first sensational boy band: six talented young men who came together in Germany from 1928-1934 and took the world by storm with their signature blend of sophisticated close harmonies and uproarious stage antics.

The group sold millions of records, starred in a dozen films and packed the houses of the most prestigious concert halls around the globe until the world they knew forever changed.



The Comedian Harmonists consisted of Harry Frommermann (tenor buffo), Asparuh "Ari" Leschnikoff (first tenor), Erich Collin (second tenor), Roman Cycowski (baritone), Robert Biberti (bass), and Erwin Bootz (pianist). Their repertoire ranged from the folk and classical songs arranged by Frommermann to appealing and witty popular songs of the day.

In 1927, unemployed actor Harry Frommermann was inspired by The Revelers, a jazz-influenced popular vocal group from the United States, to create a German group of the same format. Once the group was assembled, it quickly began rehearsals. After some initial failures, the Harmonists soon found success, becoming popular throughout Europe, visiting the United States, and Australia. The group's success continued into the early 1930s, but eventually ran into trouble with the Nazi regime: three of the group members – Frommermann, Collin, and Cycowski – were either Jewish or of Jewish descent, and Bootz had married a Jewish woman.

The Nazis progressively made the group's professional life more difficult, initially banning pieces by Jewish composers, and finally prohibiting them from performing in public. The group's last concert in Germany was in Hanover on March 25, 1934 after which they sailed to America on SS Europa and gave several concerts. Fearing internment if they stayed abroad, however, they eventually returned home amid bitter internal disputes.

Frommermann, Cycowski, and Collin subsequently fled Germany and formed a new group, which performed under the names "Comedian Harmonists" and "Comedy Harmonists" with a new pianist, bass, and high tenor. The remaining members in Germany likewise replaced their counterparts in a successor group named "Das Meistersextett" (as the authorities forbade an English-language name). Neither group was able to achieve the original success of the Comedian Harmonists, with the German group stifled by political in-fighting and heavy censorship, as well as the war draft (call-up); the emigrant group was unable to find work in America due to hostility to German entertainers, and they were unable to return to Australia, where they had enjoyed extensive success in the 1930s. The Bulgarian Asparuh Leschnikoff returned to his fatherland in 1938 and started a successful career. By 1941, both groups had broken up. Although all members survived the war, they never re-formed after the war.

The group remained mostly forgotten until 1975, when filmmaker Eberhard Fechner created a four-hour black-and-white television documentary, interviewing the surviving members who were living around the world. The documentary aired over two nights in German in 1977 causing renewed interest in the music of the Comedian Harmonists, with their records being released on vinyl. They won recognition from the musical entertainment industry in 1998 when they won the Echo Prize from the Deutsche Phonoakademie.

About the authors

Barry Manilow, Music

Barry Manilow is an internationally-known star whose talents and success have reached every facet of entertainment. He has sold 80 million records. *Rolling Stone* called him “the showman of our generation.” Manilow is a Grammy, Emmy, and Tony award winner, as well as an Academy Award nominee. His theatrical roots go back to his days in the mailroom at CBS in New York, when, at 18, he wrote the entire original score for a musical adaptation for the melodrama *The Drunkard*. The show ran Off-Broadway for eight years. He made his film scoring debut in 1994 with the Warner Brothers animated film *Thumbelina*, for which he contributed songs written with his *Harmony* collaborator Bruce Sussman. His second animated feature, *The Pebble and the Penguin* (MGM), once again featured songs by Manilow and Bruce Sussman. *Copacabana – The Musical*, (written with Sussman) played a sold out run in London's West End for 18 months, toured the U.S., and is currently touring world-wide. He was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2002. Manilow recently finished a six week sold out run in New York at the St. James Theatre. The show, called *Manilow on Broadway*, received glowing reviews and played to wildly enthusiastic audiences. He considers *Harmony—A New Musical* the most rewarding creative experience of his career.

