

# AL HIRSCHFELD:

*A Blueprint-based Arts Resource*





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**AL HIRSCHFELD: A Blueprint-based Arts Resource**

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# LETTER FROM THE CHANCELLOR

Dear Colleagues:

No one has ever captured the essence of the performing artist or the spirit of the artistic process better than Al Hirschfeld. The "Line King" documented a century of the arts and its history in extraordinary and memorable ways both through his exceptional artistry and his ability to create a unique lens through which we can view the arts in New York City, the talented personalities who performed, and the times in which they lived.

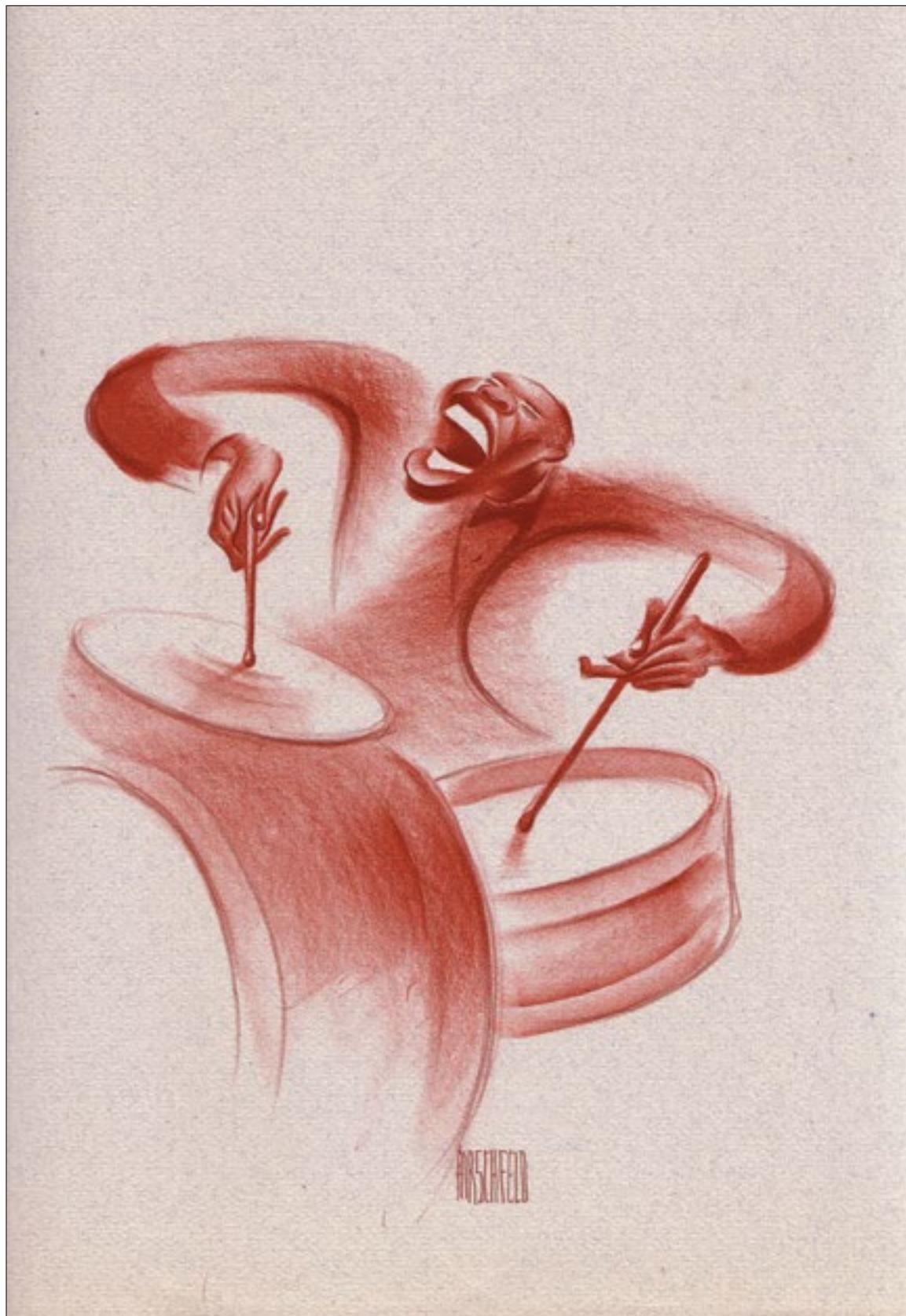
We are fortunate that Mr. Hirschfeld's brilliant legacy is preserved at The Al Hirschfeld Theatre in the Broadway theatre district and through this curriculum resource that has been created through the generosity of The Al Hirschfeld Foundation. Thanks to the Foundation, New York City public school students will now have the opportunity to learn about the life and work of Mr. Hirschfeld and to marvel at his brilliant eye for both the big picture and all the small details within it.

It is a great pleasure to provide this curriculum to the New York City public school community. I look forward to the many creative ways our teachers and students will use this wonderful new tool for learning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel I. Klein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Joel I. Klein



Solid Sender from Harlem As Seen By Hirschfeld, 1941

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



This document was made possible through the generosity of Louise Kerz Hirschfeld and The Al Hirschfeld Foundation. It was a direct and happy result of Mrs. Hirschfeld's involvement as a member of the advisory board of the Martin E. Segal Theatre Center at the Graduate Center, CUNY. It was at an advisory board meeting that Mrs. Hirschfeld offered to share Mr. Hirschfeld's work with the New York City public schools.

What started as a poster turned into a curriculum filled with rich and exciting images portraying the performing arts through the visual arts in ways that only Al Hirschfeld could imagine. We are extremely grateful to Mrs. Hirschfeld and The Al Hirschfeld Foundation for giving the New York City Department of Education permission to share these images through the creation of this curriculum resource. Thanks also to David Leopold, the archivist for The Al Hirschfeld Foundation, for providing us with background and history along with the origin of the images we selected.

We are deeply appreciative of Peter Royston, who skillfully developed this curriculum document as a complement to the *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts*. Gratitude is also extended to the Arts Directors at the New York City Department of Education: Joan Finkelstein, Dance; Paul King, Theater; Barbara Murray, Music; and Karen Rosner, Visual Arts, for their contribution to the arts content. Special thanks also to the administrative staff of the Arts Office: Joan Siscaretti, Carol Varikos-Marketan, and Eddie Villanueva, who helped get it done. We also extend our deepest appreciation to our designer, Pam Pollack, who has created a beautiful resource for our teachers and students. We wish to thank Ken Priester for his editorial skills; Gabrielle Scalise, Office of Legal Services, for creating the necessary legal permissions regarding the use of copyrighted work; and Michael Remer for his legal consultation on behalf of the Al Hirschfeld Foundation.

We are thankful to Rocco Landesman and the Jujamcyn Theaters for hosting the launch of the curriculum in the wonderful Al Hirschfeld Theatre. Also, to Keith Sherman & Associates for gathering the wonderful tributes from celebrities whose caricatures appear in these pages (Chita Rivera, Mandy Patinkin, and Tommy Tune). Cheers for *The New York Times*, in whose pages the art of Al Hirschfeld appeared from 1928–2002.

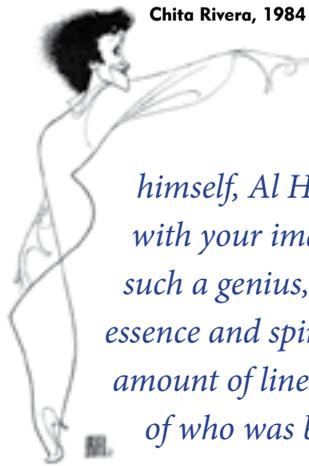
Finally, we wish to acknowledge Martin E. Segal for his ability to put the right people together to get a lot of good work done. Thank you, Martin.



Rene Auberjonois in *Big River*, 1985

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Chita Rivera, 1984

*“Possibly the only tribute more important than having your own caricature done by the Line King himself, Al Hirschfeld, would be to be commemorated with your image on a U.S. postal stamp. He was such a genius, one who had the ability to capture the essence and spirit of a subject by using a minimum amount of lines and leaving no doubt as to the identity of who was being portrayed.*”

*“A classic example would be his drawing of Bob Fosse or Sammy Davis Jr.—both movement and energy express the feelings and talent of both of these show business giants. Since I knew them both, I can attest to how bulls-eye both are. As for myself, I have been honored over half a dozen times with drawings that have amused as well as moved me. Each and every time he found the character that I was playing.*”



Sammy Davis Jr., 1990

*“The theatre and the arts in general have been left with a void without him. Let’s be grateful for the abundance of the great works he has left behind.”*

-Chita Rivera  
January 25, 2008

# INTRODUCTION: AL HIRSCHFELD:

*A Blueprint-based Arts Resource*

This resource introduces students to an incredible visual artist and documentarian. Al Hirschfeld’s career spanned nearly a century, providing us with a rich body of work reflective of the dancers, musicians, actors, visual artists, and other notables in the field of the arts who have contributed to the culture of our nation.

