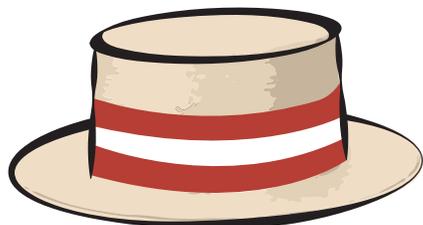
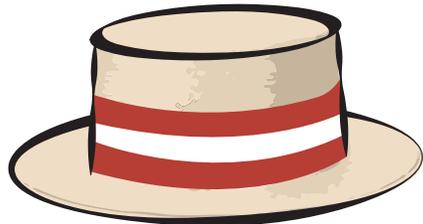
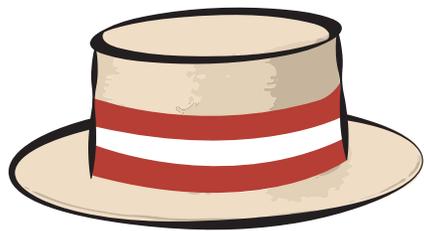


GOODSPEED MUSICALS

AUDIENCE INSIGHTS



The Fabulous LIPITONES

NOT SO

A Traditional Barbershop Quartet

THE FABULOUS LIPITONES

The Norma Terris Theatre
May 9 - June 2, 2013

WRITTEN BY
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&
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The Fabulous LIPITONES

Audience Insights TABLE OF CONTENTS

Show Synopsis.....	3
Character Summary.....	4
Meet the Writers.....	5
An Interview with John Markus.....	6
Sikhism.....	7
The Barbershop Quartet.....	9
Resources.....	11

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www.goodspeed.org/pages/guides

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SHOW SYNOPSIS

It's the day of the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America Toombs County semi-finals. The members of The Fabulous Lipitones, Howard, Wally, Phil and Andy, are performing one of their favorite songs, "Hello, My Baby", when suddenly Andy has a heart attack on stage.

After Andy's funeral, the group meets at Howard's home to brainstorm ideas for the future of The Fabulous Lipitones now that they are lacking a leading man. As they argue, Ralph from Gas-N-Git auto mechanics calls Howard to tell him that his car is repaired and ready to be picked up. While Ralph is on speakerphone, Wally hears someone singing in the background. He asks Ralph who it is and Ralph complains that it is his new mechanic, Bob, who never stops singing. Wally invites Bob to audition for The Fabulous Lipitones.

The next night, Bob arrives at Howard's house to audition for the group. He is a young, Middle-Eastern man who is visibly pleased to be there. The men are surprised by Bob's ethnicity and are taken aback when he takes off his coat and has a Kirpan hanging around his shoulder and chest. Bob explains that carrying the small, curved, and decorated dagger is a tradition for followers of the Sikh religion.

At rehearsal the next day, Ralph calls to inform Bob that Gas-N-Git got busted by Federal Marshalls for employing illegal immigrants. Bob explains to the group that his work visa isn't completely legal and that the United States is not what he expected so he wants to return to Pakistan anyway. He is about to go back to his apartment to wait to be arrested for semi-illegally working at Ralph's garage, but stops when an ambulance approaches Howard's home. The ambulance came for Howard's wife, Maris, who has fallen ill.

Several days later, Phil, Howard and Wally are at Calhoun's Funeral Parlor. There is a picture of Maris on an easel. Bob shows up to pay his respects and explains that the police still hadn't come to arrest him. The group joins together to sing Maris's favorite song "The Story of the Rose" and Phil notices that they are beginning to sound like a real quartet.

After some time has passed, the group is ready to put their barbershop talents to work. Bob, Howard, Wally and Phil are backstage waiting to perform. They are all nervous as they are to follow The Sons of Pitches, one of the best barbershop groups around.



