

**The Theatre of  
Western Springs  
Presents**



This program is partially  
sponsored by a grant from the  
Illinois Arts Council

**Morning Star**

By Sylvia Regan

Directed by Jack Phillips

**Note:** Since the language of the play is rich in Jewish idiom and speech color, there is a danger of caricaturing the lines should an accent be used. Therefore, with the exception of Aaron's speech, the playwright suggests that no accents be used.

**Cast**

(in order of appearance)

**Fanny**

.....Elyse Hultgren\*

**Becky Felderman**

..... Mary Van Nest

**Aaron Greenspan**

.....Rick Kabialis\*

**Esther**

..... Marybeth Stork\*\*

**Hymie (as a boy)**

..... Jack McDermott\*\*

**Harry Engel**

.....Dan Marema

**Sadie**

.....Julie Knoch

**Irving Tashman**

.....Gonzo Schexnayder

**Benjamin Brownstein**

..... William FitzGerald

**Myron Engel**

.....Edward W. Wavak

**Hymie (as a young man)**

.....Erik Jaworski\*\*

**Annie**

.....Martha Niles

**Hymie Tashman**

..... Jimmy Woulfe\*\*

\*new to our stage

\*\*CTWS student

**Setting**

The action takes place in Becky Felderman's home, on the lower East Side of New York

**ACT I**

Scene 1: December, 1910

Scene 2: January, 1911

Scene 3: March, 1911

**Intermission**

**ACT II**

Scene 1: April, 1917

Scene 2: November, 1918

**Intermission**

**Act III**

Scene 1: November, 1931

**Acknowledgments**

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The Fruit Store, Western Springs and Hinsdale, for providing apple cider at cost with free delivery.

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The photographs illustrating this program are from The Theatre of Western Springs' archives.



*I Remember Mama*  
TWS, December, 1951

## **Director's Corner**

*By Jack Phillips*

In all the recent discussions about immigration, we tend to forget that, unless we are Native American, we all came from somewhere else. This is the story of one immigrant family's first twenty years in this country at the beginning of the last century. They all struggled to get here and faced the hardships of living in a new world as the world was changing around them. Becky Felderman is a single mother raising four children by any means she can find. Her family's story is the story of many others who sought America as a way to reach a better life and a freedom they never had. As they try to adjust to the demands of the new world, the children change faster than their mother. Yet it is Becky that somehow keeps the family together and moving forward regardless of what happens.

We thought this was a perfect play to end our seventy-nine years of continuously producing live theatre in Western Springs. Thank you for supporting us, and thank you for attending tonight.

## **Dramaturg's Diary**

*By Dave Bremer*

### **The Mosaic**

If you were to find yourself in New York in 1911, you would notice the sounds: steam whistles, car horns, horses neighing, street vendors, paper boys, the rumble of elevated trains, the chug of locomotives, the sounds of construction, the whistles of traffic police. You would notice the smells: coal smoke, gasoline exhaust, horse manure, burning garbage, food cooking, and the effluvia from factories, dirty steam. You would

notice the city. It was beginning to be very recognizable as the classic and modern New York. The tall buildings and the canyon effect they made on the street environment would be noticeable. Traffic had by then become a problem, and combined with the still plentiful horse traffic, it would have been quite a challenge to navigate. You would overhear the voices and the accents and the still occasional broken English or the foreign languages. You would notice the earnest and rushed faces.

From 1860 to 1911, over 30 million immigrants had come to America. They spread throughout the continent, yet New York was ground zero for the landing of most of them. Many stayed there. They found small enclaves in the city, which by 1911 had grown into large communities within the larger city: Irish, Jewish, Italian, German, Czech, Hungarian, Chinese, Scandinavian, Middle Eastern, Polish, and Russian. For many, the first stop was life in the tenements; buildings crammed with one or two room apartments, a cold-water tap, and toilet facilities shared with the whole building. Many people first found employment in some "Home Business" in a tenement. In 1911, you could have found people making caps, scarves, repairing shoes, stitching leather. Most of the cigars smoked in the U.S. in 1911 were made in such tenement businesses in New York. People operated pushcarts to peddle their wares or sell food. Still, the dream was to move up and out. To assimilate, to become an American, for one's children to be American.

For those who could move up and out, the first step was an actual apartment, one with several rooms

and its own bathroom. Families moved together and pooled money to pay the rent. People took in extra boarders to help out, usually behind the landlord's back. One thriving business was to give English lessons. The dream in America; work hard! (Horatio Alger and his gospel found in *Strive and Succeed* was a best seller.) Get an education. Assimilate, assimilate, assimilate! Yet, wages were still meager then. The average factory laborer worked 10-hour days and 6-day weeks. The average number of authorized holidays per year: two. Much work was paid by the piece; and when wages were hourly, one would get docked even for time going to the bathroom.

There were just over one million women in America who were employed in unskilled trades, yet only ten percent of the secretaries and administrative assistants in the country were women. Women who could rise to a place where they could own a business usually had to have a male partner who was the front for the business even if the woman was the major or senior partner.

