

Get ready to see

RAGTIME

at Wheelock Family Theatre at Boston University

A social story to help families prepare for a visit to the theater



I am going to see a play called *RAGTIME* at Wheelock Family Theatre at Boston University.



When I get to the theater, we will walk through the lobby. It might be crowded.



I can take deep breaths and be patient as we move through the crowd.

In the gallery will be an exhibit about *RAGTIME* and the stories it tells. I can look at the timelines and hear the stories before I go into the theater.



In a play, people on stage tell a story -
right in front of us!

These people are called actors.



When I sit down in the theater I will see
the set. A set is an imaginary place,
built on the stage, to show where the
story happens.



The set for this play looks like a library.
There are so many books! The set can
move to show the different places the
character's visit.



This play takes place in three different neighborhoods in New York City during the early 1900s. The story is about the different kinds of people who live there.



The story of this play is told through songs and dancing, not just speaking.



The music comes from a special place below the stage. This is where the musicians sit and play their instruments. There is also a conductor who tells them how and when to play.



Sometimes the sounds and music can get loud. If it is too loud for me I can always cover my ears...



...I can hug or hold hands with my mom or dad, or with someone else who came with me to the theater.



If I need a break I can go into the lobby...



...or to a quiet, cozy space nearby.



If I need something to hold onto I can ask an usher for a squishy toy.



I will know that the play is about to start when the lights in the room get darker and the lights on the stage get brighter.

The audience will get very quiet. It is important that I try to be quiet during the show so I can hear everything.



Here are some of the main characters in this play: Mother, Father, Mother's Younger Brother, Grandfather, and Little Boy, who live in New Rochelle and are wealthy,



Sarah, Coalhouse Walker Jr, and the other African American people who live in Harlem and are creating a new kind of music called Ragtime,



an artist named Tateh and his daughter who moved to America from a far away country,



...and famous people from that time like Booker T. Washington, who was a leader of the African American community, and Harry Houdini, an amazing magician.



This play talks about the struggles that African Americans, immigrants, and women faced at that time.



They will sing songs in the play. When the songs are over, I can clap to show how much I liked it!



There are times in the play where people say bad words and do unkind things. I know that the actors are just pretending. They are very nice in real life.



This is Anthony Pires Jr. He is the actor who plays Coalhouse Walker Jr. In the play, he feels angry and may say or do things that hurt people, but I know that he is acting.



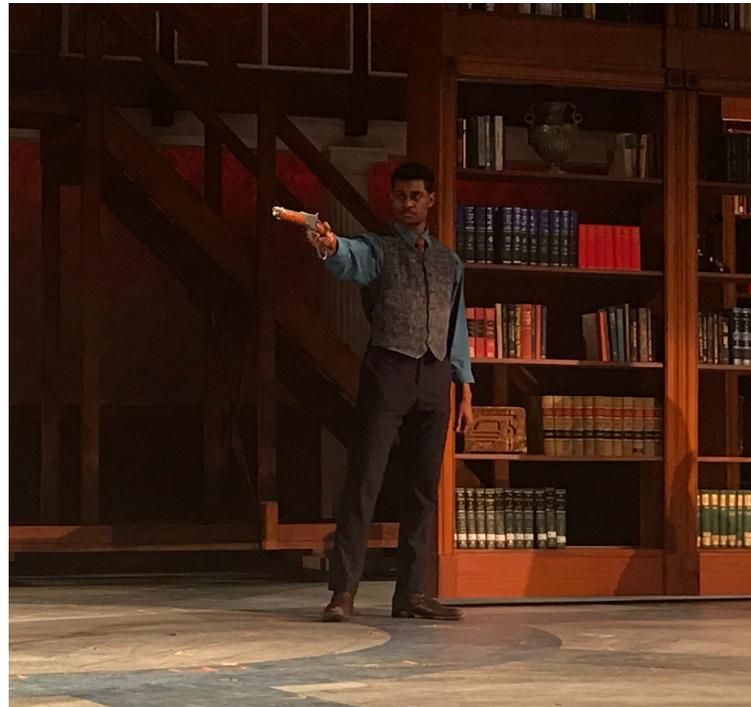
This is Pier Lamia Porter. She is the actor who plays Sarah. A group of policemen hurt Sarah. Everyone may feel sad, but I know that the actress is pretending and that she is safe.



