College of DuPage Theatre Department
Presents

The Diary of Anne Frank
By Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett
Newly Adapted by Wendy Kesselman

Directed by Connie Canaday Howard

The College Theatre Department sincerely thanks the Library for research support for classes studying the script and production, as well as for the cast, director and production team, working on the project.

Special Thanks to Professors Chris Goergen, Lee Kesselman, Richard Jarman and Christine Monnier for sharing their talents and expertise with the production.

Support is made possible by a generous gift from the College of DuPage Foundation’s Dr. Donald and Helen (Gum) Westlake Fund for Student Productions.

Place: In the top floors of the annex to an office building in Amsterdam, Holland.
Time: The years of World War II.
Characters
Anne Frank
Otto Frank
Edith Frank
Margot Frank
Miep Gies
Peter Van Daan
Mr. Kraler
Mrs. Van Daan
Mr. Van Daan
Mr. Dussel
First Man
Second Man
Third Woman

Intermission: there will be one fifteen minute intermission

Director’s Note

"It’s a wonder I haven’t abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart... when I look up at the sky, I somehow feel that everything will change for the better, that this cruelty too shall end, that peace and tranquility will return once more"

Anne Frank - July 15, 1944

Wendy Kesselman’s ‘new’ adaptation was nominated for a Tony award when it first opened on Broadway. Her adaptation included information from the re-release of Anne’s diary, which had been edited by Otto Frank and the publishers in 1947. Indeed, it is estimated that the re-release of Anne’s diary, in 1991, included an additional thirty percent of her original thoughts – largely about ‘coming of age’ and passages where she was critical her mother.

The newly released material allowed the inclusion of more of Anne Frank’s original text in the script. In reading and working on this script, it feels to me that it creates a more complete voice for both Anne, but also the other characters. The effect seems to be a glimpse into the horror of the Holocaust, and it results in a powerful, moving tribute to the human spirit and hope. CCH
Playwrights

WENDY KESSELMAN (1940- )

Kesselman received a Tony Award nomination for her adaptation of The Diary of Anne Frank, which was produced on Broadway. Her plays include My Sister in this House; The Notebook; The Last Bridge; I Love You, I Love You Not; The Executioner’s Daughter; The Juniper Tree, A Tragic Household Tale; Maggie Magalita; Merry-Go-Round; Becca, A Musical; a musical adaptation of Dickens’ A Tale of Two Cities; and a musical adaptation of Chekhov’s The Black Monk. A member of the Dramatists Guild, she is the recipient of the New England Theatre Conference Major Award for outstanding creative achievement in the American theatre, the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, the first annual Playbill Award, the Roger L. Stevens Award, the Jane Chambers Playwriting Award, the Lecomte du Noüy Annual Award, and a Guggenheim, McKnight, and two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships. She is also a seven-time winner of the ASCAP Popular Award in Musical Theatre. Ms. Kesselman’s screenplays include Sister My Sister (adapted from My Sister in the House), directed by Nancy Meckler; I Love You, I Love You Not (adapted from her play of the same name), directed by Billy Hopkins; and Mad or in Love for Fox 2000. Her screen adaptation of John Knowles’ A Separate Peace, directed by Peter Yates, aired on Showtime, won a Writers Guild of America award, and was nominated for an Emmy.

https://www.writerstheatre.org/wendy-kesselman-biography
GOODRICH, FRANCES (1890–1984) and HACKETT, ALBERT (1900–1995)

U.S. writers. Born in Belleville, New Jersey, Goodrich attended Passaic High School. She graduated from Vassar College in 1912, and then spent a year at the New York School of Social Work. She first appeared on stage in Massachusetts in 1913, and her first Broadway show was *Come Out of the Kitchen* (1916). Hackett was born to professional actors Maurice Hackett and Florence (née Spreen) in New York. He first took to the stage at the age of six. The couple met while performing together in Denver, Colorado, in 1927. Goodrich and Hackett began writing plays together; their first hit, *Up Pops the Devil*, was adapted into a film in 1931. The couple married in 1931; the marriage was the third for Goodrich, the first for Hackett. After a string of less than successful screenplays for MGM, Goodrich and Hackett enjoyed their first box-office success adapting Dashiell Hammett's *The Thin Man* (1934), which earned them their first of four career Oscar nominations. Goodrich and Hackett followed up with two more Thin Man films – *After the Thin Man* (1936) and *Another Thin Man* (1939). In 1941, the couple returned to Broadway with the long-running *Mr. and Mrs. North*. After the play's run, the couple returned to Hollywood to work for Paramount adapting *Lady in the Dark* (1944). Goodrich and Hackett were known for sophisticated comedy, but also worked on Frank Capra's classic *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946). After *The Pirate* (1948), *Easter Parade* (1948), *Father of the Bride* (1950) and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1954), the couple once again took an uncharacteristic turn to drama with a stage production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1956), which won the Pulitzer Prize for drama and two Tony Awards, and which was adapted to film in 1959. Goodrich and Hackett's final collaboration was *Five Finger Exercise* (1962).