*Danny Rutigliano, Wally Dunn, D.C. Anderson, and Rohan Kymal.
Photo by Diane Sobolewski.*

Their time to perform has come but Bob expresses that he can't go on stage. He explains that he did not realize that the other groups and the audience completely lack diversity. He doesn't want to go out on stage and be judged by, as he puts it, a "room of Phil's." Phil gives the group an unexpected pep talk and encourages them to take the stage.

After their performance, the announcer explains that the Society for the Preservation of Barbershop Harmony Championships has their first-ever tie! To break the tie for first place, The Sons of Pitches and The Fabulous Lipitones must each sing small pieces of several numbers that they choose from an envelope. They will then conclude with fifteen seconds of a song of their choice. The two groups sing their hearts out; and for the final song choice, The Fabulous Lipitones choose one of the songs from Bob's culture, "Gora Gora Rang." At the completion of the song the men hold out a beautiful four part harmony and throw off their hats.

CHARACTER SUMMARY



PHIL RIZZARDI:
The owner of “Phil’s Eternally Fit” gym and tanning salon. Phil is harsh, opinionated, and prejudiced toward those who are different from him.



HOWARD DUNPHY:
An accountant at The Purina Dog Chow Processing Plant located on the outskirts of town. Howard has trouble standing up for himself in difficult situations. Howard was separated from his wife until he took her back and is now her primary caretaker.



BABA MATI DAS (BOB):
A Sikh twenty-something year old man from Pakistan who is a mechanic at Phil’s Gas-N-Git. Bob came to the United States to make money so he could support his family who live in Pakistan. He is optimistic, likeable, genuine, and has a beautiful singing voice.



WALLY SMITH:
The head pharmacist of an independent drugstore in Tooms County. Wally was named “Druggist to Watch” on the White Coat Love dating website and now he receives more female attention than he ever has before.

MEET THE WRITERS

JOHN MARKUS

Emmy Award-winning writer John Markus began his career in high school supplying jokes about his rural Ohio hometown to Broadway columnist Earl Wilson. After graduating from Stanford University he moved to Los Angeles where he landed a job writing a revival of the animated "Mighty Mouse." Accepted into Paramount's apprentice program, he was a staff writer on "Working Stiffs," a sitcom starring Michael Keaton and Jim Belushi.

After an assignment on Paramount's "Taxi", Markus joined the original writing staff of "The Cosby Show." He became the series' supervising producer after six episodes and was promoted to co-executive producer for the second season. He remained as show runner with the acclaimed series until 1990. During his tenure, he wrote or co-wrote 67 episodes, earning an Emmy, a Peabody and two Humanitas prizes.

He also co-created the Cosby spin-off "A Different World," which ran for six seasons on NBC.

Markus next co-created critically acclaimed "Lateline" with Al Franken for Paramount Network Television and NBC.

He was consulting producer on "The Larry Sanders Show," co-writing the Emmy-nominated Ellen Degeneres episode, "Ellen: Is She Or Isn't She?" His play "Sons of Liberty," a prototype for an NBC television series, was produced at the American Place Theater and directed by Jerry Zaks.

Most recently, he created and executive produced the half-hour comedy "Kristin", a Markusfarms production in association with Paramount Network Television for NBC-TV.

MARK ST. GERMAIN

Mark has written the plays *Camping with Henry and Tom* (Outer Critics Circle Award and Lucille Lortel Award), *Out of Gas on Lover's Leap* and *Forgiving Typhoid Mary* (Time Magazine's "Year's Ten Best"), *Ears on a Beetle* and *The God Committee*, all published by Samuel French and Dramatist Play Service.

With Randy Courts, he has written the musicals *The Gifts of the Magi*, *Johnny Pye* and *the Foolkiller*, winner of an AT&T "New Plays For The Nineties Award" and *Jack's Holiday* at Playwrights Horizons.

Mark's musical, *Stand By Your Man*, The Tammy Wynette Story was created for Nashville's Ryman Theater.