“I am a musician. My passion for music has obliterated everything in its path for my entire life. Whenever there was a choice between music and anything else, music won hands down every time. No one person or material thing could ever come close to the feeling I get when the music is right.” Barry Manilow

Bruce Sussman, Book and Lyrics

Bruce Sussman is the co-author of well over 200 published and recorded songs written for dozens of artists, films, television programs and stage musicals. The majority of these projects were written with his collaborator of 40 years, Barry Manilow. For the stage, he co-authored the scores for Ted Tally's *Coming Attractions* (Outer Critics Circle Award, Pulitzer Prize nominee) and Wendy Wasserstein's *Miami*, both produced Off-Broadway by Andre Bishop at Playwrights Horizons in New York. His songs have been featured in numerous stage revues including *The Madwoman of Central Park West*, *Tuxedos for Hire*, and the long-running Off-Broadway and London productions of *Whoop-DeeDoo!* (Drama Desk Award, Obie Award). With Mr. Manilow, he wrote the song scores for the animated feature films *The Pebble and the Penguin*, *Thumbelina* and Disney's *Oliver And Co*. He is particularly proud to have written a song with Mr. Manilow for the televised bicentennial celebration of the United States Constitution. The song, “Let Freedom Ring,” was later performed at the televised *Inaugural Gala* for President Clinton. His songs have been featured in over two dozen feature films and have been recorded by an array of pop, jazz, country, and international artists, earning Grammy Awards and multiple Gold and Platinum records from around the world.



Bruce Sussman (left) and Barry Manilow

Map of Europe after World War I



Glossary for the new musical *Harmony*

Terms , phrases, characters and historical and geographical references

Phrases in quotes are dialogue from the play

Adonai- a referential term used in place of (as there is no name that can be spoken for God in the Jewish faith) “God” in Judaism that means “master” or “lord”

Amsterdam- capital of the Netherlands that has a long reputation as an industrial, cultural, and commercial center of Europe. Amsterdam hosted the Olympic Games in 1928.

Anglo-Saxon- a British population descended from Germanic tribes who settled in what is now southern England beginning in the 5th century. This population defines the period of English history from the 5th century until the Norman invasion in 1066.

Art Deco- A design style originally from Paris in the 1920s that became a dominant style in the 30s and 40s. It is characterized by geometric shapes and high ornamentation.

Autobahn- Expressways across Germany built by the government (beginning in the late 1920s during the Weimar Republic). These became the model for the Interstate Highway System of the U.S. In Germany they have a *suggested* speed limit of 80mph.

Baden-Baden- Spa town in southern Germany.

Bavaria- the largest state by area in contemporary Germany. Bavaria is where the Nazi movement was born and the site of the Beer Hall Putsch—Hitler’s first failed effort at a coup, which landed him in prison. It is rich in German culture and resources. Its capital is Munich.

Benito- (1883-1945) refers to Benito Amilcare Andrea Mussolini. Mussolini was an Italian politician who led the National Fascist Party and ruled Italy from 1926 to 1943. He became Prime Minister in 1922 and established a dictatorship within five years. When the Allies invaded Italy, Mussolini was defeated in the Grand Council of Fascism and was arrested the next day. He escaped and tried to go north in 1945, but he was captured and executed by Italian Partisans.

Berlin Observer- the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* was a daily newspaper that began in 1883 and was prohibited by the Allies in 1945

Bicarbonate- drinking bicarbonate raises the pH level of the stomach and evens out the highly acidic environment that results from food digestion.

Bolsheviks- Refers to a member of a communist party. Originally derived from the Russian word for “majority” (big). First came to power during the October Revolution in 1917. Eventually transformed into the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The term is used more generally for followers of Lenin and Marxism, as Bolshevik was the political party of Lenin.

Borscht- Russian soup popular in Eastern and Central Europe. Beetroot is the most common main ingredient. It is a mainstay of Eastern European Jewish cuisine.

Bourgeois(ie)- French word used to describe the upper middle class. This economic class developed in the early Renaissance and is characterized by their ownership of capital rather than their cultural standing. In Marxist philosophy it is the class who owns the means of production and it is often used derisively.

Fanny Brice (1891-1951) A singer and actress in stage, radio and film known for comedy. Her life is the source material for the musical *Funny Girl*. (See photo left of Fanny Brice In “The Great Ziegfeld” playing herself. 1936).



Budapest-the capital and largest city in Hungary. Experienced growth throughout the 18th and 19th century and became the second capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Kingdom of Hungary became an Axis power, but soon began secret negotiations with the U.S. and the U.K. Discovering the betrayal, Hitler invaded in March of 1944.

Cantor- a member of the clergy in Judaism who can lead worship as well as officiate important events.

Chupah- a canopy Jewish couples stand underneath during a wedding ceremony. It is a sheet or large prayer shawl called a *tallis* supported by four poles that are sometimes manually held up by attendants to the ceremony. It symbolizes the home the new couple will build together.

Coalition government- refers here to the coalition government under Hitler between the National Socialist German Workers Party, the Bavarian People's Party, and the German National People's Party (along with other smaller parties).

