

A  
**COMPANION**  
TO  
**THE GREAT  
GATSBY**



IVY TECH  
WALDRON AUDITORIUM  
September 5 - 22, 2019

WRITTEN BY  
**F. Scott Fitzgerald**

ADAPTED FOR  
THE STAGE BY  
**Simon Levy**

**REMEMBERING  
AND FORGETTING**

thē·mes·ter FALL 2019  
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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

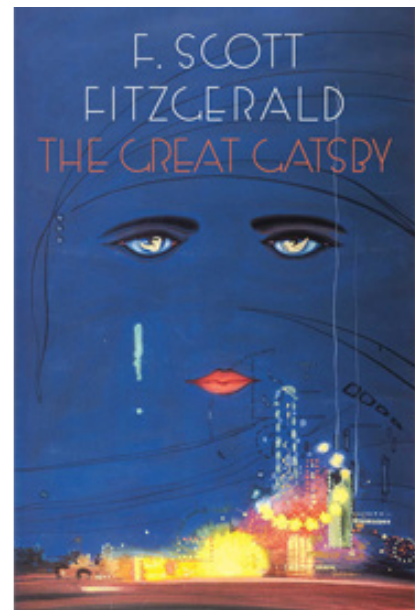
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by **Kate Galvin**, Artistic Director, Cardinal Stage

I have been captivated by the world of the Roaring 20's for many years. The fashion, the music, the parties - it all seems incredibly appealing and I've often wondered what my life would have been like if I'd lived during this time. But there's a current of desperation and denial that flows just beneath the champagne and gin. "New" women who worked, drank, smoke and dated whom they pleased, were one threat to the established social order. Ambitious young men who came from nothing and made a fortune on Wall Street were another. And ordinary citizens were demonstrating a blatant disregard for the law and mixing amongst a growing criminal class under the rule of Prohibition. The party that was the Roaring 20's was always going to be unsustainable, with American society dancing right up to the edge of The Great Depression.

Fitzgerald captured this world perfectly in *The Great Gatsby*. There a danger that creeps in around the edges of his story early on, and if we take the time to notice it, we'll come to realize that things are not going to end well. For this production, I was greatly inspired by Maureen Corrigan's book *So We Read On*, in which she examines the novel through the lens of a hard-boiled noir. Our characters are hurtling towards a tragic end, but they are too caught up in their own romances and intrigues to look up and see what's coming. As J.J. Hunsecker says in the classic film noir *The Sweet Smell of Success*, "My right hand hasn't seen my left hand in thirty years." Our characters don't want to know - remembering their responsibilities or failures will just ruin the party...or their marriage. Nick looks up too late, but once he does he can't forget.

*The Great Gatsby* presents us with a rich world of escapism at the same time it offers an opportunity for deep reflection - on ourselves, on society, on America. It's a dazzling cocktail of artistry that has earned its place in the canon of great American literature and I am thrilled to share this production with our community.

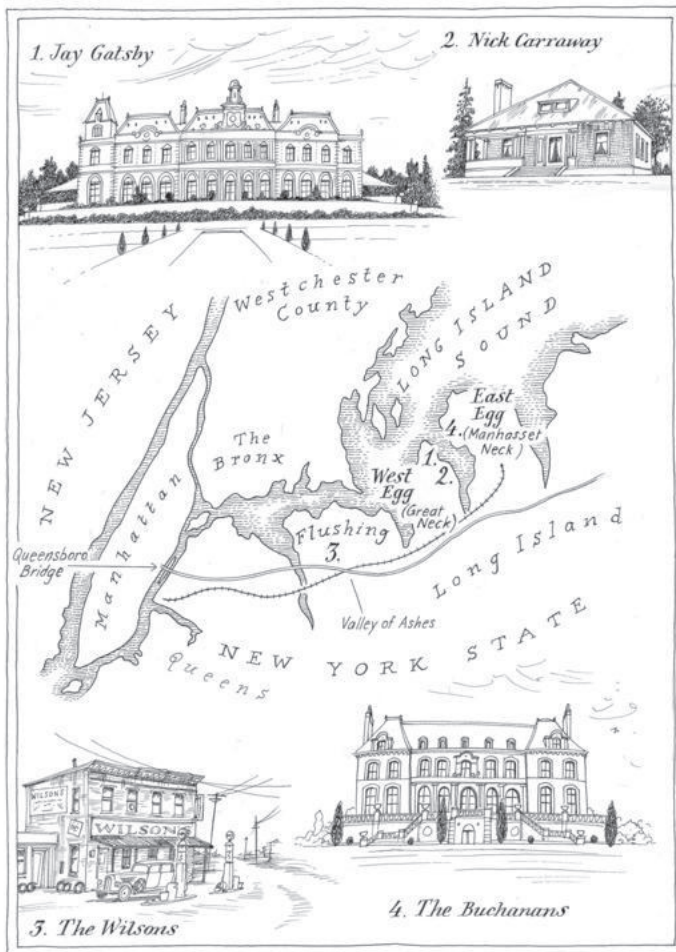


Francis Cugat's 1925 cover art for the original publication of *The Great Gatsby*, which served as inspiration for this production