Many educators have grown up admiring Hirschfeld’s weekly drawings in *The New York Times*, and counting the NINA’s hidden in folds of costumes, elaborate hairdos, and fanciful backgrounds. We have marveled at Hirschfeld’s unique gift for zeroing in on the physical characteristics that define his subjects, while at the same time giving us rare glimpses into their personalities.

The New York City Department of Education, in collaboration with The Al Hirschfeld Foundation, has written *Al Hirschfeld: A Blueprint-based Arts Resource* for a new generation.

Through this resource students will learn about Al Hirschfeld, truly a national treasure. They will see the artists and artistic productions that populate his drawings, and find themselves peering through a window at the evolving culture of the 20th century.

Learning to look at the world and represent it through works of art that speak to everyone is a magnificent gift. The students in our New York City public schools now have this gift to call their own.



Nina’s Revenge, 1966

“His gyrating line is Gotham life plugged into an electric socket flashing neon, open all night.”

Frank Rich  
Introduction to *Hirschfeld's New York*



Tommy Tune in *White Tie And Tails*, 2002



# AL HIRSCHFELD:

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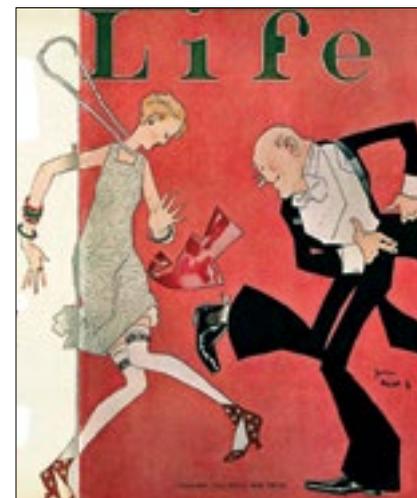
## A BRIEF HISTORY

From the beginning, Al Hirschfeld was always drawing. “It was kind of a sickness, I suppose,” he later said, “always drawing. It never occurred to me that I could do anything else, or would want to do anything else.” (*Hirschfeld's New York*, p. 13)

He was born in St. Louis, Missouri on June 21, 1903. His parents, Isaac and Rebecca Hirschfeld, ran a candy store.

If not for young Albert's drawing, the Hirschfelds would probably have stayed in St. Louis. But fate took a hand when a local artist was so impressed with Albert's artwork that he told Rebecca to take him to New York City to get a good education in the arts. She immediately dropped everything and packed up the family. In 1914, the Hirschfelds moved to the city that would become such a strong part of Al's life and work. They lived on West 183rd Street in Washington Heights.

Albert enrolled in the National Academy of Design some time after he arrived in New York City. He attended the Art Students League in 1927 and 1928, and continued to branch out into the real world. He discovered a lifelong love: the theater. He later said, “When I was about fourteen, my mother took me to see a musical comedy. ... And that was my first experience in the theater and I was enchanted with it. It transported me to another world. ... You might say that I was stage-struck. I was mesmerized by the stage.”



He began to work for different movie studios headquartered in New York City. The movie industry had not yet made its move to Hollywood, and NYC was still a bustling hub of the film world. He started as an errand boy for Goldwyn Pictures, but by the time he was 18 years old, in 1921, he had become art director for Selznick Pictures Corporation.

While working in the movie industry, Hirschfeld met the artist John Held Jr. He would always say that Held was a great influence on him. Held had been influenced by pre-Columbian sculpture and 6th century B.C. vases.

Here's a drawing by John Held Jr. showing the famous dance of the 1920s, the Charleston. Can you see Held's influence on Hirschfeld?

## Caricaturist vs. Characterist?

“The subject that motivates and inspires me, is people.”  
(Hirschfeld: *Art and Recollections*, p. 18)

What kind of an artist was Al Hirschfeld? Today he is often called a caricaturist, but Hirschfeld did not agree with this label. A caricaturist is defined as “someone who parodies in an exaggerated manner.” Or as Hirschfeld said, “Caricature ... implies a critique or a criticism. ... So I don’t refer to my drawings as caricatures. I prefer to think of them as ‘character drawings’ and would feel more comfortable being classified as ‘characterist’ if there is such a word or school.” As a characterist he captured the character—the inner life and abilities—of his subjects. He had, as Louise Kerz Hirschfeld said, “a special awareness of their interior, and perhaps a secret clue to some area of their personality.” (*Hirschfeld On Line*, p. 24)

Unlike many caricaturists, Hirschfeld seems to be celebrating his subjects, rather than making fun of them.



Sketch of Miguel Covarrubias, 1924

## A BRIEF HISTORY continued



Miguel Covarrubias,  
Mexican painter and  
illustrator

During the early 1920s, he became close friends with Miguel Covarrubias, a Mexican painter and illustrator. They shared a studio at 110 West 42nd Street. Covarrubias already had a reputation as a caricaturist, working for *Vanity Fair* and *The New Yorker*. Covarrubias was another influence on Hirschfeld, who called him a “natural graphic artist ... and a lot of that rolled onto me.”

*The late 1920s brought many changes to Hirschfeld’s life.*

Beginning in late 1925, Hirschfeld had a studio in Paris, France. A trip to North Africa in the winter of 1926 was his first exposure to the stark sunlight that would change how he saw the art of drawing (see pages 7–9).

In 1926, he did a quick drawing of the French actor Sacha Guitry during a performance. He happened to be sitting with the press agent Richard Maney, who noticed the drawing and told Hirschfeld he should submit it to the *New York Herald Tribune* newspaper. Hirschfeld’s drawing of Guitry was on the front page of the Drama section the next Sunday. Soon other newspapers wanted Hirschfeld’s work. In those days, New York City had 14 daily newspapers!

“Suddenly,” he later said, “I found that I was being paid for the things I thought nobody wanted.” (*Hirschfeld On Line*, p. 7) He was only twenty-three years old.

In 1928, Hirschfeld created the first of what would become thousands of drawings for *The New York Times*. In July he married Flo Allen, a Broadway chorus girl, and they left soon after for Russia, where he was on assignment for the *Herald Tribune*, covering Russian theater. In 1931, Hirschfeld traveled to Tahiti, but found it too commercial, too much like home. At the suggestion of Miguel Covarrubias, he continued on to Bali, a trip that would change his life (see the Visual Arts section).

After returning to New York City, Hirschfeld created two books that focused on life in the city: *Manhattan Oases*, a 1932 guide to speakeasies in Manhattan, and *Harlem*



French actor Sacha Guitry, 1926

**Self-Portrait in Barber Chair**  
(57th St. Studio), gouache on board (Original artwork is in color.)



**The caves of Lascaux, site of some of the oldest human art work on record**



As *Seen By Hirschfeld*, a 1941 album of lithographs with a foreword by the writer William Saroyan. Both of these books are still in print—check out the Resources section for more information.

His work appeared in three New York newspapers until 1943, when he signed an exclusive contract with the *The New York Times*. In addition, Hirschfeld supplied artwork for a number of film studios and a wide variety of publications.

His work methods were as unique as he was. Hirschfeld worked in his studio on a Koken barber chair: he liked the chair's adjustability.

"The problem of placing the right line in the right place has absorbed all of my interests across these many years," he said. Hirschfeld loved his work. He called it "hard fun." (*Hirschfeld On Line*, p. 9)

Al Hirschfeld continued to work throughout his life. He married Dolly Haas in 1943 and they stayed married until her death in 1994. In 1996, Hirschfeld married theater historian Louise Kerz. Al Hirschfeld died on January 20, 2003 at the age of 99. He lived through most of the 20th century and left us his impressions of a multitude of musicians, actors, dancers, visual artists, producers, directors, and performances. His artwork serves to document nearly a century of American culture.

### *Seeing in Lines: Hirschfeld's Asian Inspirations*

Throughout his career, Al Hirschfeld had a problem, and it was a problem he loved solving. He said, "To capture personality in graphic forms is the problem I try to solve in every drawing, and every drawing dictates its own solutions." (*Hirschfeld On Line*, p. 44)

To capture the personalities of his subjects, he aimed for the most simple, most elegant solution. When he visited the caves of Lascaux, site of some of the oldest human art work on record, he said, "There's a horse that is absolutely the greatest drawing I've ever seen. It's done with primitive means, but nobody is ever going to improve on it." (*Hirschfeld On Line*, p. 8)

It was during a trip to the island of Bali in 1931 that Hirschfeld began to "see in lines."

"I knew my life would never be the same," he said, "The Balinese sun seemed to bleach out all color,



**Kabuki Series: Set of 12 Color Lithographs, 1976 - Kanonko**



**Wayang Kulit, the shadow puppet art form of Bali (above)**

**Katsushika Hokusai, 1760–1849 (right)**

leaving shadows, so that things became black and white. Everything was pure line. The people became line drawings walking around.” (*Hirschfeld: Art and Recollections*, p. 22)

An additional artistic influence was wayang kulit, the shadow puppet art form of Bali: “They just throw shadows onto a screen; the black and white design is exaggerated, almost caricature ...” (*Hirschfeld: Art and Recollections*, p. 22) Hirschfeld arrived at the theory that, because of the blazing sun “from Egypt east (or west depending on which way you’re going) all the way to China and Japan, the Malayan archipelago and down through the Great Barrier Reef, the kind of artist that develops is the graphic artist. Painters come from Europe and the north of Europe particularly, where the light is grey and you see color very clearly. But on the beach there is no color.” (*Hirschfeld: Art and Recollections*, p. 22)

Hirschfeld was greatly influenced by the Japanese artists Hokusai, Utamaro, and Harunobu—along with their use of line, he closely studied their use of perspective and their creation of stylized, or non-realistic, “posed” forms.