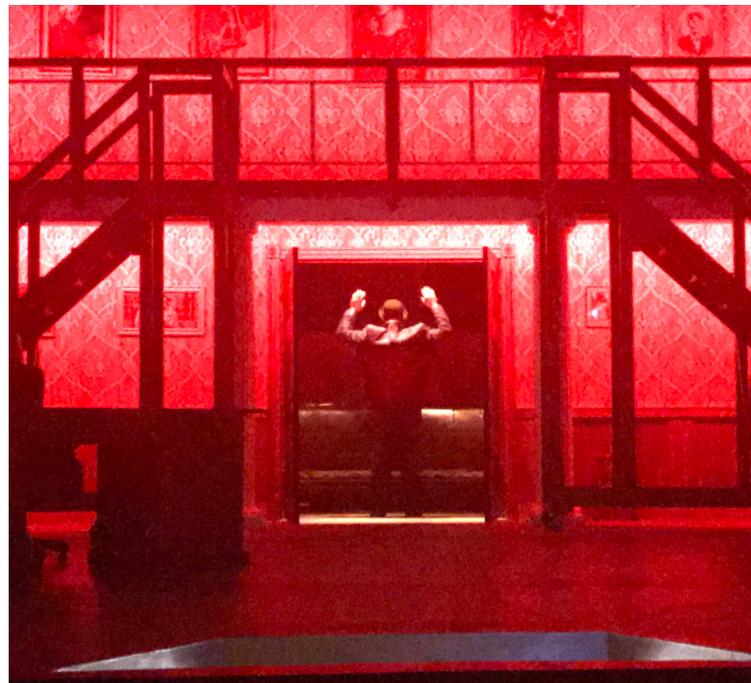
Sometimes in the show, the people use violence to hurt each other. This can be scary, but I will remember that the actors are pretending. If I am scared, I can close my eyes.



At other times, there are characters that hold guns. Coalhouse and the Harlem kids are some of the people who hold them.



These guns are pretend but I will hear loud noises and see flashing lights. I may feel scared. I can put my hands over my ears and shut my eyes when that happens.



There is also magic in this show. Harry Houdini and his assistant do a disappearing trick. Some people may clap and cheer to show they liked it.

If I want to clap I can.

If I don't want to clap I don't have to.



Sometimes during the show the actors go into the audience. If I'm in the front seats, I can turn my head to look at them.



In one scene, there is smoke on stage. I know this is a special kind of smoke called **haze** that is used in plays. It is made backstage by a device called a **haze machine**.

I know that everyone is safe.



The sounds may be loud and the action may be startling. If I need to I can cover my ears or leave the theater and take a break.



At the end of a scene or song some people will clap. Clapping tells the actors that I liked their performance.



If I want to clap I can.
If I don't want to clap I don't have to.

This play is performed with an intermission. This is a break in the play where I can leave the theater to walk around the lobby, use the restroom,



get a drink of water, or have a snack.



At the very end of the play all of the actors will come out on stage and bow. This is called a curtain call.



I can clap. Clapping tells the actors I liked the show.

If I really like the show I can stand up and clap. This is called a standing ovation.



If the sound is too loud, I can always cover my ears.



If I feel anxious or upset I can take deep breaths to help me stay calm.



I can hold hands with mom or dad or with someone else who came with me to the theater.



After I move through the lobby I will leave Wheelock Family Theatre at Boston University.



Going to the theater is very exciting!

I hope I will have a great time when I go to see *RAGTIME*.



For more information about access and inclusion at Wheelock Family Theatre at Boston University please contact Jeri Hammond, Director of Education, Outreach, and Community Engagement, at JeriH@bu.edu or 617-353-1459.