*The Great Gatsby* author F. Scott Fitzgerald with his wife, the original flapper, Zelda Fitzgerald

# THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE GREAT GATSBY



The Great Gatsby Setting Map, by Regina Madanguit



Corona Ash Dump  
("The Valley of Ashes") in  
Flushing, Queens circa 1920

Hampstead House, a  
mansion on Long Island's  
"Gold Coast" that may have  
inspired Fitzgerald.



## RESOURCES

In addition to housing copies of F. Scott Fitzgerald's many writings, the Monroe County Public Library also has books, DVDs, and online resources that discuss his popular works and provide an analysis of the author and place his writings in the context of the time. What follows is a short bibliography highlighting several of these titles and a selection of Fitzgerald's fictional works.

### BOOKS:

#### ***A Short Autobiography*** by F. Scott Fitzgerald

(Adult Nonfiction - 800.92 Fitzgerald Fit)

A revelatory anthology of 19 personal essays and articles by the 20th-century literary master spans his career and includes a 1920 article written shortly after *This Side of Paradise* made him famous and a 1940 assessment of the times in which he lived.

#### ***Novels and Stories, 1920-1922*** by F. Scott Fitzgerald

(Adult Fiction - Fitzgerald)

At the outset of what he called "the greatest, the gaudiest spree in history," F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote the works that brought him instant fame, mastering the glittering aphoristic prose and keen social observation that would distinguish all his writing.

# REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING IN *THE GREAT GATSBY*

**Judith Brown**, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Associate Professor, Department of English, Indiana University

*The Great Gatsby* brims with memory: Jay Gatsby himself longs for that faraway summer when Daisy was his, and Nick Carraway takes pains to capture the story of his summer on West Egg. Both claim to remember a past that was better and more noble than the present.

We all know Gatsby's story: he's the self-made man who plans to return to an idealized past. "Can't repeat the past?" he exclaims. "Why of course you can!" Nick, too, as he recounts this story inhabits a past when Gatsby lives, superior to everyone else, despite the vastness of his deceptions.

Of course, both men remember a past that is imbued with no small amount of fiction. In fact, the heart of *The Great Gatsby* beats with the determination to remake memory, to improve the dull realities, and to lift one's own experience into something better, more glamorous, and therefore more illusory. "That's the whole burden of the novel--the loss of those illusions that give such color to the world so that you don't care whether things are true or false as long as they partake of the magical glory," Fitzgerald wrote to a friend. The novel is committed to forgetting in service to a more enchanted remembering, and yet even that must be lost as reality ultimately intrudes.

What reality do we know in *Gatsby*? Violence, accidents, crime, betrayal. Crass consumerism, the brute power of the wealthy, the fear of immigrants and other races, the empty allure of celebrity. But what does the novel ask us to remember? Instead, Nick wants us to believe in something more idealized, more intangible, and subtle.

In order to remember the dream, we must forget the ugly reality. The messiness of bodies, for example, and the reality of life lived on the dirty ground of desire, class politics, or sweating bodies. It is no accident that Myrtle Wilson, who is all grasping body, dies in the most gruesome of ways, her breast and mouth torn open. She is punished for her body: this novel needs to expunge her for her very embodiment. Instead Daisy—floating and ethereal Daisy, whose voice is like money—hovers untouched over the squalid lives of the poor.

This is really Nick's story, though, and his own attempt to recapture a past in which Gatsby, his disciplined and honest hero, lived. What must be forgotten, what Nick's story is most committed to forgetting then, is the trauma of his death. In the novel, we don't see his body, but rather the swirling arabesque of his blood in the pool. Nick writes from the Midwest where he has beaten his retreat, and where he can devote himself to his remembering. But his memory, the whole of the narrative he relates in *The Great Gatsby*, holds onto the enchantment—it's why we love the story still—as he returns us into a past that we will believe was better, more beautiful: and "so we beat on, boats against the current, borne ceaselessly into the past." It's a famous ending, one that tells us something about the pleasures of memory, even if improved a little by sadness, tinged with the "magical glory" that finds greatness, despite everything.