**Kitagawa Utamaro  
Okita of the Naniwaya Teahouse  
c. 1790**



# Hirschfeld and VISUAL ARTS

## Art Making

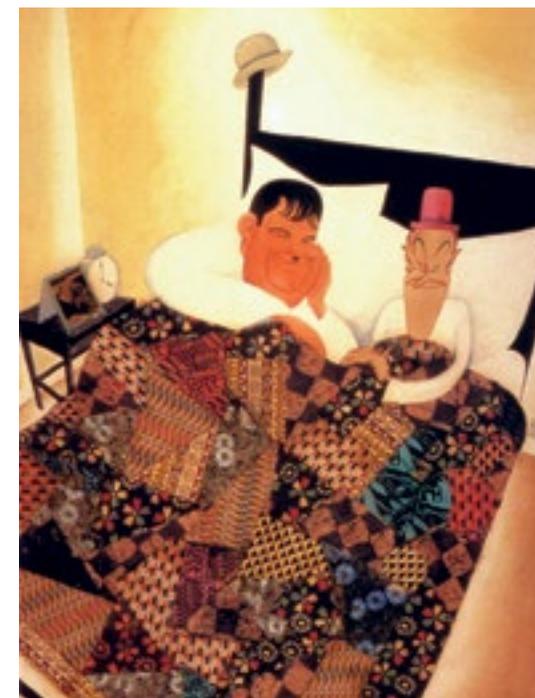
### GRADE 2

■ Study Al Hirschfeld's drawings and discuss how he uses line. Identify the kinds of lines in his drawings. Describe the feelings evoked by different kinds of lines: smooth lines, jagged lines, curved lines, short lines, long lines, broken lines.

Experiment with a variety of lines to express different emotions. Look at examples of artists' line portraits. Discuss how artists use line to express themselves. Draw a portrait of someone in your family or neighborhood. Use line to express an essential feeling about that person.



*Artist Descending a Staircase* with Michael Cumpsty, Harold Gould, Paxton Whitehead, Jim Fyfe, Michael Winther, John McMartin, and Stephanie Roth, 1989



*Laurel and Hardy, 1928* (above)

*The Marx Brothers, 1935* (above right)



■ Study "Laurel and Hardy, 1928" and "The Marx Brothers, 1935." Hirschfeld used swatches of cloth for "Laurel and Hardy" and cut sheet music for "The Marx Brothers." What special effect do these materials add to the drawings?

Discuss the properties of collage, including: texture, layering, depth. Explore the way Eric Carle uses collage. Create a simple portrait combining collage and drawing of someone you know.

■ Al Hirschfeld's daughter, Nina, was born in 1945. In honor of her, Hirschfeld began to hide her name in some of his drawings. He would put the number of NINA's hidden in the drawing next to his signature. Find the NINA's in a Hirschfeld drawing: First, find one of the drawings we've provided that have a number next to Hirschfeld's signature. Then, look hard for the NINA's!

### Grade 5

■ Study the Hirschfeld drawings "The Musical, 1997" or "Say, Darling, 1958" on page 13. Discuss how Hirschfeld uses detail and balance to evoke a sense of place, whether it's on a stage, backstage, or the audience. What place has a special feeling for you? How would you make it come alive in a drawing? What kind of drawing tool would you use? Pencil? Charcoal? Crayon? Why is the choice of tool important? How did other artists evoke a sense of place in their drawings? Do a small drawing of a place that has significance for you. What feeling do you want to convey to the viewer?

■ Hirschfeld worked almost exclusively in the drawing medium. What would a sculpture of an Al Hirschfeld drawing look like? What materials would he have used?



To see a sculpture by Al Hirschfeld, go to: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/hirschfeld/images/01507u.jp>. Discuss the differences between sculpture and drawing. What does Hirschfeld's comment that sculpture was "just a drawing you could trip over in the dark" reveal about him?



Barbra Streisand in *Funny Girl* looking in mirror and seeing herself as Fanny Brice, 1964



*Say, Darling*, 1958 (above)  
*The Musical Receives a Standing Ovation*, 1997 (top right)

**Grade 8**

■ How does Hirschfeld draw characters in a setting to depict the illusion of depth? Perspective? Scale of objects and figures? How do these choices convey a message about the subject? Examine the work of Georges Seurat. Compare Seurat's work with Hirschfeld's depiction of the artist's style in his drawing of *Sunday in the Park with George* (p. 66). Select an appropriate drawing tool, and do a study of a person in a setting.

■ In 1964, Barbra Streisand portrayed the comedienne Fanny Brice in the show *Funny Girl*. In his *Funny Girl* drawing, Hirschfeld juxtaposes his image of Streisand with a 1910 photograph of Fanny Brice. What effect does this juxtaposition have on the overall composition? Create your own composition, juxtaposing a photo of a well-known figure with your drawing of that same figure.

**Grade 12**

- Study Al Hirschfeld's drawings. Make a list of the materials you think he uses for his work. How can students use these same materials in their art making?
- Hirschfeld drew many celebrities throughout his career—including himself! He drew several self-portraits throughout his life. Study Hirschfeld's drawings of himself (pp. v, 6, 14, 21). If Hirschfeld was a "characterist," what were the characteristics he saw in himself? If you were to draw yourself, what characteristics would you emphasize?
- Theater is not like movies on videotape, or DVD, or television with TiVo®: as you view a theatrical performance you cannot stop or repeat it. It's happening in real time, in real life. The subjects won't stop as you draw them. So Al Hirschfeld developed a special code—a combination of words and symbols—to take visual notes for himself during a performance that would give him clues when he worked on the drawing later on in his studio. He would use words to help him recapture the feeling of the character. For instance, he would write 'fricassee chicken,' a chicken dish stewed in gravy. He said, "The words 'fricassee chicken bring back to mind the feeling about an arm that I wanted to get into my drawings. A sketch would help me re-create the shape of the arm, but 'fricassee, chicken' gives me the bone and muscle." Other notations included: "leather hair," "exposed nerve," "idiot," "star," "spiral," "fried eggs" (for eyes). He said, "Mouths are slits, peaholes, caverns, fangs;

Self-portrait, 1985



hair is corn silk, Brillo, rope, string, thread, fuzz, or cue ball." (*Hirschfeld: Art and Recollections*, p. 25)

Create your own code. Watch a television show or movie on videotape or DVD, but don't stop the action. Choose one character as your subject. As you're watching, concentrate on your subject's face (eyes, hair, nose, mouth, chin, cheeks), his or her body and movements. What do they remind you of? You see that Hirschfeld used mainly nouns—things—to remind him later of the look and the feeling of his subject. Write down words that remind you of your subject's appearance and character. After you're done watching, use your notes to help you draw your subject.

By the way, Hirschfeld would do all of his note-taking in a darkened theater, and because he didn't want to bring attention to himself, he used the stub of a pencil to draw in his pocket!

### *Literacy in the Arts*

#### **Grade 2**

■ With your teacher and classmates, read aloud the brief biography of Hirschfeld beginning on page 3 (or check the Resources section for links to other brief bios). Write or discuss a response to Hirschfeld's life in the form of observations and questions. What else would you like to find out about Hirschfeld's life? How was Hirschfeld's life like your own? Like that of the members of your family?

#### **Grade 5**

- Write a personal response to Hirschfeld's work regarding:
  - » Treatment of subject: What clues can you find for what Hirschfeld thinks about his subjects?
  - » Tools and techniques: In examining the drawings, what tools do you think Hirschfeld uses? Have you used these tools? How might Hirschfeld's work look different in another medium?

#### **Grade 8**

■ Hirschfeld found inspiration in Bali, where the bright sun made him look at the world in a different way. Another artist, Paul Gauguin, left his life in France for Tahiti, where he changed his painting to a more vibrant, unrestrained style. How can changing our viewpoint by moving to another place change the way we see the world? How do other artists reflect the environment in which they live? Give specific examples.



Prince Of Wales Turns His Back on the Throne, *New Masses* cover, 1937

- Choose one of Al Hirschfeld's works and examine it over a period of time. Create an "examination journal": a daily log of your feelings and observations about your chosen work. How does Hirschfeld evoke the character of his subject? How do your feelings about your chosen work evolve over time?

- Study a Hirschfeld drawing. Based on the visual evidence, discuss hypotheses about the time period and the subject.