Television credits include Writer and Creative Consultant for "The Cosby Show." He co-wrote the screenplay for Carroll Ballard's Warner Brothers film, *Duma*. Mark directed and co-produced the upcoming documentary, *My Dog An Unconventional Love Story*, featuring, Richard Gere, Glenn Close and Edward Albee among many others.

Mark has written the children's book, *Three Cups*.

He is an alumnus of New Dramatists, where he was given the Joe A. Callaway Award, a member of the Dramatists Guild, the Writer's Guild East and a Board Member of the Barrington Stage Company. He was awarded the "New Voices In American Theatre" award at the William Inge Theatre Festival.



John Markus and Mark St. Germain.
Photo by Diane Sobolewski.

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN MARKUS

What is your vision for *The Fabulous Lipitones*? Tell us about your inspirations.



JOHN MARCUS: Growing up in London, Ohio (pop. 6,000), I have held on to a nostalgia for the traditional leanings of the Midwest. My family is Jewish—the only in that town—but I played clarinet in small bands at Methodist church socials and Presbyterian cake walks. As an “other” who became a comedy writer, I cannot help but embrace and consider the darker lining of these traditions. The idea of enjoying while at the same time challenging everything old-fashioned appeals to me. Our vision was to celebrate, and yet shake up, the cultural comfort zone of these characters.

Talk a bit about the collaboration and how the show came about.

JM: Mark and I first worked together twenty years ago when I brought him in to write episodes of “The Cosby Show.” From the get-go, he struck me as a writer’s writer, someone capable of hatching the big idea, with the discipline and prodigious gifts to execute it. We’ve collaborated on and off over the years, but two years ago he began semi-harassing me with phone calls broadly outlining a piece set in the world of competition barbershop, centered around a quartet losing its prized member. I didn’t see it then, but the calls kept coming. To get them to stop, I drove to his home in Pound Ridge where we parked ourselves at a picnic table in his backyard and fleshed out what became *The Fabulous Lipitones*. Writing this play with him has been one of the most joyous creative experiences of my career. But I do miss getting those calls.

What stage of development is the show in now?

JM: Mark and I are absolutely thrilled to be developing our musical at this storied theatre company. We’ve been working the script for eighteen months now, and the story keeps producing opportunities to deepen its intent. From here, we hope to see the creative goal posts, so to speak. With director Gordon Greenberg and the top-notch cast and crew that will assemble, we hope to sharpen the play and find all the funny. My work in television has indoctrinated me to the World of Rewrite, and the atmosphere at Goodspeed will help us fully realize the play. Who knows where *The Fabulous Lipitones* will travel, but my hope is that, with this pedigree, our musical can eventually be enjoyed all over the country. Especially in places like the town in which I grew up.

Tell us what you hope to accomplish here at Goodspeed.

JM: My training is to never spoon feed an audience with messages. Our goal is to make an audience laugh at the characters and situations, and that they’ll find both to be truthful. I would hope that, leaving the theater, they’ll feel something they innately understand—that, even though the road to finding harmony with others can be bumpy and discouraging, it is nearly always worth it. And for me, I want to subtly suggest that deep down we are all “others,” who yearn only to belong.

SIKHISM



Guru Nanak

In *The Fabulous Lipitones*, the leading man of a barbershop quartet passes away and the remaining members of the group are given the option to replace him with a Sikh man named Baba Mati Das, Bob for short. The group is reluctant because Bob's way of life is so different from American culture. However, after spending a little time with him, they learn about Bob's beliefs and gladly accept him into the group.

SIKH ORIGINS

The founder of Sikhism was Guru Nanak. Around 1500 C.E., he began preaching a message of love and understanding and passed this message on to 9 other gurus. In 1708, just prior to his passing, the 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, proclaimed that Sikhs no longer needed a living Guru and that they could follow the scriptures of the Gurus before him for guidance. As a result, the Sikh people now follow the Eternal



Sri Guru Granth Sahib

Guru of the Sikhs, or Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The Sri Guru Granth Sahib is comprised of writings from the 10 original Gurus and includes writings from Saints of other faiths that were in agreement with Sikh Gurus. The writings stretch from 1469 to 1708 and they include answers to Sikh religion and moral questions.