## BOOKS, continued

### ***So We Read on: How The Great Gatsby Came to Be and Why It Endures* by Maureen Corrigan**

(Adult Nonfiction - 813.52 Corrigan)

Offering a fresh perspective on what makes *Gatsby* great- and utterly unusual- *So We Read On* takes us into archives, high school classrooms, and even out onto the Long Island Sound to explore the novel's hidden depths.

### ***Tender is the Night* by F. Scott Fitzgerald**

(Adult Fiction - Fitzgerald)

A story of Americans on the French Riviera in the 1930s is a portrait of psychological disintegration as a wealthy couple supports friends and hangers-on financially and emotionally at the cost of their own stability.

### ***Trimalchio: An Early Version of the Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald**

(Adult Fiction - Fitzgerald)

This is the first edition ever published of *Trimalchio*, an early and complete version of F. Scott Fitzgerald's classic novel *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald wrote the novel as *Trimalchio* and submitted it to Maxwell Perkins, his editor at Scribner's, who had the novel set in type and sent the galleys to Fitzgerald in France. Fitzgerald then virtually rewrote the novel in galleys, producing the book we know as *The Great Gatsby*.

# FASHION OF THE ROARING 20'S

**Jason Orlenko**, *Costume Designer*

**“There was now nothing to distinguish a young woman from a schoolboy except perhaps her rouged lips and penciled eyebrows.”**

-James Laver, *Costume and Fashion: A Concise History*

In designing the costumes for *The Great Gatsby*, I do my best to take the historical information and utilize parts of it to render the period, while stylizing the overall look of the piece to appeal to our modern sensibilities, creating clothes for the actors to use as tools to help tell us the story.

The 1920s brought about a revolution in fashion not really seen before in modern times. Long hair and a curvy, hour-glass silhouette, which had been the feminine ideal for ages, was thrown out in favor of a slim, androgynous look. Short hair, bobbed to the chin and a long, lean, “boyish” shape was very in vogue. Also, for the first time, women bared and presented their legs in short skirts, sheer stockings and sky-high heels.

Emboldened by their new fashion, women of the time would go out on the town drinking and smoking in public, activities that would have been absolutely scandalous only a few years prior. The forward-thinking new women were called Flappers. The women portrayed in *The Great Gatsby* are often simplified to this term, however they each exemplify different modes of fashion on display.

Probably the closest to our modern idea of a Flapper is the character of Jordan Baker. She's an independent, partying, professional athlete. In our production she wears trousers, fabulous beaded party dresses at night, and elegant silk chiffon dresses in the day. *(continued)*

The Great  
Gatsby



## DVDs

### ***The Great Gatsby***

(Adult Audiovisual - Great)

In 1920s Long Island, a mysterious American millionaire's efforts to recapture the sweetheart of his youth result in tragedy.

### ***The Great Gatsby: Midnight in Manhattan***

(Adult Audiovisual - 800.92 Fitzgerald Great)

This documentary was produced to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the publication of *The Great Gatsby* on April 10th, 1925. “Midnight in Manhattan” explores the dark, turbulent life and creative spirit of *Gatsby's* writer, F. Scott Fitzgerald. It covers his college days at Princeton as well as his unsuccessful marriage to Zelda Sayre who eventually was diagnosed with schizophrenia and committed to multiple hospitals. It presents a fascinating portrait of this most enduring and complex of American icons.

### ***Classics of American Literature Part 5***

(Adult Audiovisual - 800 Weinstein)

To truly understand the United States of America, you must explore its literary tradition. Professor Weinstein has crafted these lectures to explain why some works become classics while others do not, why some “immortal” works fade from our attention completely, and even why some contemporary works now being ignored or snubbed by critics may be considered immortal one day.