#### Grade 12

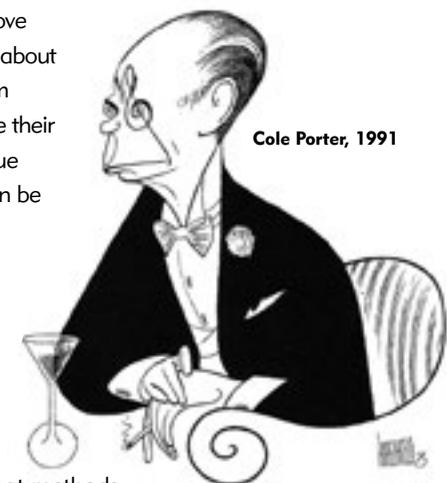
- Hirschfeld said, "The problem I have created for myself is to translate a specific person in legible symbols so that the reader when confronted by my arrangement of lines, will recognize their meaning as clearly as he or she would recognize any letter of the alphabet." (*Hirschfeld: Art and Recollections*, p. 19) Hirschfeld believed that we all have certain qualities about us—the way we stand, how we walk and move our hands when we talk—that make us unique. Think about how you often can recognize friends or loved ones from blocks away without seeing them clearly: you recognize their unique qualities, or, as Hirschfeld would say, their unique "arrangement of lines." Discuss how these qualities can be determined by culture, environment, or behavior.

- Hirschfeld said, "The subject that motivates and inspires me is people." Hirschfeld's work mainly focuses on the human figure and face. Compare his work with other artists whose body of work includes representations of the human figure, such as Vincent van Gogh, Pablo Picasso, Frida Kahlo, Chuck Close, Hokusai, Utamaro, or Harunobu. What methods do they use to evoke the personalities of their subjects?

- Along with translating his subjects into easily recognized symbols, Hirschfeld often melded actual symbols into his artwork, such as the British pound sterling sign in "The Prince of Wales Turns His Back on the Throne, 1937," or musical symbols in "Cole Porter, 1991" or "The Musical, 1997" (p. 13). Discuss the power of symbols: Why are they effective? Compare Hirschfeld's melding of symbols with human faces and figures with the work of political cartoonists such as Thomas Nast, Pat Oliphant, David Levine, and Herblock.

- With his unique style, Hirschfeld often attempted to break the human figure or face down to its essence: this is the vision he saw in Bali. Compare Hirschfeld's work with the work of other artists who have attempted to convey the essence of character through minimal lines and symbols, such as Keith Haring and Jean Michel Basquiat.

- Use the Hirschfeld images to write wall text, labels, catalogue, or promotional material for a fictional Al Hirschfeld show. Include both detailed factual information and your own commentary.



Cole Porter, 1991



Broadway on a Saturday Night, 1943

## Broadway

Carl Sandburg

I shall never forget you, Broadway  
Your golden and calling lights.

I'll remember you long,  
Tall-walled river of rush and play.

Hearts that know you hate you  
And lips that have given you laughter  
Have gone to their ashes of life and its roses,  
Cursing the dreams that were lost  
In the dust of your harsh and trampled stones.

## Broadway

Sara Teasdale

This is the quiet hour; the theaters  
Have gathered in their crowds, and steadily  
The million lights blaze on for few to see,  
Robbing the sky of stars that should be hers.  
A woman waits with bag and shabby furs,  
A somber man drifts by, and only we  
Pass up the street unwearied, warm and free,  
For over us the olden magic stirs.  
Beneath the liquid splendor of the lights  
We live a little ere the charm is spent;  
This night is ours, of all the golden nights,  
The pavement an enchanted palace floor,  
And Youth the player on the viol, who sent  
A strain of music through an open door.

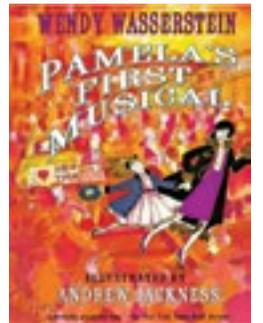
Hirschfeld and VISUAL ARTS continued

## Making Connections

### Grade 2

■ Discuss with your classmates and teacher your theater experiences: Have you seen a play? What was it about? Did you like it? Why? Were the actors wearing costumes? Describe them. Describe the scenery. Where was the play performed? Describe the location. How is a play different from a video or movie? What does a Broadway theater look like? How is a theater built for professional performances different than a movie theater?

■ Discuss the Broadway theater district. Where is it in New York City? Look at pictures of the Broadway area. Why do you think there are so many theaters? Look at the theater listings in a newspaper. What are some shows that are currently playing on Broadway? Why do you think Al Hirschfeld liked being part of the Broadway community: the actors, directors, and audience?



■ Read *Pamela's First Musical* by Wendy Wasserstein. How are YOU a member of the Broadway community just by living in New York City?

### Grade 5

■ Al Hirschfeld came to New York City in 1914. Using library or Internet resources, compare photos of New York City in 1914 and today, focusing especially on Times Square and the Broadway theater district. Describe similarities and differences.



### Grade 8

■ The life of the theater has been the inspiration for many famous artists. Compare Al Hirschfeld's work with the work of artists such as Edgar Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec.

■ Compare the feelings Hirschfeld

evokes regarding Times Square and the Broadway theater district to those found in poems about Broadway by Carl Sandburg and Sara Teasdale.





Richard Kiley in  
*The Man of La Mancha*,  
1977

#### Grade 12

- Artists who create poster art for the theater, as Hirschfeld did several times, must be “characterists” as well, defining in one image the “character” of the play or musical, with the goal of attracting an audience. Compare Hirschfeld’s work with that of theatrical poster artists such as Gilbert Lesser, Paul Davis, Milton Glaser, or Paula Scher.

### Community and Cultural Resources

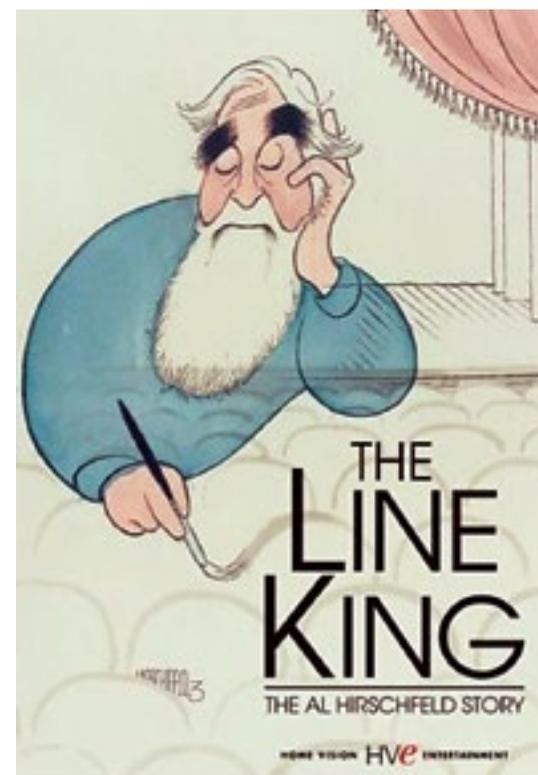
#### Grade 2

- On the Internet, take a virtual tour of Hirschfeld’s work at the Margo Feiden Gallery at [www.alhirschfeld.com](http://www.alhirschfeld.com).

- You can also visit the Library of Congress’ Web exhibition on Hirschfeld, which shows his theater work and beyond. Find it here: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/hirschfeld>.

#### Grade 5

- Watch the documentary *The Line King: The Al Hirschfeld Story*, directed by Susan Dryfoos, (Homevision, 2004) to learn more about Al Hirschfeld.



#### Grade 8

- Learn more about the Broadway theater district and the Broadway community through Websites such as [www.broadway.com](http://www.broadway.com), [www.playbill.com](http://www.playbill.com), [www.broadway101.com](http://www.broadway101.com), and [www.theatermania.com](http://www.theatermania.com).

#### Grade 12

- Using the Hirschfeld images, create a gallery or museum guide for a fictional Hirschfeld exhibit. Combine detailed facts and commentary.
- Create a second step to your fictional Hirschfeld exhibit by creating a comparative exhibit, a fictional exhibit that would hang Hirschfeld’s work side by side with another artist. Create a gallery or museum guide for this comparative exhibit, combining detailed facts about both artists along with commentary comparing the artists and their work.



## Careers and Lifelong Learning

### Grade 2

■ Discuss Hirschfeld's influence on the world of animation. Study his drawing of Danny Kaye and read this quote: "Obviously, I used the many hands and legs to communicate action. Danny Kaye, as we all know, was a bundle of it. This is in a way using animation technique in a single panel drawing, like watching a few seconds of Mickey Mouse. Kaye was a live-action cartoon, an actor and special effects man all in one, similar to what they say of Jim Carey nowadays." Did you know? Eric Goldberg, who created the genie for the Disney film *Aladdin*, was greatly inspired by Hirschfeld. Watch the movie and see if you can find Hirschfeld's influence.



Goldberg also created the "Rhapsody in Blue" segment from the Disney film *Fantasia 2000*, which was a tribute to Al Hirschfeld's work.

### Grade 5

■ Invite a visual artist to visit your classroom to discuss his or her own work.

How does this artist's style and process compare with Hirschfeld's?

Eric Goldberg  
"Rhapsody in Blue"  
segment from the  
Disney film *Fantasia 2000*

### Grades 8 & 12

■ Before creating your wall text, labels, catalogue, promotional material, museum guide, or catalogue for a fictional Al Hirschfeld show, research the job descriptions, necessary characteristics, and required education and training for these jobs: curator, installer, conservator, and museum publication production staff.