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/frances-goodrich-and-albert-hackett
Background on *The Diary of Anne Frank*


Just three weeks before Anne Frank and her family went into hiding to escape Nazi persecution, Anne was given a diary for her 13th birthday. "I hope you will be a great sense of comfort and support," she wrote in her first entry, and the diary certainly provided that, acting as confidante, confessor, teacher, and ultimately her legacy. What the diary has provided for the world since its publication 50 years ago, however, is not just a poignant portrait of burgeoning adolescence, but a moving glimpse into the horrors of the Holocaust and a testament to the power of the human spirit. The original version of "Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl," considered one of the single most important documents of World War II, was ultimately printed in 55 languages and spawned a variety of plays and films, including Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett’s Pulitzer Prize-winning Broadway play "The Diary of Anne Frank" (1956) and George Stevens’s subsequent Oscar-winning film (1959).

Now comes a new Broadway production of "The Diary of Anne Frank," adapted by Wendy Kesselman to include new material that Otto Frank edited out of his daughter’s diaries upon publication. (There were actually two diaries - the private one she began at age 13, and the version she began editing and revising herself for possible publication after the war as a testimony to her experiences under Nazi occupation. The originally published version is a combination of the two, with Otto Frank leaving out some of the more sensitive passages.) The beauty of the written diary is that it puts a vivid, vibrant face on horrors most of us hardly dare imagine. While no play can compress into two hours the full richness of a life, even one so tragically ended just shy of Anne's 16th birthday, the new adaptation makes a valiant attempt at giving a more complete portrait of a young girl in the midst of a devastating political climate and staggering personal changes.

But while it is compelling theater, one can't help but feel something is missing in the new production, given its pre-Broadway premiere in Boston recently. James Lapine's direction lacks visceral charge, and Adrienne Lobel's clever sets don't quite capture the stifling claustrophobia of Anne's hide-out. We see the forced good humor and teasing, the snide remarks, the occasional profession of faith, and the frequent bickering that characterized the Frank family's confinement in an attic annex with a dentist and Otto's business partner, wife, and son. We see Anne, bounding about the apartment with incessant cheeriness, clowning and chattering. But we never quite feel the terror and confusion felt by all, not the least Anne, herself a "little bundle of contradictions," a high-spirited minx battling with her "purer self" and trying hard to "find a way of becoming what I would so like to be." Natalie Portman is appropriately effusive, but only voice-overs hint at her intensity and probing intelligence. Sophie Hayden is affecting as Anne's mother, and George Hearn, Harris Yulin, Austin Pendleton, and Rachel Miner are solid, if unremarkable. The standout is Linda Lavin, whose sarcastic, high-strung Mrs. Van Daan gives the play liveliness and immediacy. The play's ending is its most powerful moment, as the lights dim and a page from the diary is projected across the set. Otto, the only one of the eight to survive the war (he died in 1980), reads Anne's words:

*The Diary of Anne Frank* Study Guide
College Theatre
April 5-15, 2018
"When I write, I shake off all my cares. But I want more than that. I want to be useful, to bring enjoyment. I want to go on living, even after my death."
That she has.
'The Diary of Anne Frank' begins previews at the Music Box Theatre in New York on Nov. 21 and opens on Dec. 4. More information is on the Internet at www.annefrankonbroadway.com/