# FASHION OF THE ROARING 20'S, CONTINUED

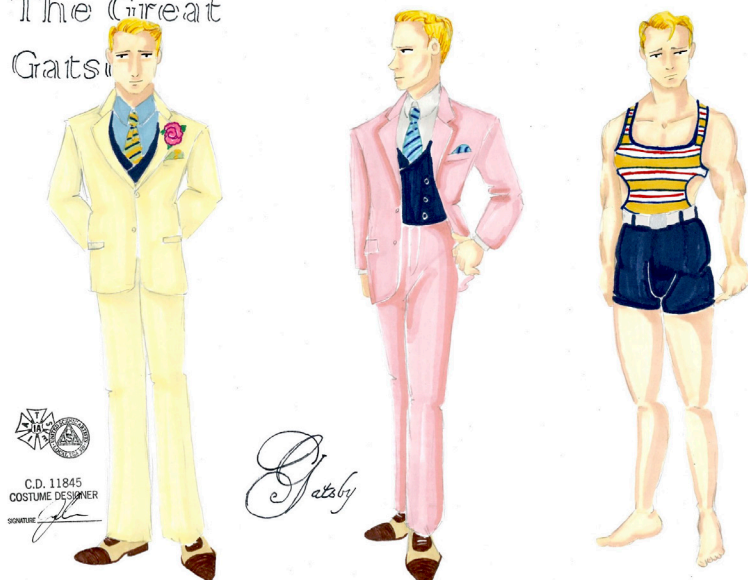
Daisy Buchanan, the epitome of a 1920s high society woman, favors drop-waist, lightweight silk, pastel gowns, and the shortest cropped hair in the show. She is almost falling off the edge of fashion, while still calling back to the pre-WWI Fashion of her single life.

The Great Gatsby



Menswear of the 1920s extended rather seamlessly from the Edwardian age prior. 3-piece worsted wool and linen suits in the summer were popular. Tom Buchanan and Nick Carraway wear far more traditional menswear colors of blue, tan, and brown. Meanwhile, Jay Gatsby takes it two steps further in pink and white suits, demonstrating to other characters his extravagance and “new-money” taste.

The Great Gatsby



INSTANTLY AVAILABLE ON HOOPLA

**Careless People: Murder, Mayhem, and the Invention of the Great Gatsby** by Sarah Bartlett Churchwell

(Streaming Audiobook)

With wit and insight, Sarah Churchwell traces the genesis of a masterpiece, discovering where fiction comes from and how it takes shape in the mind of a genius. Blending biography and history with lost and forgotten newspaper accounts, letters, and newly discovered archival material, *Careless People* is the biography of a book, telling the extraordinary tale of how F. Scott Fitzgerald created a classic and in the process discovered modern America.

**The Curious Case of Benjamin Button and Other Jazz Age Tales** by F. Scott Fitzgerald

(Streaming Audiobook)

F. Scott Fitzgerald, one of the greatest American writers, is best known for *The Great Gatsby*, considered by many to be the most important novel of the 20th century. But Fitzgerald also made his living as a short story writer, and *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button and Other Jazz Age Tales* collects four of his best.

# AFTER THE SHOW...

## QUESTIONS AND WRITING PROMPTS FOR THE CLASSROOM

- Which characters do you empathize with? Which characters do you dislike? Why? Was your reaction to seeing these characters on stage different from reading about them in the book?
- How do your attitudes toward the characters change over the course of the play? How might this have been intentional on the part of the playwright?
- The story is told from the perspective of a friend of Gatsby. Why do you think Nick tells the story?
- Do you think that Nick is a trustworthy narrator? Do you believe he is telling the truth about every part of the story? Are there characters who he idealizes or villainizes? Do you think that he bears any responsibility for Gatsby, Myrtle or George's death?
- Tom makes some particularly bigoted remarks about race. How does Tom reflect racial attitudes in 1920's America? What kind of reaction did these comments provoke for the audience today? Would the reaction have been different 100 years ago?
- What choice would you have made in Daisy's situation? Why?
- How is social class depicted in the story? How do the characters represent various levels of social class? What theatrical elements were used to depict class differences?
- How does *The Great Gatsby* relate to current society? How are the attitudes of the characters reflected in modern America?



Example of Eduardo Benito cover art for *Vogue* (circa 1926) which served as inspiration for this production

INSTANTLY AVAILABLE  
ON HOOPLA, *continued*

### ***Last Call: The Final Chapter of F. Scott Fitzgerald***

(Streaming Video)

The true story of an aspiring young writer who becomes the friend, caretaker, and confidante of literary genius F. Scott Fitzgerald when she accepts a job as his private assistant. What she discovers is a troubled man, struggling to escape private demons and emerge with one last great novel.

### ***Last Time I Saw Paris***

(Streaming Video)

Charles returns to Paris to reminisce about the life he led in Paris after it was liberated. He worked on "Stars and Stripes" when he met Marion and Helen. He would marry and be happy staying in Paris after his discharge and working for a news organization. He would try to write his great novel and that would come between Charlie, his wife and his daughter.