SIKH BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS

One of the main beliefs of Sikhism is to wear or display symbols of faith, also known as the Five K's. Included in the Five K's is the Kirpan. When Bob meets Howard, Phil, and Wally, they see his Kirpan and are caught off guard by it because they do not realize what the decorated dagger—along with many other things—mean in Sikhism. As the group continues to get to know Bob, they realize that there is more to Sikhism than they originally assumed.



Kirpan

THE FIVE K'S

When the 10th Guru died, he created the Khalsa which was an order for men and women who have undergone a Sikh baptism and follow the Sikh Code of Conduct and Conventions to physically display items/attributes of faith. These items are known as the Five K's, or Kakkars, and include the following:

- 1) Kirpan: a ceremonial dagger that symbolizes a Sikh's duty to defend those in danger
- 2) Kesh: uncut hair that symbolizes a respect for the perfection of God's creation. Hair is required to be covered by a turban or a scarf
- 3) Kanga: a wooden comb that Sikhs use twice daily and is to be kept in the hair at all times. Combing of the hair represents maintaining God's creation with grace and that the Sikh life should be tidy and organized
- 4) Kachha: a specific style of cotton undergarments that symbolizes self-respect and the mental control over lust. Lust is one of the five evils in Sikh culture
- 5) Kara: a metal bracelet that reminds Sikhs that whatever a person uses their hands for has to be in promise and dedication to advice given by the Guru. The circle represents a Sikh life that is never-ending

THE FIVE VICES

Sikhs are also required to avoid the Five Vices, or panj, which are the five major weaknesses of the human personality that can cause obstruction in a Sikh's moral and spiritual life. The Five Thieves include the following:

- 1) Kam: lust
- 2) Krodh: rage
- 3) Lobh: greed
- 4) Moh: attachment
- 5) Ahankar: ego

It is believed that if someone of the Sikh faith can overcome these, they will achieve complete salvation.

SIKHISM

GOD AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Sikhs believe in a monotheistic God. They believe that God is without form or gender, that all Sikhs have direct access to God, that meaningless religious rituals and superstitions are valueless to Sikhs, and that a full life is lived as part of a community by living honestly and caring for others.

Sikhs believe in equality of all men and women in their communities. Any learned and respected member of the community can read from the holy scriptures and lead a congregation in prayers and ceremonies.

RELIGIOUS CENTERS

Sikhism does not have one centralized location that is a mandatory place of pilgrimage or worship. The most historic religious center, which holds the Sri Guru Granth Sahib and is the most primary gate to the Guru, or the Gurdwara, is called the Harmandir Sahib, or the Golden Temple. It is located in Amritsar, Punjab, India.

SIKHISM TODAY

Today, Sikhism is the world's fifth largest religion with an estimated more than 20 million followers worldwide and an estimated more than 150,000 followers in the United States. There are Sikh communities all over the United States but the largest and oldest communities exist on the east and west coasts. The majority of the members of the Sikh population in the U.S. are considered to be citizens and most have made the U.S. their permanent homes.