This was the age of Ragtime. It was the high water mark for publishing sheet music. Most every household had some type of musical instrument. Radio was still just wireless telegraphy, so people would sing at home or at parties. Even the financially strapped would find a way to provide for some sort of musical instruction for members of their family. Almost every tavern had a piano, and sometimes a paid person to play it. There were beer gardens in the neighborhoods and concerts in Central Park and other open places. Celebrity was a different thing then. Entertainers who toured

the country, Broadway stars, the rich, famous, powerful or the royal were the superstars of the day. Musicals, music halls, vaudeville — all were popular entertainments. Lyricists and composers would compose songs for particular stars and even write musical shows around a star or a song. Tin Pan Alley was becoming a booming industry. For a song writer to “sell” a song to a star meant big success. Motion pictures were in their infancy. The move from Chicago and New Jersey — the original homes for the industry — had started. Jewish immigrants, men who had worked hard, learned to take risks and look forward in the process, took the new business to Los Angeles for the cheap land, predictable weather, and variable terrain. These men, with names like Mayer, Selznick, Warner, Sennett, and Goldwyn were about to start something, which would become known as “The Studio System.”

Still for the working man trying to move up, the big issues were decent pay, safe working conditions, and a forty hour work week with compensation for injuries while working. And along with the working people came the social thinkers, the revolutionaries, and the idealists who had been exiled from their homeland. They mixed into the already risen Labor movement in the U.S. In 1911 New York, this meant the Garment Industry. It was a time of both foment and opportunity.

You would notice something else all around you. It was the Hope. Everything was better here, even the hard times, because tomorrow, it would change, or tomorrow you could reinvent yourself, or tomorrow you could move on.

## ***Production Credits***

### **Director**

Jack Phillips

### **Technical Director**

Thad Hallstein

### **Stage Manager**

Darla Goudeau

### **Assistant Stage**

### **Manager**

Bonnie Hilton

### **Costume Designers**

Amanda Ragan,

Patti Roeder

### **Costume Crew**

Corinne Alexander, Ann

Marie Hultgren, Kelli

Kopp, Kathy Kuser,

Laura Leonardo Ownby,

Ginny Richardson

### **Dramaturg**

Dave Bremer

### **Hospitality Chair**

Carol Clarke

### **Hospitality Crew**

Cheryl Brand, Ruth

Cekal, Brian Centers,

Penny Choice, Mary

Clarke, Philip Conway,

Nell Fisher-Agnew Tom

Frohnapfel, Bonnie

Hilton, Karen Holbert,

Dennis Hudson,

Andrea and Roland

Imes, Donna, Eleanor

and Rich Kanak, Heinz

Karplus, Bill and Joyce

Love, Arlene Page,

Katie Pecis, Adam

and Margo Rickert,

Joan Roeder, Pat Rotz,

Donna Sauers, Jackie

Schwab, Mary Smith,

Liz Steele, Carol Suda,

Merrilyn Tomchaney,

Charron and Dick Traut,

Susan Waldschmidt,

Gini Welch,

Sue Wisthuff

### **Lighting Designer**

Cal Turner

### **Lighting Crew**

Linda Bugielski,

Angelee Johns Favoino,

Paul Roach,

Cathy Van Horne

### **Makeup Designers**

Peggy Carlson,

Martha Niles

### **Makeup Crew**

Linda Auer, Cindy

Blaszak, Lori D'Asta,

Mary Ellen Druyan,

Kelli Kopp, Mari Lamp,

Stephanie Williams

### **Properties Designer**

Patricia Huth

### **Properties Crew**

Andy, Ed and Nancy

Belda, Tom Gess, Mark

Cunningham, Mike

Huth, Jim Kopp,

Kevin Slattery

### **Set Construction Chair**

Rob Snyder

### **Set Construction Crew**

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Jon Allen, Anne Cahill,

Phillip Conway, Bob

Erck, Mark Favoino,

Harry Hultgren, Mike

Huth, Jon Mills, Tom

Squillo, Amanda Ragan,

Paul Roach, Bill Rotz,

Peter Sonnenberg

### **Set Designer**

Michael Huth

### **Set Dresser**

Mary O'Dowd

### **Set Painting Chair**

Rob Nardini

### **Set Painting Crew**

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Cindy Blaszak, Carol

Clarke, Mike Huth,

Kelli Kopp, John

Mueller, Jack Phillips,

Rich Ptacek, Amanda

Ragan, Fred Sauers,

Jackie Weiher Siwek,

Rob Snyder, Peter

Sonnenberg

### **Sound Designer**

Jack Calvert

### **Sound Crew**

Tom Frohnapfel,

Betsy Stiles

### **Box Office Chair**

Mary Ellen Schutt

### **Box Office Crew**

Karen Arnold, Ed

Barrow, Susan

Cardamone, Danna

Durkin, Lori B. Proksa,

Carol Suda, Sue

Valenta, Marilyn Wilson

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Bill Wilson

### **House Managers**

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Choice, Karen Holbert,

Susan Hannigan,

Karla Hudson, Mike

Janke, Bill Love, Jon

Mills, Jackie Schwab,

Don Strueber, Marilyn

Weiher, Denny Wise

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