## Be a "Characterist"

Choose a subject (suggestion: your favorite teacher or a member of your family) and create your own black-and-white line drawing. First, write down five words describing his or her outer appearance, followed by five words describing what the subject typically wears focusing on textures, patterns, and lines. What is the one thing about your subject's outer appearance you think best defines him or her? Write down five words describing how your subject moves and typical facial expressions. Finally, write one sentence describing his or her overall personality. Use your brainstorming notes to create a black-and-white line drawing of your subject.

# Hirschfeld and MUSIC



Marian Anderson, 1948



Ella Fitzgerald, 1993

## Music Making

### Grade 2

- Teach words and melody to “A Tisket A Tasket” by rote. Have students create movement to accompany song.
- Examine Hirschfeld’s images of Ella Fitzgerald and Marian Anderson. Ask students which image depicts the singer who is more apt to sing this song. Why? What clues does Hirschfeld provide to support this answer?
- Listen to Ella Fitzgerald’s recording of “A Tisket A Tasket.”
- Have children sing and move with recording.

### Grade 5

- Use Hirschfeld’s drawings of musicians as the basis for improvisation.

■ Study Hirschfeld’s 1990 and 2002 images of the Beatles. Teach a Beatles tune (e.g., “Ob La Di, Ob La Da”).

- » Improvise accompaniment using classroom rhythm instruments.
- » Use music vocabulary to describe the song’s characteristics.
- » Discuss visual and musical correlations using appropriate arts vocabulary.

- Using songs or instruments (traditional or homemade), create a soundscape based upon one of Hirschfeld’s drawings—capture its essence in sound and music.



The Beatles: Paul Mc Cartney, John Lennon, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr, 1990 (above right), 2002 (left)



**Aerosmith: Steven Tyler, Joey Kramer, Joe Perry, Brad Whitford, and Tom Hamilton, 1977 (right)**

**Grade 8**

Locate Aerosmith’s song “Don’t Want to Miss a Thing.”

- Prior to listening to this piece, examine Hirschfeld’s drawing of the group. What information about singer Steven Tyler’s style and approach to singing this song can we glean from the drawing?
- Listen to the Aerosmith recording. Compare aural and visual responses.
- Sing the song using distributed lead sheet and lyrics.
- Use a Hirschfeld drawing as the basis for improvisation. Create an improvisation to be sung or played reflecting the images and emotions depicted in Hirschfeld’s work. Recreate the rhythms, dynamics, and tempos Hirschfeld uses in his drawings of musicians.

**Grade 12**

- Students sing “Oh, What a Beautiful Morning,” “Tonight,” and “Seasons of Love” from *Oklahoma!*, *West Side Story*, and *Rent*.
- Discuss the stylistic evolution of these iconic musicals.
- How does Hirschfeld visually capture the stylistic differences among them?



**Oklahoma! (left) Clockwise from top left: Celeste Holm, Marc Platt, Katherine Sergava, Joan Roberts, Alfred Drake, Joseph Buloff, and Agnes De Mille dancers, 1943**

**Rent (above right) From left to right: Daphne Rubin-Vega, Taye Diggs, Fredi Walker, Adam Pascal, Wilson Jermaine Heredia, Anthony Rapp, Idina Menzel, and Jesse Martin, 1996**



**West Side Story with Ken Leroy, Mickey Calin, Chita Rivera, Larry Kert, and Carol Lawrence. 1957**

Isaac Stern, 1990



Marc Blitzstein, composer of *The Cradle Will Rock*, 1938

## Music Literacy

### Grade 2

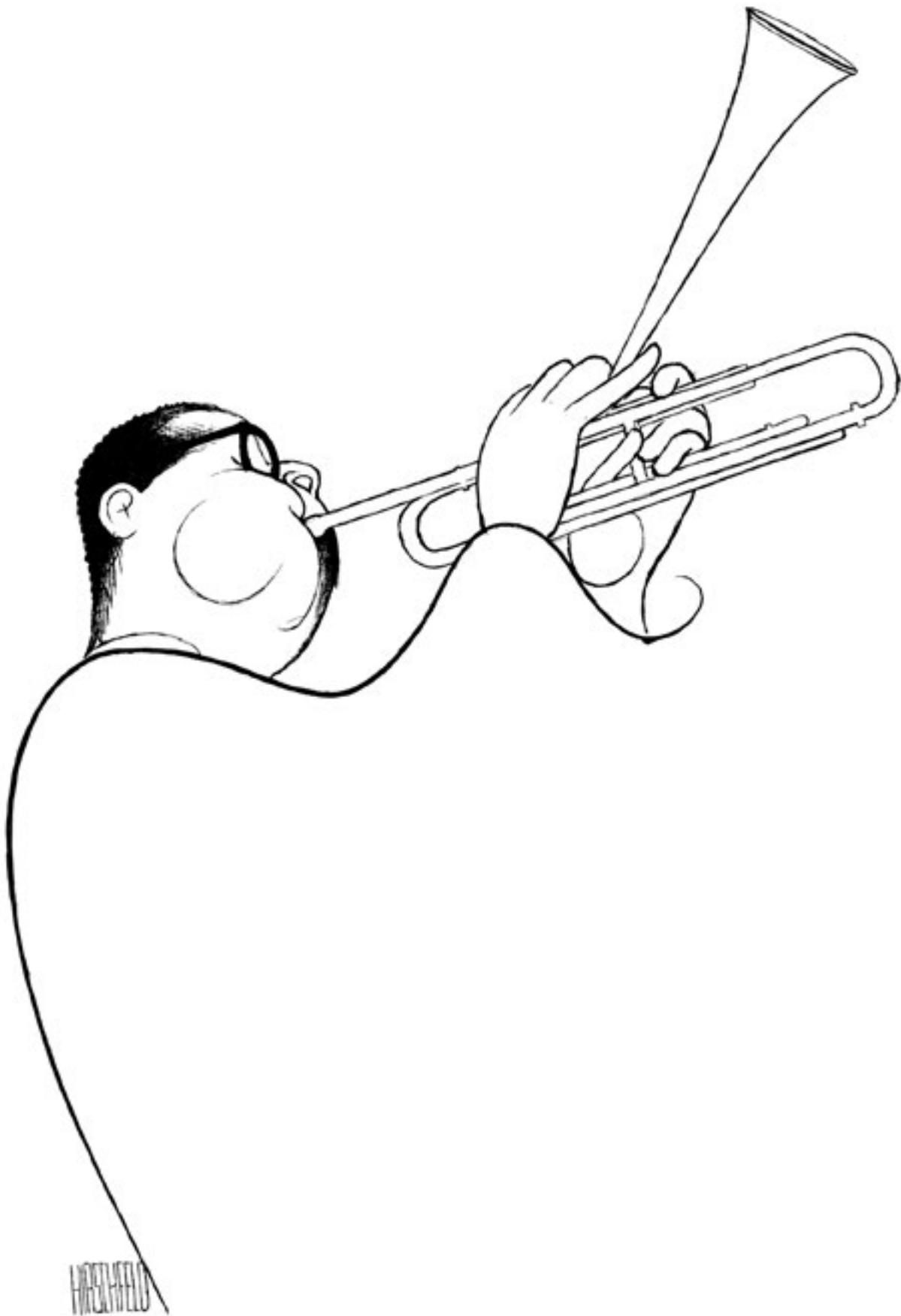
- Rhythm is one of the musician's most important tools. How does a visual artist use rhythm? Study Hirschfeld's drawings and discuss each one's connection to musical rhythm.
- How many different rhythms can we find in each piece? Is the drawing's rhythm smooth or jagged? Continuous or interrupted?
- Illustrate the rhythms seen in Hirschfeld's drawings by creating and imitating large movements for class participation.

### Grade 5

- Define the musical terms: pitch, dynamics, meter, timbre, and tempo.
- Discuss which of these musical elements are reflected in Hirschfeld's work and describe how.

### Grade 8

- Use music vocabulary to describe a musical performance depicted in Hirschfeld's work. How does he help us "hear" the performance in the drawing?
- Study Hirschfeld's images of Isaac Stern and Marc Blitzstein. Look at the hands in each drawing. Note the heavier line on Blitzstein's hands compared with the airy loop of Stern's arm and hand.
- Research the lives, performance, and interpretive styles of Stern and Blitzstein. Based upon your research, how and to what degree has Hirschfeld captured the personalities and musical instincts of these two artists?
- Listen to the music of Isaac Stern (e.g., Ludwig van Beethoven's Violin Concerto in D and Johannes Brahms' Violin Concerto in G) and Marc Blitzstein. (Blitzstein's music can be found on recordings and on the video of the movie *Cradle Will Rock*). How does their music compare with your original impressions? What drawing styles and effects did Hirschfeld use to evoke the sound of their music?
- Listen to Duke Ellington's "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing." To which genre of music does it belong? What elements of music distinguish it from the music typically played by Stern and Blitzstein?
- Study photos of Ellington or videos of him at work. Draw your interpretation of Ellington.



