

***Ragtime* Week 8 Address for Week of April 21st**

Hello Everyone,

We've arrived. For seven long weeks we've gathered together with a common purpose. In just a few days, we officially unveil the fruits of our labor to audiences. We're determined that the fruit will be ripe and delicious. I'm not in the habit of passing out moldy, dried out oranges. That's exactly what a student found in my desk drawer a few days ago, but that's another story entirely.

I'm REALLY proud of how much energy, time, focus, commitment, and joy you've put into this rehearsal process. At times I may seem oblivious to your sacrifices, but I'm not. I know all too well that you've given up many opportunities for other experiences by choosing to be with us instead. However, you've also gained. For seven weeks we've labored intensively towards a common goal. You've gotten to know many students with whom you've had little to no contact previously. You've consoled each other through some very difficult situations. You've inspired each other through an endless array of creative endeavors connected to the show. You've shared wonderfully numerous and long periods of laughter. And, now, you've arrived at the end result of this long process. Thank you for joining us.

People routinely question why and how we the student and adult production staff are willing and able to pour ourselves into this process to the extent that we do. The answer isn't complicated; it's all of you who make it possible. Our program is not filled with mirror image personalities or automatons. We are an amazingly eclectic group. It's one of our greatest strengths. Still, I generally see a through-line within the group. By in large, you're thoroughly wonderful young people. You are moral. You are kind. You are intelligent. You are creative. You are social. You are connected. And you are going to go on to do and become really amazing contributors to the world in the years ahead. I have little doubt that many of you will remain gratefully tethered to each other in many future creative pursuits- a perpetuation of the creative work that your time in West Bloomfield fostered. I know that I speak for our entire staff when I say that I count myself lucky to have had the opportunity to help cultivate your inherent talents.

Okay, enough mush for now. On to the work of the week ahead. It's been said that the process of legislation is similar to that of sausage production; you do not want to witness either. Well, following our work on Sat, I've been seeking tours of local meat processing centers and hoping to swing through the state capitol building. They'd offer tremendously prettier sights and our tech run. YES, we have a lot of work to do this week, but we'll get there. We have a truly seasoned crew, thoroughly rehearsed actors, and an orchestra pit populated by an amazingly talented set of musicians. It will all come together in spectacular manner... *but* it won't just happen either. Please contribute in every possible way that you can to our forward progression this week. Stay focused. Stay positive. Stay committed. By Thursday, we'll birth an amazing piece of live theatre.

- Greene

Quote for the Week: "He ran with his mind. He ran toward something. He was unencumbered by fear and did not know there were beings in the world less curious about it than he. He saw through things and noted the colors people produced and was never surprised by a coincidence. A blue and green planet rolled through his eyes." – *Ragtime*, Pg. 263, E.L. Doctorow

Thought for the Week: Are you an actively curious person by nature? In our story, the Little Boy is every bit the eccentric. He pulls us through the narrative, and his innocent comments and unassuming insights shape the landscape of the entire world our story creates. BE THIS PERSON. Take it all in, day after day. Marvel at the wonder of it all. Don't join the mob, falling into complacency and cynicism. It's all too easy to do so, but it won't offer a path towards any greater enlightenment or insight. You'll soon wake up and be eighty, if you're lucky. Don't allow the strand of time between this moment and that to be routine. You're better than that. Find the inspiration to color the experience. Work towards your greatest passions. Be conscious of the world that surrounds you. Make your life's run meaningful.