

SCRIPT EXCERPT:

#1: OPENING SCENE

The Blackbox is set with cabaret-style seating, gentle house music is playing, and the house lights are set low-ish to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere and to allow easy access for FOH volunteers who usher audience members to their seats. The bar area is set up for either drinks service (evening show) or tea, coffee, biscuits service (matinee show).

On the stage in the corner is a comfortable armchair and floor lamp, alongside which sits a small side table. On the table rests a large book titled "The Great American Songbook" inside which there is conveniently a copy of the script for the MC to secretly read. There is a small butler's bell on the table, and a jug + glass of water.

Also on the stage there is a microphone stand and stool for singers to use. Elsewhere on the stage is the jazz band: a keyboard & saxophone.

The lights change, the house music changes to the louder Entry Song while PERSON IN CHAIR enters and sits in the armchair. Music then gently fades.

PERSON IN CHAIR

I love jazz. I love theatre, too. I love those old-school tunes by Broadway composers of yester-year that no-one seems to play anymore. (sighs) I mean, kids these days: they can recite every line of "Hamilton" from memory, but ask them to name a single tune from a Rodgers & Hart musical, and they draw a blank. They think Richard Rodgers was some guy who built a Broadway theatre on 46th Street.

Anyway, enough of that: let's get started. Welcome, hello! How are we all today? Good? 4

Welcome to STAG's Bakehouse Black Box Theatre. Tonight I will be guiding you on a journey through the wonderful world that is the music of George Gershwin. We have four sensational talented singers waiting in the Green Room who will be interpreting a number of classics tonight, all written by George and Ira Gershwin.

Tonight's all about giving performers a chance to sing some jazz, to step out of their comfort zone slightly, but to do so in a warm, welcoming, supportive environment. After the last few years performance opportunities have been few and far between, so we're thrilled that we're able to be back on stage, doing what we love, and giving performers a space to grow.

A quick bit of house keeping: restrooms are back out in the foyer and to the right. Out in the foyer you would have passed the bar as you entered, where you'll find tea, coffee, drinks etc. There will be an interval tonight, so you will have a chance to refill those drinks. Speaking of which:

PERSON IN CHAIR rings the small bell on the small table.

(loudly, to FOH staff) Cup of tea, stage left please. Milk, no sugar. And a Monte Carlo.

(to audience) We'll be getting started in about 5 minutes - see you soon!

End of scene. Slight change in lights to assist movement of audience members to the bar, and the house music resumes (HM Playlist)

PERSON IN CHAIR

So, Amy is going to stick around for the next tune, which is the beautiful ballad "Embraceable You".

House music plays excerpt of song (Excerpt #2). Like before, the excerpt is loud for 10-or-so seconds then decreases.

Like "But Not For Me", "Embraceable You" comes from the 1930 musical Girl Crazy. However the song had actually been written several years earlier for an unpublished operetta that never made it to the stage, called East is West.

It's good to see George didn't let a good song go to waste. It's sung in the first act of *Girl Crazy*, performed by Molly (Ginger Rogers) and Danny, played by Allen Kearns.

Ad lib conversation with SINGER #1. Then they invite SINGER #1 to begin.