Comrades- someone who you are close to in politics. The term is most often associated with Communism because of its extensive use as a replacement for gendered and ranked terms such as *mister*.

Copenhagen Tivoli Park- a garden that holds the second oldest amusement park in the world. Much of it was burned in 1943 by Nazi sympathizers, but it was quickly rebuilt and reopened.

Desoto- brand of automobile based in the U.S., manufactured and marketed by the now-defunct DeSoto Division of the Chrysler Corporation from 1928 to 1961.

Deutschland- the German name for "Germany".

Marlene Dietrich- Developed a career in 1920's Berlin performing in plays, cabaret, and some film roles. She became an international star with *The Blue Angel* in 1930 (filmed in English and German). She went on to a very prolific film career. While filming *Knight Without Armour* in England in 1937, agents of Hitler offered her a lucrative deal to return to Germany and film scripts of her choice. She rejected the offer and her films were banned in Germany. She was granted American citizenship in 1939. During World War II, she made anti-Nazi broadcasts in German and entertained the Allied troops across Europe and Northern Africa. This led to Dietrich's position as a symbol for German resistance. She was awarded the Medal of Freedom by the United States and a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor in France. She died in Paris in 1992 and while her casket was covered with a French flag, but she was buried in Berlin.



Still from *The Blue Angel* (1930)

Albert Einstein (1897-1955) German theoretical physicist most famed for developing the general theory of relativity. He received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1921. He was visiting the U.S. when Adolf Hitler came to power and did not return to Germany even though he was a professor at the Berlin Academy of Sciences. He became a U.S. Citizen in 1940. Though at first he supported the development atomic weapon technology in order to combat the Nazi's research efforts, Einstein later cautioned against the use of nuclear weapons. Einstein was affiliated with the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, NJ until his death.

Émigré- A person who emigrates for political or social reasons. Often associated with events that result in large numbers and upper class citizens leaving their country of origin.

Fascist- followers of political ideals that would lead to the installation of a totalitarian state. These ideals promoted the supremacy of that state over the concerns of the individual. Fascism is often set in opposition to socialist and communist ideologies and political parties.

Fatherland- a nationalist concept of taking pride in the nation of one's ancestry, or "the land of your forefathers."

Finito- Italian for "finished"

Fuhrer Chancellor- Both titles associated with Hitler in popular culture (Chancellor is a political title, while Fuhrer means "leader.")

Gestapo- the "Secret State Police" of Nazi Germany formed in 1933. It ended in 1945. The Gestapo was formed with the authority to investigate treason and sabotage against the Nazi Party and in 1936 were given a blank check to operate without any kind of judicial oversight, resulting in the committing of horrific acts of torture and sadistic murder.

Mayor Fiorello La Guardia- Mayor of New York City from 1934 to 1945. Remembered as energetic and social with a great deal of power. He supported Roosevelt and was rewarded with New Deal funds. After refusing to run for a fourth term he was appointed director of the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense in 1941.

Harmony- In music, the use of simultaneous pitches (tones, notes) or chords.

President Hindenburg- (Paul von Hindenburg 1847-1934) the second president of Germany who served from 1925 to 1934. He was previously a successful Prussian military leader who served in WWI. He hated Hitler and therefore ran for president a second time even though he was 84 years old because he thought he was only candidate thought to be able to defeat Hitler in a popular election. Under pressure, he eventually appointed Hitler as Chancellor in 1933. After the Reichstag Fire he signed the Enabling Act which gave Hitler legislative powers. Upon Hindenburg's death, Hitler declared the office of the President vacant and made himself head of state.

Hirohito- (1901-1989) This is a popular name for Emperor Shōwa of Japan. His reign extends from 1926 to 1989.

"How can tyrants safely govern home?"- quote from Shakespeare's *Henry VI*. It reads "How can tyrants safely govern home, unless abroad they purchase great alliance?"

Jitterbug- A dance popular throughout the early 20th century in the US that is associated with swing dancing.

Knish- Yiddish for an Eastern European snack food made by covering a savory filling with dough.

Katzenjammer Krauts- *The Katzenjammer Kids* is an American comic strip. It began its run in 1897 and still continues to be syndicated. Between 1916 and 1918 it was adapted into 37 silent cartoon shorts. In 1938 *The Captain and the Kids* became MGM's first self-produced series of theatrical short cartoons.