B.D. Wong in *M. Butterfly*, 1988 (above)

*Miss Saigon* with Jonathan Pryce, Lea Salonga, and Willy Falk, 1991 (right)

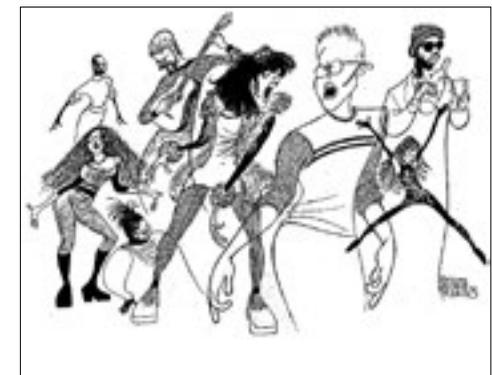
Dizzy Gillespie, 1996 (left)

**Grade 12**

- Create a soundtrack for a Hirschfeld slide show using contemporary music. Each musical choice must merge smoothly into the next. Each musical choice must be justified. How does your musical choice match the feelings evoked in the Hirschfeld drawings?
- Study Hirschfeld's drawings of musicians in opera, jazz, musical theater, and classical genres. What are the musical differences among these genres?
- How do Hirschfeld's drawing techniques change to evoke different genres of music?
- Musicians often create different interpretations of the same original musical piece (e.g., John Coltrane's version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "My Favorite Things"). Hirschfeld drew several versions of Duke Ellington throughout Ellington's life. Compare them, placing them in chronological order.
- Modern adaptations often infuse classical works with a fresh, contemporary style. Compare the Hirschfeld drawings of productions of *La Boheme* and *Rent*. Compare his drawings of two adaptations of *Madame Butterfly*—*Ms. Saigon* and *M. Butterfly*.



*La Boheme*, a Metropolitan Opera production, with Italo Tajo, Renata Scotto, Teresa Stratas, Jose Carreras, James Morris, Richard Stilwell, and Allan Monk, 1981



*Rent*  
From left to right: Daphne Rubin-Vega, Taye Diggs, Fredi Walker, Adam Pascal, Wilson Jermaine Heredia, Anthony Rapp, Idina Menzel, and Jesse Martin, 1996



John Kander and Fred Ebb, 1978

### *Making Connections*

#### **Grade 5**

- While looking at Hirschfeld's images of various musicals, discuss the history of musical theater in the United States, focusing especially on how musical theater blossomed in New York City.
- Discuss the characteristics of musical theater and how Hirschfeld captures those feelings.

#### **Grade 8**

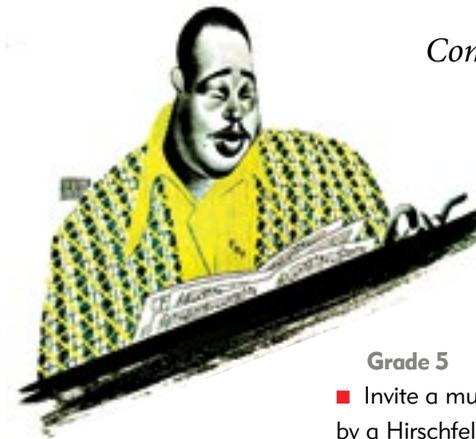
- Using Internet or library resources, research the training, lives, and careers of one of the musicians Hirschfeld drew.
- Al Hirschfeld lived through most of the 20th century, and drew musicians and performances from a wide variety of musical styles: classical, jazz, musical theater, rock. Discuss Al Hirschfeld as a musical historian.
- Discuss the history of musical theater. Trace the origins of this art form to its cultural roots. Investigate why musical theater took root in American culture. Discuss its impact on today's society.
- Create a musical map of New York City. Use a city map to locate the following musical landmarks which appear in Hirschfeld's drawings: The Broadway theater district, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Madison Square Garden, the Blue Note. Where are you in relation to these venues or landmarks?
- Find two locations where Broadway musical theater rehearsals take place. Find out where jazz, musical theater, and rock recording takes place in NYC today. Mark these locations on your map.

#### **Grade 12**

- Listen to songs from a variety of eras whose topic is "Broadway"—for example, "Give My Regards to Broadway" by George M. Cohan (written in 1904) or "On Broadway" by Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil (written in 1968). Discuss the feelings they evoke, the different pictures they paint of Broadway, and how they reflect the times in which they were written.



Duke Ellington, 1991



Duke Ellington, gouache, 1946

## Community and Cultural Resources

### Grade 2

- Invite a professional artist and a professional musician to your classroom. Discuss the connections between visual art and music.
- After seeing a concert and visiting an art museum discuss the connections between visual art and music.

### Grade 5

- Invite a musician to your classroom. Ask him or her to improvise a tune inspired by a Hirschfeld drawing. Ask a visual artist to visit your classroom and create a drawing inspired by one of Hirschfeld's musical subject compositions.
- Visit the Duke Ellington Memorial at the northeast corner of Central Park near 110th Street and 5th Avenue. Compare the statue of Duke Ellington by Robert Graham with Hirschfeld's images of Ellington.
- Using appropriate Websites, create a guided tour through the life of a musician portrayed by Hirschfeld.

### Grades 8 & 12

- Consult local newspaper, magazine or Internet listings to choose a musical performance for your class to visit.
- Attend a musical performance in a local professional venue or school. Divide the class in half: one half will write reflections and commentary on the performances they've seen, the other half will create drawings in response to what they've seen. When finished, compare the written pieces and the drawings. Discuss how drawing and writing each give different understandings of a performance.



Stephen Sondheim, 1977  
(above)

Leonard Bernstein, 1989  
(left)

### Careers and Lifelong Learning

#### Grade 2

■ Invite parents and other family members who work in the performing arts to speak about how they are influenced by music. Display several of Hirschfeld's drawings. Elicit responses to the images.

■ Draw a picture of someone performing one of the following jobs:

- » Instrumentalist
- » Singer
- » Composer
- » Lyricist

Discuss what it might be like to do this type of work for a living.

■ After you have completed your drawing create a one minute improvisation of someone performing that job. Photograph your dramatization. How does your photograph compare with Hirschfeld's version of this type of artist? How does the photograph compare with your drawing?

#### Grade 5

■ Create your own "characterist" drawing of a musical performance for a class or school newspaper.

■ Research the career of one of Hirschfeld's musical subjects, focusing especially on how he or she began his or her training and education. At what point in the subject's career did Hirschfeld create the drawing?

■ Make a list of characteristics you would need to be a successful:

- » Instrumentalist
- » Singer
- » Composer
- » Lyricist

Study Hirschfeld's images of artists with these jobs. What characteristics does he give them?



Wynton Marsalis, 2002

Sightseer's Map of New York, 1939

#### GRADE 8

- Use the Internet to research career opportunities in music. Check out Websites such as <http://www.menc.org> or <http://www.artsopportunities.org>.



- Using your research into musical careers, create a music career tree and describe the function of each career. Along with your descriptions of musical careers, use the Hirschfeld images of musical artists to illustrate your career tree.

#### GRADE 12

- Use the Internet to explore institutions of higher learning and post-secondary venues that offer studies in careers in music.
- Research the life of one of the musical artists that Hirschfeld portrayed, focusing especially on his or her high school and college education. Discuss how education affected his or her career.
- Using your research into musical careers, explore, in collaboration with a guidance counselor, opportunities for internship/externships in the New York City music and cultural community.

## Be a "Characterist"

Choose one of your favorite musicians or musical groups and create your own black-and-white line drawing. First, write down five words describing his or her outer appearance, followed by five words describing what the subject typically wears focusing on textures, patterns and lines. What is the one thing about your subject's outer appearance you think best defines him or her? Write down five words describing how your subject moves and typical facial expressions. Finally, write one sentence describing his or her overall personality. Use your brainstorming notes to create a black-and-white line drawing of your subject.

# Hirschfeld and DANCE

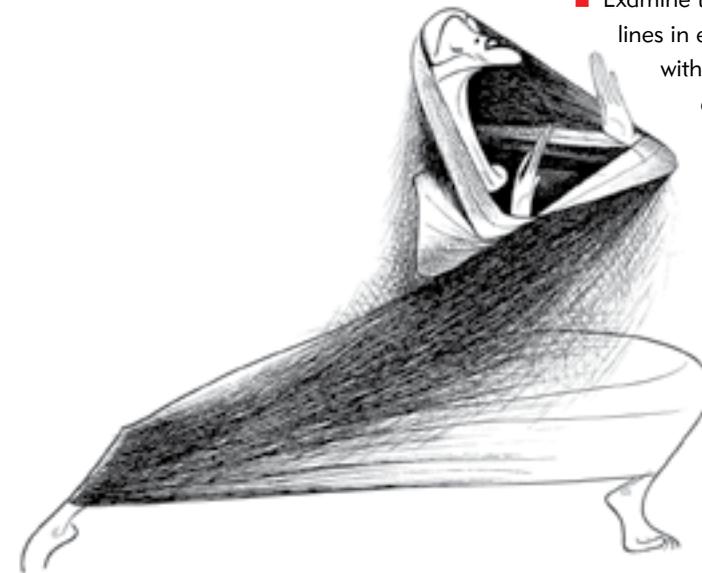


George Balanchine, director of New York City Ballet, in rehearsal, 1974

## Dance Making

### Grade 2

- Examine two contrasting Hirschfeld drawings. Which lines in each image are straight or curvy? Improvise with straight and curved pathways in the body and in space. What sorts of movements does each image suggest? What parts of the body are in motion? Explore your own movements using these parts of the body. What kind of energy or dynamics is suggested in each image—light or strong, free or bound, sudden or continuous? Explore these dynamics. In response to the drawings, choose three different kinds of movements, a straight or curved pathway, and a kind of energy or dynamics. Create a movement sentence, practice it, and perform it for your class. Discuss how the two drawings influenced your choices in the dance you created.