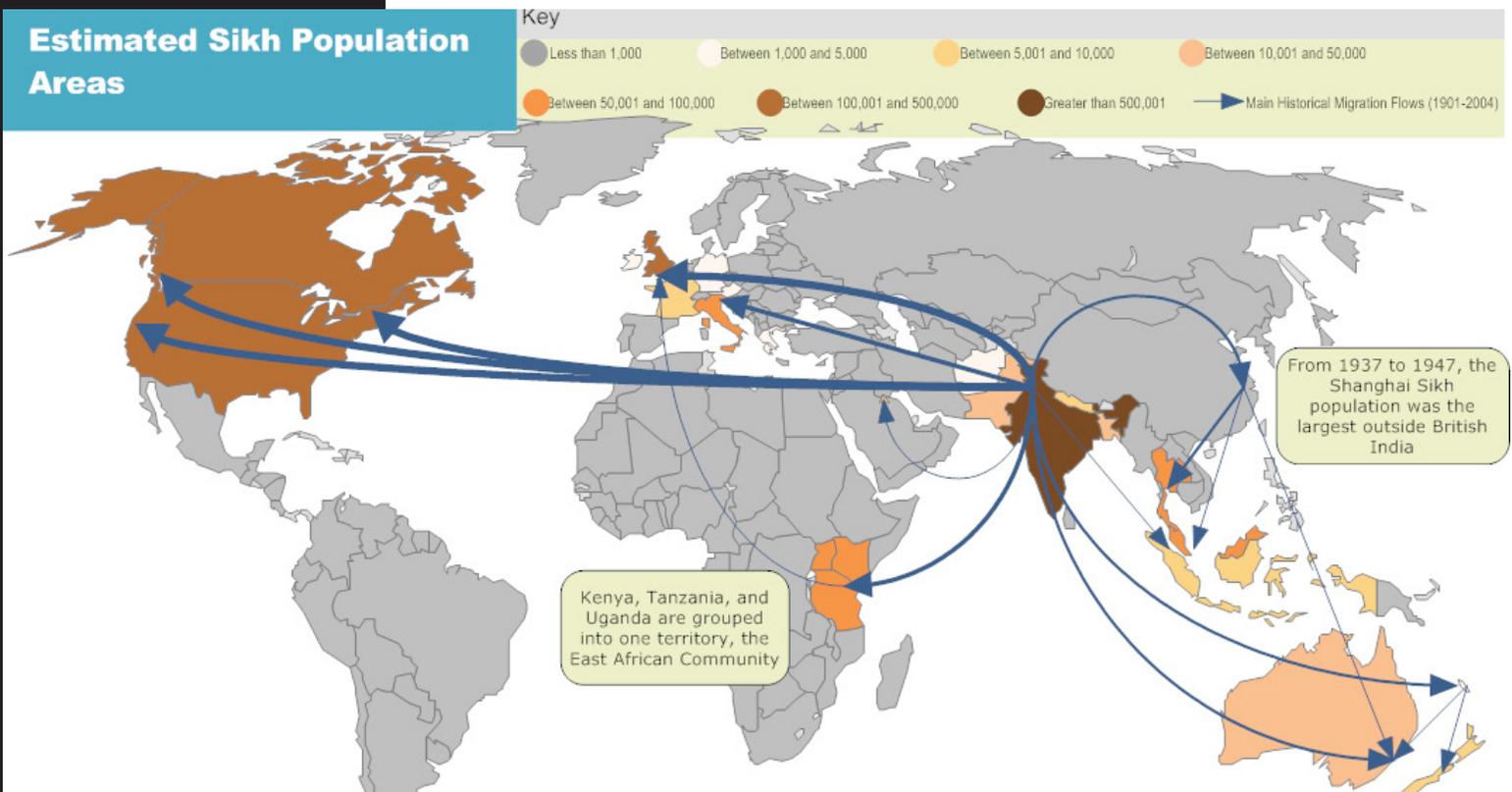
After the attack on The World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, the Sikh community immediately began experiencing discrimination in the United States. As a result of the prejudice, many Sikhs responded by working on domestic anti-terror policies for the United States.

Today, Sikhs strive to maintain equal respect and acceptance of all other ways of life and beliefs. Similarly, Sikhs support equality, freedom of religion, and service to their own communities as well as throughout the world.



