

BROADWAY AND BEYOND



THE TEMPATATIONS
AIN'T TOO PROUD



THE
NATIONAL THEATRE
FOUNDATION

Ain't Too Proud – The Life and Times of the Temptations

The National Theatre

June 17–22, 2025

Book by Dominique Morisseau

Music and Lyrics from

the Legendary Motown Catalog

Based on the book entitled

The Temptations by Otis Williams

Music by arrangement with

Sony/ATV Music Publishing

Choreographed by Sergio Trujillo

Directed by Des McAnuff

Packet prepared by Dramaturg Leayne C. Dempsey

AIN'T TOO PROUD is the electrifying new musical that follows The Temptations' extraordinary journey from the streets of Detroit to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. With their signature dance moves and unmistakable harmonies, they rose to the top of the charts creating an amazing 42 Top Ten Hits with 14 reaching number one. The rest is history — how they met, the groundbreaking heights they hit and how personal and political conflicts threatened to tear the group apart as the United States fell into civil unrest. This thrilling story of brotherhood, family, loyalty and betrayal is set to the beat of the group's treasured hits, including "My Girl," "Just My Imagination," "Get Ready," "Papa Was a Rolling Stone" and so many more.



For almost 200 years, The National Theatre has occupied a prominent position on Pennsylvania Avenue—"America's Main Street"—and played a central role in the cultural and civic life of Washington, DC. Located a stone's throw from the White House and having the Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site as its "front yard," The National Theatre is a historic, cultural presence in our Nation's Capital and the oldest continuously operating enterprise on Pennsylvania Avenue. The non-profit National Theatre Foundation oversees the historic theatre and serves the DC community through three free outreach programs, Saturday Morning Live!, Community Stage Connections, and Teens Behind the Scenes. These programs provide the greater Washington area with access to high quality performing arts experiences while promoting and employing local and regional artists.

This guide was created for the Teens Behind the Scenes program. Teens Behind the Scenes is made possible thanks to the generosity of the Jacqueline Badger Mars Next Generation Fund at The National Theatre. Established by Jacqueline Badger Mars in 2022, the fund provides leadership support for The National Theatre Foundation's signature community programs and seeks to inspire future theatre artists and appreciators onstage, behind the scenes, and in the audience.

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KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

We are excited to welcome you to The National Theatre through The National Theatre Foundation's Teens Behind the Scenes program! Whether you're a new theatre-goer or a seasoned veteran, here are a few things to bear in mind.

WHAT WILL I BE SEEING?

The National Theatre has hosted many memorable productions. These days, the shows you are most likely to see here are national tours, many of which are derived from current or recent Broadway productions. In those cases, the touring version uses the same script, musical score, choreography, and direction as the Broadway original, while the production elements, such as the set and costumes, have been adapted so they can be transported across the country. The actors onstage are also traveling all over the country, often for a year at a time. In other words, the show you see in Washington, DC is the same show that folks in places like Seattle, Dallas, and Chicago will see, too. In addition to national tours, you may also see the occasional pre-Broadway tryout. This is when producers debut a show in a major city outside of New York to see how it plays in front of a paying audience, before making the jump to Broadway.

HOW CAN I MAXIMIZE MY EXPERIENCE?

Thankfully, going to the theatre is a much more relaxed and inclusive experience than it used to be. However, there are still expectations for what makes a good theatre-going experience for everyone. Here are some tips for getting the most out of your experience.

- **Arrive early and let the staff help you get settled.**
This gives you time to grab refreshments and use the restroom. If you are late and the show has already started, you may have to wait to be seated. Keep an eye out for the ushers: they are to help you.
- **Respect the space and your fellow audience members.**
Consume any food and drink you bring into the auditorium carefully. Keep the aisles and rows clear by putting your belongings under your seat. Be mindful of your neighbor's personal bubble. If you must talk during a performance, keep it to a whisper or briefly share your thoughts during laughter or applause.
- **Take a break from your screen.** Cellphones and tablets shine brightly in the dark and their noises can distract from the experience. Be sure to silence your devices and put them away, or better yet, turn them off. An exception is a closed captioning app like GalaPro, which you can use on your device.
- **Show your appreciation.** Performers can tell if you are tuned into the show, so if you enjoyed the big musical number, applaud and cheer! If something shocks or surprises you, gasp! Laugh if the moment calls for it; nothing kills a comedy like a quiet auditorium! While courtesy is important, it shouldn't stop you from having a good time.

Know that downright disruptive behavior, such as excessive talking, prolonged use of phones and devices, or any form of abuse, will not be tolerated. When in doubt, consult with members of the house staff and heed their instructions: they are in charge during the show.

More than anything, we want you to know that we're glad you're here.
Enjoy your experience at The National Theatre!

GO BEHIND THE SCENES WITH OUR TBTS WEBINAR SERIES

The TBTS Webinar series is a collection of interviews with emerging and leading theatre professionals, each conducted by one of our TBTS Dramaturgs. The artists share their pathways into the profession, what their creative process entails, and what young artists like yourself can learn from their experience. Check out this summer's offerings, featuring the artistic director of one of America's leading regional theatres, a prolific actor and teacher, a Tony-nominated lighting designer, a New York-based stage manager, a composer and music director, and a professor and leading access specialist!



The National Theatre Foundation presents

BEHIND THE SCENES OF MUSIC DIRECTION
featuring Kristin Stowell

Interviewed by Lindsey R. Barr
in June 2024



The National Theatre Foundation presents

BEHIND THE SCENES OF STAGE MANAGEMENT
featuring Maria De Barros


Interviewed by Lindsey R. Barr
in June 2024



The National Theatre Foundation presents

BEHIND THE SCENES OF LIGHTING DESIGN
featuring Amith Chandrashaker

Interviewed by Leayne Dempsey
in June 2024



The National Theatre Foundation presents

BEHIND THE SCENES OF DRAMATURGY
featuring Samuel Yates

Interviewed by Leayne Dempsey
in July 2024



The National Theatre Foundation presents

BEHIND THE SCENES OF ACTING
featuring Ro Boddie

Interviewed by Leayne Dempsey
in July 2024



The National Theatre Foundation presents

BEHIND THE SCENES OF ARTISTIC DIRECTION
featuring Hana S. Sharif

Interviewed by Lindsey R. Barr
in August 2024



WELCOME FROM THE DRAMATURG

Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations tells the story of one of the defining voices of R&B—and one of the most successful vocal groups of our time. This production captures both The Temptations' journey to fame and the essence of their live performances.

In this summer packet, you will get a closer look at this catalog musical, hear from members of the creative team (including band member Otis Williams himself), and enjoy a summer playlist filled with grooves perfect for a relaxing day.

I hope this packet gives you a deeper understanding of the genius behind *Ain't Too Proud* and the enduring legacy of The Temptations. Continue exploring the world of theatre and listening to the music that inspires you.

Have an amazing summer!

Written by: Leayne Dempsey, Dramaturg



The “classic five” lineup of The Temptations. Clockwise from top: David Ruffin, Melvin Franklin, Otis Williams, Eddie Kendricks, and Paul Williams.

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