Martha Graham, 1968 (above)

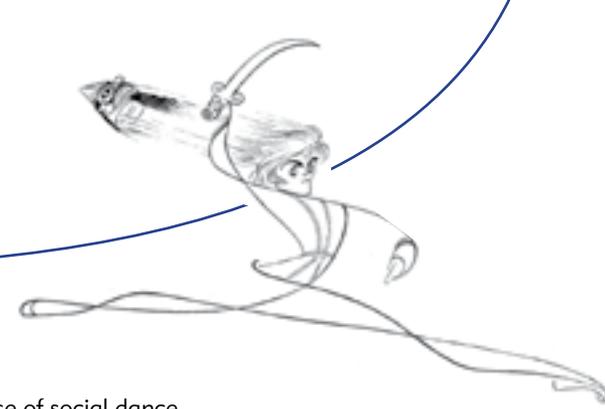
### Grade 5

- Choose four of the Hirschfeld drawings of dancers. As you study the images, isolate and describe the actions or dance movements you see. What body shapes are depicted in the drawings? How are levels, directions, speed, rhythm, and dynamics suggested? What about these elements suggests a particular dance style? Create one movement suggested by each of the four images separately. Then put the four movements together into a short dance phrase.
- Working in small groups, combine your Hirschfeld dance phrases into a group dance. Find a way to move your dance through space. Start and end your dance in a tableau that reflects all four drawings.



An Impression of the cakewalk in *St. Louis Woman*, 1946

Hirschfeld and DANCE continued

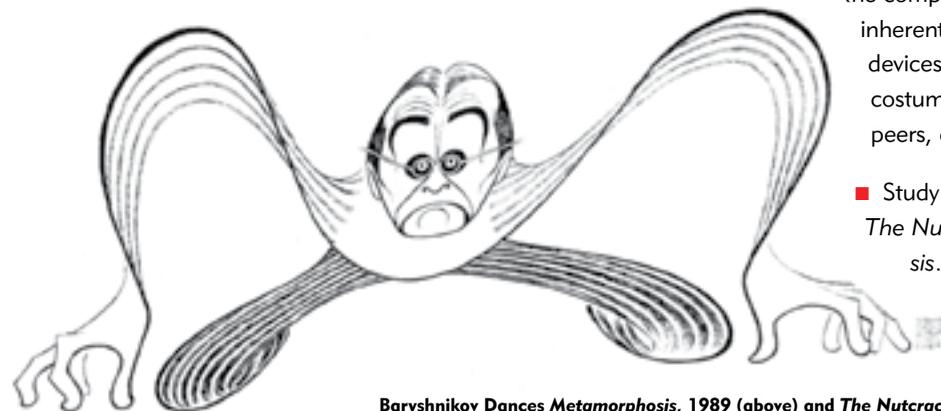


Grade 8

- Discuss the history and purpose of social dance.
- Identify the social dances in the Hirschfeld dance images in *Oklahoma!* (p. 27) and the cakewalk from Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer's *St. Louis Woman*. Choose one image depicting a social dance and research its history. How does Hirschfeld's drawing illuminate the vitality of this social dance in terms of energy and emotion? What does the image tell you about the cultural and social environment in which this dance arose?
- Work with a small group to create a short piece based on this social dance, using information from your research and visual clues from the Hirschfeld image. Vary the formations and dynamics in the piece, inserting at least one surprise moment. Choose music and costumes based on your research and the Hirschfeld image.
- Discuss social dance in relation to Hirschfeld's quote: "The subject that motivates and inspires me is people." (*Hirschfeld: Art and Recollections*, p. 18) Perform your dance for peers, and discuss how this quote applies to your piece.

Grade 12

- Study one of Hirschfeld's group dance images. Take notes describing gesture, facial expression, body language. Improvise to create an original movement vocabulary derived from these elements.
- As you're studying the image, think about how Hirschfeld communicates choreographic devices such as repetition, echoing, accumulation, juxtaposition, variation. How does he utilize these ideas in visual terms?
- Use the Hirschfeld dance image you have studied, your notes, and your resulting original movement vocabulary as the inspiration for a dance. Choose a cast for your dance, taking into account the number of dancers in the image, and the complexity or simplicity of the composition. Identify a theme inherent in your movement, and make use of the choreographic devices suggested by the Hirschfeld image. Choose music and costumes suggested by the drawing. Perform the piece for peers, and describe your process from image to stage.
- Study Hirschfeld's images of Mikhail Baryshnikov in the ballet *The Nutcracker* and in the theater/dance piece *Metamorphosis*. Identify the overall feeling of each show. How does Hirschfeld's style in each drawing reflect the styles of the different performances?



Baryshnikov Dances *Metamorphosis*, 1989 (above) and *The Nutcracker*, 1988 (above right)

James Cagney in *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, 1934



## Dance Literacy

### Grade 2

- Look at the Hirschfeld dance images. Which images show movements that are sharp? Smooth? Flowing? Jagged? Think of five movement energy words that come to mind when looking at the images.
- What are the feelings you experience when you look at Hirschfeld's dance images? What emotions do you think the dancers are trying to convey?
- What movement actions do you see in the images? List five movement action words that you have found in the drawings.
- Watch on video the dances that Hirschfeld has depicted, such as Mikhail Barishnikov's *The Nutcracker* (Kultur Video, 1977), or those in *Oklahoma!* (20th Century Fox, 1955), or *Yankee Doodle Dandy* with James Cagney (Warner Home Video, 1942). How are the drawings different from the live action in the videos?

### Grade 5

- Which of the Hirschfeld dance images seem to suggest a narrative or story? What about the drawing leads you to infer this story? What might the dancer or dancers have been doing before the moment captured in the drawing? What might they do next? Why do you think so?
- Study the Hirschfeld dance images. What dance genres do they represent? What elements in the drawings give you clues about the style or genre?
- Working in groups, use the Internet and your school library to research the life and career of one of the dance artists Hirschfeld portrays. Include information about the style or genre of dance practiced by this artist, and the particular show or dance that Hirschfeld chose to depict. Present your findings to the class.

### Grade 8

- Before studying the Hirschfeld images of Cagney and Baryshnikov (p. 43), watch these two performers dancing (both performances are available on video). Write down your impressions of each dance performance, describing movements, combinations of movements, the relationship of the body to the stage and to the audience, and how the body moves through space. Which of these elements reflects particular stylistic traits of tap and ballet, and which elements reflect the personal styles of these two performers?



**Chicago with Chita Rivera,  
Jerry Orbach, and Gwen Verdon, 1975 (above)**

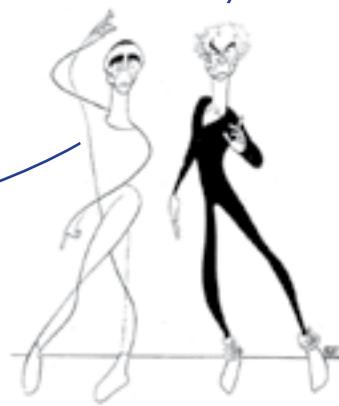
**Bob Fosse, Broadway director/  
choreographer, 1977 (right)**

*“His ability to capture movement in accurate detail is as great as his knack for catching personal likenesses.”* Louise Kerz Hirschfeld

*“He is to caricature what Fred Astaire is to dance.”* Jules Feiffer,  
at the dedication ceremony of the newly named Al Hirschfeld Theatre on June 23, 2003

*Hirschfeld and DANCE continued*

**Paul Taylor and  
Merce Cunningham,  
choreographers, 2001**



- After seeing the videos, observe the Hirschfeld images of James Cagney (p. 44) and Mikhail Baryshnikov (p. 43). How did Hirschfeld’s observations of these performers’ dance styles match your impressions? How were they different? How did Hirschfeld change his style to portray tap dance and ballet?

- Use a Hirschfeld drawing as the basis for improvisation. Create a dance improvisation that reflects the images and emotions depicted in Hirschfeld’s work. Recreate the rhythms, dynamics, and tempos Hirschfeld uses in his drawings of dancers or choreographers.
- Read the quotes on the opposite page by Louise Hirschfeld and Jules Feiffer about Hirschfeld and dance, and discuss them in relationship to several of his images of dance.