Gypsy Rose Lee- (1911-1970) Burlesque entertainer and the subject of the musical and film *Gypsy* (1962). She became famous working for Minsky's Burlesque for four years and made five films between 1937 and 1938. She continued to work in a variety of capacities in the entertainment industry until her death.

Lemming- a small rodent often found in tundra. Because of a high death rate during mass migrations, lemmings are commonly believed to be mindless followers with no sense of self-preservation. This has been proven untrue, but the term *lemming* often refers to a human who reflects these characteristics.

Leningrad – name of St. Petersburg from 1924 to 1941. It was renamed just after the death of Vladimir Lenin. It is a long-time center of international culture and wealth. Between 1917 and 1940, 2 million people fled the city in response to oppression, anarchy and murder that occurred under Lenin and Joseph Stalin.

Mazel-tov- means "good luck" in Hebrew/Yiddish and is used at significant life events of joy.

National Broadcasting Corporation- also known as NBC founded by the Radio Corporation of America in 1926.

National Socialists- Also known as the Nazi Party, they are active in Germany between 1920 and 1945. It is composed of a combination of the racist German nationalist movement and the anti-communist *Freikorps* (free corps) paramilitary culture.

Nosher- a Yiddish term for one who is always eating or snacking.

Nuremberg Laws- written in 1935 replacing the 1933 decree, these are anti-Semitic laws that defined what persons would be considered Jewish under Nazi German law. The Nuremberg Laws stripped them of all civil liberties by changing their political status from "citizens" to "subjects of the state."

Instructional chart issued to help bureaucrats distinguish "Jews" from "Mischlinge" (mixed race persons) and Aryans



Oktoberfest- a 16-day festival from late September to the first week of October celebrating beer that is held every year in Munich. The festival has been a tradition since 1810 when King Ludwig I married Princess Therese of Saxe-Hildburghausen in Munich.

“Oh what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive”- a quote from Sir Walter Scott’s epic poem, *Marmion*.

“One day strike against Jewish shops and businesses”- This occurred on April 1, 1933 as a part of a state-managed campaign.

Petard- A small bomb used to blow up gates when breaching fortifications. “I’m hoisted by my own petard ” is a line taken from *Hamlet*. To hoist by one’s own petard is to blow oneself up with your own explosive.

Pair of Nylons- Nylons were first introduced in 1939 and became instantly popular in the U.S. In 1942 the War Production Board announced that Du Pont’s nylon manufacturing would be used exclusively for war materials. Between 1945 and 1946 riots broke out when Du Pont shifted its manufacturing back from wartime materials to luxury goods like nylons.

Pack of Luckies- Lucky Strike brand of cigarettes especially popular with soldiers in WW2. They were rationed in the United States due to the green dye used in the packages. The white and red packet we know today was born from this need.

Persian Lamb Coat- coat made from the pelt of newborn Karakul sheep. Karakul are mostly found in Uzbekistan and Central Asia.

Pogrom- a mob attack that targets people of Jewish cultural traditions. In the nineteenth century and early twentieth century this term is especially used for violent attacks in Eastern Europe and Russia. An infamous pogrom in Poland occurred in 1905 called the Bialystok pogrom. In the early years of the 20th century, Bialystok had a Jewish population of 75%. During the bloodshed between 82 and 200 victims were killed and 169 shops and houses were plundered.

President of the Reichsministry of Music- The *Reichsmusikkammer* (the “Reich Music Chamber”) One of the seven sub-sections of the Reichministry of Culture.

Proletariat- In Marxist theory refers to the social class that does not own the means of production, but are dependent on wages in exchange for their labor power.

Rabbi- Derived from the word for teacher/master. The term usually refers to someone who has been through *semikha* (Rabbinic Ordination) which gives him or her authority to answer questions of Jewish law and become a leader in religious communities.

Reichsministry of Finance- A department of President Hindenberg’s government. It is headed by Lutz von Krosigk from 1932-1945. Several of Krosigk’s family members participated in assassination attempts on Hitler. Von Krosigk eventually would serve as the Leading Minister of the German Reich (equivalent to Chancellor) in the brief period between Hitler’s suicide and the end of WWII.

Reichstag- The Reichstag was built to house the parliamentary body of the German Empire and then the Weimar Republic. The building was completed in 1894. It was used for its intended purpose until it was burned in 1933. (see photo below)

Reichsminister of Culture- Head of the Reichskulturkammer (RKK) or the Reich Chamber of Culture instituted in Nazi Germany in 1933. Walther Funk held this position from 1933 to 1938.