If American Jews are angrily squaring off over such fundamentals as their fealty to Israel and the very definition of who is a Jew, why not have a brawl over Anne Frank? This week a new version of "The Diary of Anne Frank" reaches Broadway on a wave of suspicion and controversy that provoked a major Jewish writer to make a pre-emptive strike in The New Yorker without even waiting to see it.
The writer is Cynthia Ozick, whose October essay summarized two scholarly books -- by Lawrence Graver and Ralph Melnick -- that make the airtight case that Anne's father, Otto Frank, and theatrical luminaries including Garson Kanin and Lillian Hellman deliberately corrupted the diary for Broadway consumption in 1955. The play stripped the diary of its Jewishness and sanitized the Holocaust by dispensing with any details, the Nazis included. Audiences were treated instead to a sentimental, generic slab of postwar optimism exemplified by Anne's curtain line: "I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart."
The 1955 script was written by the husband-and-wife screenwriters Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett in the same earnest style of their Hollywood work, like "It's a Wonderful Life" and "Father of the Bride." Whatever the motives behind the dilution of the diary, their play is typical of its Broadway period. The cute jokes, glib inspirational homilies and one-note characters epitomize the formulaic playmaking that writers like Tennessee Williams and Eugene O'Neill rebelled against. "Waiting for Godot" flopped on Broadway the same season that "Anne Frank" was a smash, winning the Pulitzer and the Tony.
But the muted Jewishness in the play pandered to American Jewry as well as to Broadway commercialism. Except for Meyer Levin, the novelist who made a crusade of his failed effort to supplant the Hacketts' dramatization with a more faithful version of his own, few in 1955 protested the bleaching out of the Franks' ethnicity on stage. American Jews were embracing the assimilationist nirvanas of suburbia and Reform Judaism; it was not kosher to be "too Jewish." Broadway's "Anne Frank" was hardly the only Jewish setting from which Hebrew prayers were being excised.
In 1997, the new "Anne Frank" happens to be directly across 45th Street from "The Old Neighborhood," David Mamet's powerful indictment of what he calls "plain brown wrapper" 50's Reform Judaism. Though the new "Anne Frank" still bills the Hacketts as principal authors, their text has been almost completely overhauled by theater artists of the Mamet generation: the playwright Wendy Kesselman and the director James Lapine. Months before Ms. Ozick's article was published, they were reclaiming the characters' Jewishness, Anne's sexuality and, in the diary's words, "the suffering of millions" -- not just in Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen but in the Dutch transit camp of Westerbork.

Ms. Kesselman said while making final revisions at previews last week that the Anne Frank Foundation had been only encouraging of her long effort to restore honest history and Anne's unexpurgated words to the stage.

"Not everyone will be happy," says Mr. Lapine. "People will either attack us or embrace us." Indeed, some Holocaust historians, most eloquently Lawrence Langer, have questioned whether Anne Frank's diary in any form belongs more to the literature of puberty than that of the Holocaust. Seconding Mr. Langer, Ms. Ozick asked in The New Yorker the incendiary (if academic) question whether history might have been better served if the diary, so easily reduced to kitsch, had been lost or destroyed.

As was true of the 1955 "Anne Frank," perceptions of the 1997 version may well be colored by contemporary Jewish-American debates, no matter what's on stage. But maybe adults' reactions don't matter as much as those of children who are seeing it for the first time and carry none of their parents' baggage. The 13-year-old bar mitzvah boy who came with me was shaken by the experience -- and was incredulous when I told him afterward how the version I saw as a child ended with Anne's cheery testimonial to people's goodness of heart. That line turns up in the 1997 "Anne Frank," but earlier and no longer ripped out of context to hit a false note. This time the play ends, humbly, with the silence of the dead.
Publicity Photos for College of DuPage Theatre Department’s *The Diary of Anne Frank*
**Things to watch for in performance:**
- The entire play takes place in the secret Annex, except for moments that we see outside the apartment. What is the effect of the eight people, in hiding for nearly two years, in a small space? What is the effect of the moments we see outside the apartment?
- Anne Frank’s story has had several adaptations and treatments – from book to stage to film. Why do you think it remains so popular?

**Things to think about after the performance:**
- This production was staged on both the set and in the audience. What was the effect?
- What is the effect of the recorded diary entries of Anne, or Hitler’s speeches, or speeches of the BBC?
- Mr. Dussel joining the two families in hiding is a historical fact. In the fictionalized play, how did his coming into hiding with them affect the group – as individuals and as a whole?

**Other Analysis “Tools”:**
- What happens in the very last moments of the play? Certainly, the last few minutes, but, more importantly, the last thirty seconds? In that time, WHAT happens or is said, and what does that say about what the play is ‘about?’ In a nutshell, how does the playwright drive his point(s) home?
- And what is the significance of the title? Why did the playwright decide that this was the most quintessential title for their work?

**The running time for this production is approximately 2 hours with one 15 minute intermission.**

**This performance takes place in the Playhouse of the MAC. The show runs Thursday-Saturday evenings at 8P, Sundays at 3P April 5-15, 2017. College Theater’s Box Office 630/942-4000.**

Please note that a pre-show discussion will take place prior to the performance, Thursday, April 5 at 6:45pm in MAC 140. The pre-show discussion will include the director and designers, and will be a discussion of the approach to this production.

A post-show discussion will take place on Friday, April 13, following the performance in the Playhouse. The post-show will be with director, cast and crew, and will be fielding questions from the audience. Post-show occurs after the show, for approximately 30 minutes.