The Golden Temple

Estimated Sikh Population Areas



Source: Wikimedia Commons. Chart constructed using data by Johnson and Barrett (2004). Quantifying alternate futures of religion and religions by Todd M. Johnson and David B. Barrett (2004).

THE BARBERSHOP QUARTET

THE BEGINNINGS

Barbershop is a type of singing that is characterized by a cappella four-part harmonizing with voice parts typically in tenor 1, tenor 2, bass, and baritone. Although it did not acquire the name, "barbershop," until the early 1900s, its origins are traced to England and it spread to North America in the 19th century. In the United States, the style was influenced by the hymns, psalms, folk songs, and improvisational singing by African Americans in bars, barbershops, and parlors.

In the 1840s, barbershop groups started appearing in minstrel shows at popular vaudeville venues. It was at this time that groups like The American Four and The Hamtown Students began to form.

TIN PAN ALLEY AND BARBERSHOP

Between the 1880s and 1890s, many music publishing companies opened in New York City on West 28th Street between 6th Avenue and Broadway to create Tin Pan Alley. Tin Pan Alley was a term coined by journalist Monroe Rosenfeld, who wrote several articles for the New York Herald expressing that the sound of multiple pianos playing simultaneously on 28th Street was similar to that of crashing tin pans. Musicians aimed to attract the listening ears of consumers passing by to boost sales. Since these musicians frequently played newly released barbershop songs on Tin Pan Alley, vocal quartet

music grew in popularity and barbershop music sales significantly increased.

THE JAZZ AGE

In the 1920s, when the Jazz Age began in the United States, the new style of music was not conducive to the tight harmonies and tempos of barbershop songs. Jazz rhythms and melodies were vastly different from that of barbershop and this contrast led to a decline in the number of barbershop groups.



ROCKWELL'S "BARBERSHOP QUARTET"

On September 26, 1936, the cover of the Saturday Evening Post displayed Norman Rockwell's iconic painting titled "Barbershop Quartet." The painting was released a year after one of New York

DID YOU KNOW...

In 1910, the popular a cappella four-part harmony style of singing acquired the title, "barbershop" with the publication of the popular tune, "Play That Barbershop Chord."



CLICK HERE to watch a clip of Judy Garland singing "Play That Barbershop Chord" from the movie *In The Good Old Summertime*



THE BARBERSHOP QUARTET



Owen Clifton Cash

City's first barbershop competitions and it was later selected to be used as promotional art for the Society for Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Singing in America. This painting helped foster the popularity of barbershop singing in America; however, the style's resurgence was short-lived until Owen Clifton Cash and Rupert Hall met in 1938.

THE SOCIETY FOR PRESERVATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF BARBERSHOP SINGING IN AMERICA

In 1938, tax attorney, Owen Clifton Cash, from Tulsa, Oklahoma ran into fellow Tulsan, Rupert Hall on a chance trip in Kansas City. The two men quickly found a shared interest in vocal harmony and discussed the decline of barbershop as a result of the Jazz Age. Cash and Hall agreed to join forces to make barbershop popular again. As a result, they decided to invite their friends to a "Songfest" on the roof of the Tulsa Club on April 11, 1938. Twenty six men came to that first meeting and by the third meeting 150 men were attending.

With so many voices singing on one rooftop, the group caused a massive traffic jam in front of the Tulsa Club and became the interest of many local news stations. With the unexpected publicity and new visibility, the Society for Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Singing in America, now the Barbershop Harmony Society ignited a renewed interest in barbershop groups.

Today, the Barbershop Harmony Society hosts more than 5 nationwide competitions annually and welcomes youth, collegiate, professional, and senior groups to partake in four-part a cappella singing events.



CLICK HERE to listen as Society founder O.C. Cash talks with radio host Richard Levins and then-Society president Charlie Merrill about the first gathering in Tulsa Oklahoma, and the subsequent growth of Society quartets and chapters across America.



CLICK HERE to watch a brief history of Barbershop

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