Will Rogers (1879-1935) A vaudeville performer and film actor, Will Rogers is one of the most remembered performers of the 1920s and 1930s. His rope act in the Ziegfeld Follies led to his success. He made 71 movies in the 1930s. He became an active political figure who supported Roosevelt’s New Deal. He even mounted a mock campaign for president in 1928.



Eleanor Roosevelt- (1884-1962) First Lady from 1933-1945 alongside her husband Franklin D. Roosevelt. She redefined the role to include her many social projects and her public pursuit of social change.

Seig Heil- a variation of the Nazi salutes that translates to “Hail victory.”

“Sh’mā Yisrael... Adonai Eloheh... Adonai Echod.”- The Shema Yisrael is a prayer that serves as a centerpiece of the morning and evening Jewish prayer services. It translates to “Hear, Oh Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.” It is the central statement of Judaism comparable to John 3:16 in Christianity. It is also uttered at times of great peril that might result in one’s death.

Shtetl- Yiddish for “town.” It often refers to a small town with a high percentage of people identified as Jewish in Central and Eastern Europe before the Holocaust.

Sol Hurok- (1888-1974) the most revered and successful impresario (manager, presenter, and producer) of classical artists who ever lived. His long and illustrious career had him representing the greatest artists who ever lived. His long and illustrious career had him representing the greatest artists in their respective fields. His roster included dancers Isadora Duncan, Pavlova and Rudolph Nureyev. Musicians included Segovia (guitar), Horowitz and Van Cliburn (piano), Isaac Stern and Efraim Zimbalist (Violin). Singers included Jan Peerce and Feodor Chaliapin. He broke the color barrier in classical music by representing and producing singer Marian Anderson, whose concert on the steps of Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC is an iconic event in the Civil Rights Movement.

Richard Strauss- (1864-1949) respected and successful German composer of the late Romantic style known for his operas and orchestral work. He was also a renowned conductor. He was appointed to the post of president of the *Reichsmusikkammer* in 1933 despite his private contempt of the Nazis and their cultural policies. He was released from that position in 1935 when a letter he wrote was intercepted by the Gestapo. In it he denied the Nazi Party stance on “Aryan supremacy.” He is a deeply controversial figure whose colleagues worldwide, Toscanini most notably, denounced him for his complicity, which was—even in the kindest sources—informed by his cowardice, self-interest, and grandiosity.

Sturmmann- a junior officer in Nazi paramilitary organizations. Translates to “stormtrooper.”

Third Reich- refers to the German political power between 1933 and 1945 under the totalitarian state of Hitler and the Nazi Party. The term is an expansion on Arthur Moeller van den Bruck’s book that proposed the first Reich (the First Empire) was the Holy Roman Empire (962-1806) and the second Reich was the German Empire (1871-1918). Through this thinking the Third Reich became a logical extension of German history

V.J. Day 1945- The day Japan surrendered, effectively ending WWII. This event was celebrated on August 14, 1945 in the United States.

“We saved them, Rabbi! Every Jewish person in Bulgaria!”- Bulgaria joined the Axis powers under pressure, but did not actively participate in many Axis military operations. After heavy protests by its people in 1943, the Bulgarian government refused to send people classified as Jews under the Nuremberg Laws living in Bulgaria to concentration camps. Bulgaria was the only nation in Europe that saved every one of its Jews, and the only nation in which the Jewish population grew during the war years. There were 50,000 Jews living in Bulgaria at the onset of war and 56,000 by war’s end. Unlike the widely reported heroism and defiance of the Dutch and the Danes, the heroism, decency, and even more successful defiance of Bulgarians during the Holocaust has gone largely untold since the post-war communist government was not eager to perpetuate the story of this nationwide act of civil disobedience.

Yiddish- A fusion of German and Hebrew. It is a fusion of different German dialects with other influences, spoken as a primary language of most Eastern European Jews regardless of nationality, hence a lingua franca. It is written using the Hebrew alphabet.

“You can’t dance at two weddings with one heinie”- Yiddish proverb

Wearing Red- red is the symbol of revolution stemming from European revolutions in the 19th century. The paramilitary arm of the communist Germans at this time were called the Red Front Fighters League.



The **Nuremburg Laws** enacted by the Third Reich play a key part in the story of the Comedian Harmonists.

NUREMBERG LAWS

Reich Citizenship Law of September 15, 1935

The Reichstag has unanimously enacted the following law, which is promulgated herewith:

Article 1

1. A subject of the state is a person who enjoys the protection of the German Reich and who in consequence has specific obligations toward it.
2. The status of subject of the state is acquired in accordance with the provisions of the Reich and the Reich Citizenship Law.

