



| New York City |

ON BROADWAY!

PART TWO

Questo mese andiamo a scoprire il mondo di Off-Broadway, ovvero delle produzioni a più basso costo, nate come reazione alle sfarzose lavorazioni "commerciali" di Broadway. Qui si prediligono le opere teatrali ai musical, le scenografie sono meno sontuose, il numero di posti a sedere è inferiore, ma gli spettacoli sono comunque incredibili e vi recitano volentieri le star di Hollywood! BY LORENZA CERBINI

B2 UPPER INTERMEDIATE

Above: Duane Allen Robinson (left) in an Off Broadway production of Shakespeare's *Othello*.

GLOSSARY

- 1 **actually:** davvero
- 2 **seats:** posti
- 3 **they don't mind:** a loro non dispiace
- 4 **kicked off:** prese il via
- 5 **rape trial:** processo per stupro
- 6 **perceived:** percepito
- 7 **outlet:** sfogo

DO NOT MISS...

- 1 **darkness:** oscurità
- 2 **restless:** irrequieti
- 3 **stray from one another:** si allontanano

It could be a musical, a play, or a comedy. A visitor to New York often hears the terms "Off Broadway" and "Off Off Broadway," but what do they actually¹ mean? Decades ago, an Off Broadway production was one outside the theatre district. It was outside the "box" that extended northwards from 40th to 54th Street, and westwards from Sixth Avenue to Eighth Avenue. This "box" included Times Square and 42nd Street.

BY DEFINITION

Today an Off Broadway production is defined not by its location, but by the number of seats² in the theatre. The definition of "Off Broadway" is a theatre with a seating capacity between 100 and 499. An "Off Off Broadway" theatre is even smaller, with a seating capacity of under 100.

STOMP

There are dozens of Off Broadway and Off Off Broadway productions every year. Most run for a few days, but some last a lot longer. Take *Stomp* and the *Blue Man Group*, for example. *Stomp* is a percussion group (from England) that uses the human body and ordinary objects to create a physical theatre performance. It first opened in New York in 1995.

BIG NAMES

Stars like Al Pacino, Claire Danes and America Ferrera love to perform in Off Broadway productions. They don't mind³ working for small companies: on the contrary, it offers them a welcome opportunity to interact with a "real audience." Recently, former boxer Mike Tyson went on stage with a solo show called *The Undisputed Truth*. After a limited summer 2012 engagement on Broad-



DO NOT MISS...

Totally Tubular Time Machine

A new pop musical featuring hit songs from the '80s to today. A talented cast of "celebrity pop stars" perform great hits live: Madonna, Michael Jackson, Lady Gaga and more.

Theatre: Culture Club
20 W. 39th St.
www.cultureclub.com

The Spook Show: House of Ghostly Haunts

A celebration of the strange, macabre and the fantastical. This show ends in 10 minutes of complete darkness⁴. No one is admitted under the age of seven.

Theatre: Canal Park Playhouse
508 Canal St.
www.canalparkplayhouse.com

Cronica de Una Muerte Anunciada

This is an adaptation by Fabio Rubiano of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's story, "Chronicle of a Death Foretold."

Theatre: Gramercy Arts Theatre
138 E. 27th St.
www.repertorio.org

The Fantasticks

'The Fantasticks' tells the story of a young boy and girl who fall madly in love, but soon grow restless² and stray from one another³.

Theatre: Snapple Theater Center
1627 Broadway

How 2 B A New Yorker

'How 2 B A New Yorker' shows audiences how to develop the superior air that marks one as a true New Yorker, as opposed to a tourist.

Theatre: Sofia's
221 W. 46th St.
(Broadway and Eighth Ave)
www.sofiasny.com



way, Tyson took his show (which was produced by Adam Steck and directed by Spike Lee), on tour. The 10-week tour kicked off⁴ on February 12, 2013 at the Murat Theatre in Indianapolis (the scene of Tyson's famous rape trial⁵ in 1992) and visited 36 cities, including Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, and, of course, New York.

A LITTLE HISTORY

The Off-Broadway movement started in the 1950s, and was seen as a reaction to the "perceived⁶ commercialism" of Broadway, and provided an "outlet⁷ for a new generation" of creative artists. The first great Off-Broadway musical was the revival of Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's classic, *The Threepenny Opera*, which starred Lotte Lenya, who won a Tony Award in 1956. Six decades later, Off-Broadway is still a vibrant place. ☺

Above and below: two scenes from *The Fantasticks*. Top: *Stomp*, which was originally from Brighton, England, has been playing on Off Broadway since 1995.