Article 2

1. A Reich citizen is a subject of the state who is of German or related blood, and proves by his conduct that he is willing and fit to faithfully serve the German people and Reich.
2. Reich citizenship is acquired through the granting of a Reich citizenship certificate.
3. The Reich citizen is the sole bearer of full political rights in accordance with the law.

Article 3

The Reich Minister of the Interior, in coordination with the Deputy of the Führer, will issue the legal and administrative orders required to implement and complete this law.

Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor of September 15, 1935

Moved by the understanding that purity of German blood is the essential condition for the continued existence of the German people, and inspired by the inflexible determination to ensure the existence of the German nation for all time, the Reichstag has unanimously adopted the following law, which is promulgated herewith:

Article 1

1. Marriages between Jews and subjects of the state of German or related blood are forbidden. Marriages nevertheless concluded are invalid, even if concluded abroad to circumvent this law.
2. Annulment proceedings can be initiated only by the state prosecutor.

Article 2

Extramarital relations between Jews and subjects of the state of German or related blood are forbidden.

Article 3

Jews may not employ in their households female subjects of the state of German or related blood who are under 45 years old.

Article 4

1. Jews are forbidden to fly the Reich or national flag or display Reich colors.
2. They are, on the other hand, permitted to display the Jewish colors. The exercise of this right is protected by the state.

Article 5

1. Any person who violates the prohibition under Article 1 will be punished with a prison sentence.
2. A male who violates the prohibition under Article 2 will be punished with a jail term or a prison sentence.
3. Any person violating the provisions under Articles 3 or 4 will be punished with a jail term of up to one year and a fine, or with one or the other of these penalties.

Article 6

The Reich Minister of the Interior, in coordination with the Deputy of the Führer and the Reich Minister of Justice, will issue the legal and administrative regulations required to implement and complete this law.

Article 7

The law takes effect on the day following promulgation, except for Article 3, which goes into force on January 1, 1936.

Pre-Play Discussion Questions:

How was the entertainment industry affected by the rise of the Third Reich in pre-WWII Germany?

What was the Treaty of Versailles? How did it effect Germany between World War I and II?

Read and discuss the glossary. What words and phrases do you wonder about? After the play, go back to these and see if your understanding is clearer.

Post-Play Discussion Questions:

Why do you think the set designer chose a train station as the main setting for the play? What are the metaphors you see in this design?

How did the music move the plot? What specific songs stand out to you and why?

Which characters do you identify with? Why?

Would you have stayed in Germany or tried to flee if you had been in the same position as the characters Erich, Rabbi, Lesh and Harry?

Answers to questions you may have after the play:**How many members were in the group?**

Some members of the group came and went, and there are nine people who could legitimately be considered members of the group. There are only six that are considered to be the Comedian Harmonists by fans and historians. These members are Henry Frommermann, Robert Biberti, Ari Leschnikoff, Roman Cycowski, Erwin Bootz, and Erich Collin. These are the six featured in *Harmony-A New Musical*.

Did the Comedian Harmonists really know Einstein?

Albert Einstein was indeed a family friend of the Collins. Erich and Einstein both played violin in an amateur orchestra together.

“Music when soft voices die vibrates in the memory.” This line from Percy Shelley’s 1821 poem

“Music, When Soft Voices Die.” is quoted in the play. The full text of the poem is as follows:

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heap'd for the belovèd's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

Continued Learning Resources

Movie, Book and Online Resources

The Harmonists (Movie) 1997 (R); Director: Joseph Vilsmaier; Miramax Films, distributor

Freidman, Douglas E.; *The Comedian Harmonists: The Last Great Jewish Performers in Nazi Germany*; Booklocker.com, Inc; 2010.

YOUTUBE:

CH=Comedian Harmonists

The CH hit “Veronika, der Lenz ist da” (Veronika, Spring is here)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQlsmw4Yhr4>

The film *Die Drei Von Der Tankstelle* (1930). The CH appear at 1:04:30.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6D9KJzBfOOA>

The CH hit *Das “Ist Die Liebe Der Matrosen”*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxkJ7LjZhs>

The CH imitate instruments in “The Barber of Seville Overture”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-feS3WBjXKU>

A brief speech by Albert Einstein.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-1Z2wi2uSA>

Marlene Dietrich in *The Blue Angel*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYXg7LlzyO8>

Excerpt from a documentary on Richard Strauss

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xD5QxPXTN_4