#### Grade 12

- Create a dance portfolio for the year, including journal reflections, research, ideas and drawings of dances, dance notations, clippings about dance from magazines and newspapers, review clippings, dance resources, and performance notes. Use Hirschfeld drawings as markers delineating each section of your portfolio. Attach to each drawing an analysis of the image in terms of its depiction of body line, force, energy, attack, use of weight, dancer’s intention and focus, style/genre, artist, and venue. Describe the reason you have used each drawing as a marker for its section.
- Study Hirschfeld’s images of different styles of dance. How are the dances different? How are the dances connected? How does Hirschfeld connect them through his drawings? Use these observations to inform a brief reflective paper about elements common to all dance styles and genres.
- Use Hirschfeld’s dance images as an entry point to discuss the differences between dance forms such as ballet, modern dance (e.g., “Martha Graham, 1938” on p. 41), jazz dance, Broadway tap, Broadway theater dance (e.g., “Bob Fosse, 1977”).
- Study Hirschfeld’s image of the choreographers Paul Taylor and Merce Cunningham. Consider how Hirschfeld depicts each choreographer and how that depiction reflects the artist’s style of dance.
- Study Hirschfeld’s image of the director/choreographer Bob Fosse. Then view his image from *Chicago*, a show choreographed by Fosse. Consider how Hirschfeld visually connects the artist and his style of choreography in these two images.





Tommy Tune in *Tommy Tune Tonight*, 1992



Ray Bolger in *Where's Charley?*, 1949

*"It is an eternal delight to witness the wit and magic of Al Hirschfeld's art. Not only did his art introduce me to a higher version of my favorite stars and personalities, he also introduced me to the possibilities of my own image that I had never pondered. Consequently, I aspired to dance in a way based on his dizzying drawings of me that I hadn't realized was, in truth, my essential self, my true dance. He is indeed the Line King!"*

Tommy Tune

### Making Connections

#### Grade 2

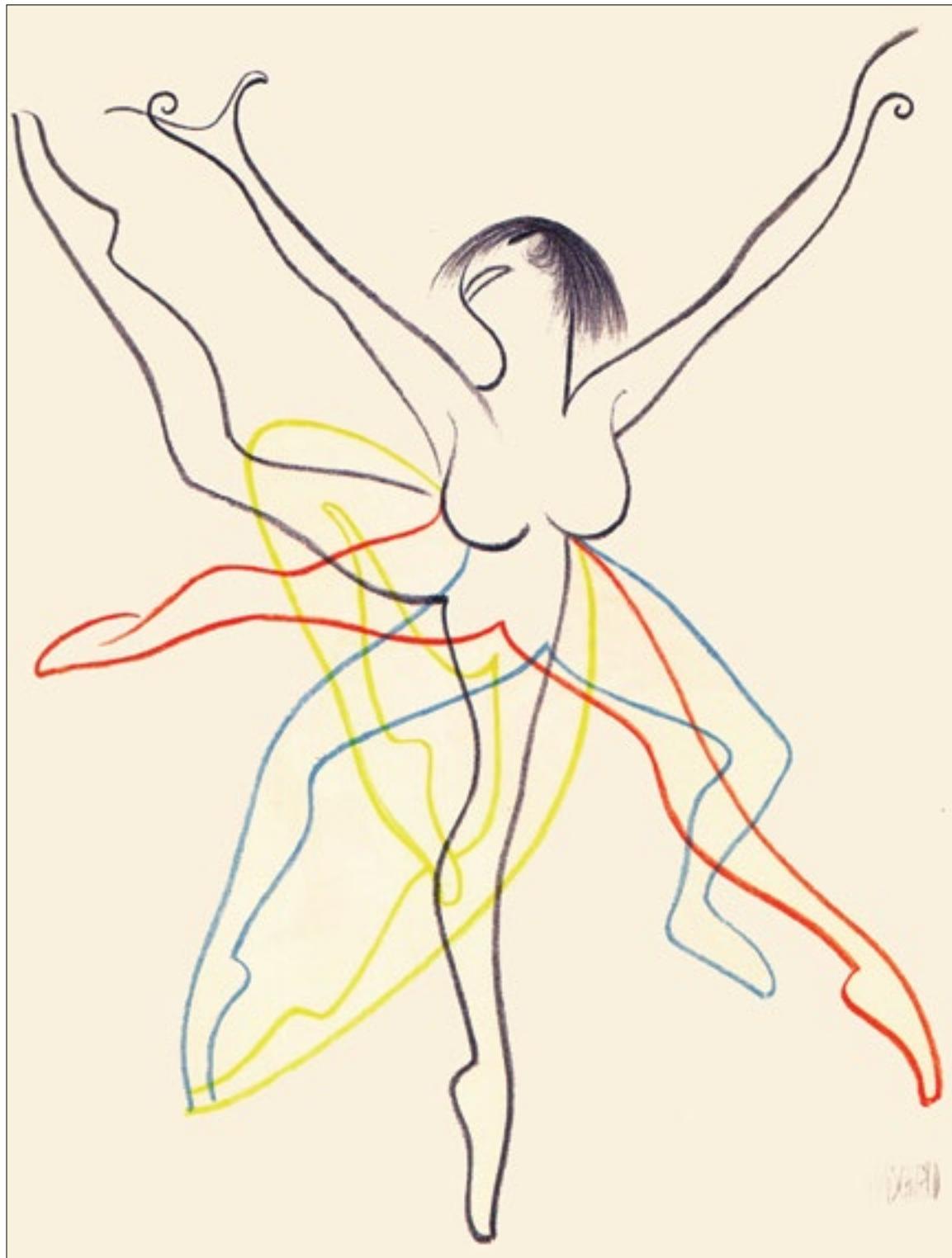
- Use the Hirschfeld dance images to discuss why people dance. For each dance image, discuss why you think that dance was created.
- How are the dance movements you see in Hirschfeld's work like the movements you see every day? For each dance image, describe one similar movement you saw today.
- What is the difference between dancing and posing? Are the dancers in Hirschfeld's images dancing or posing? Discuss how Hirschfeld captures movement in a single moment. How is a drawing of dance different from a live performance? From a photograph?

#### Grade 5

- What is a value? What is a belief? Are there values and beliefs about dance in these images? What values and beliefs are reflected in the dances Hirschfeld captured? Are they the dancers' values and beliefs? Or Hirschfeld's?
- What is Hirschfeld's "movement palette"? What are the visual cues and techniques he uses to portray different styles of movement and dance?
- Discuss the use of symmetry and asymmetry in Hirschfeld's drawings of dance and dancers.

#### Grade 8

- Using Internet or library resources, research the training, life, and career of one of the dancers or choreographers Hirschfeld drew.
- Study the costumes worn by the dancers in Hirschfeld's drawings. Discuss how costumes help to tell the story and convey the emotions of the dance, and how dress affects movement.
- Some have said that a costume designer is part tailor, part psychologist. What do they mean? Discuss the role of costume design in dance productions, and its relation to other visual arts such as drawing.
- Create a dance map of New York City. Use a city map to locate the following musical landmarks, venues where dancers that Hirschfeld drew performed: Lincoln Center, the Broadway theater district, New York City Center, the Joyce Theater, Joyce Soho, Brooklyn Academy of Music. Where are you in relation to these venues?



**Rhythm (1969), lithograph from *Rhythm* (left)**

**Practice (1969), lithograph from *Rhythm* (bottom right)**

#### Grade 12

- Research Broadway history and the history of Broadway dance. Use Hirschfeld's images to illustrate different stages in the history of Broadway dance, and describe the significance of the historical moment depicted in each image used.
- Create a dance based on Hirschfeld's life, from his coming to New York to his success. Use details from the biography beginning on page 3 as a foundation for your dance. You may choose to treat this subject in a narrative fashion, or make use of elements of Hirschfeld's personal or professional journey as thematic material to inform a non-narrative piece. In either approach, explore non-literal movement vocabulary.
- Explore the use of gesture in Hirschfeld's drawings. How can an exaggeration of physical gestures inform both art and dance?

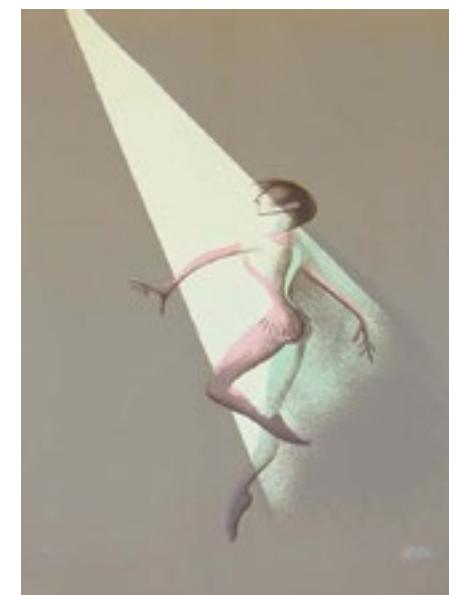
#### Community and Cultural Resources

##### Grade 2

- Create several gesture drawings of your classmates.
- Attend dance performances at schools or local professional venues. Draw pictures of what you saw, focusing especially on the dancers' full bodies. Try to recreate the quality of their movements on paper.

##### Grade 5

- Visit your school library, the local public library, and the Dance Collection at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center. Find books about and images of the dancers Hirschfeld portrays.
- Create a guided tour through the life of a dancer that Hirschfeld portrays using appropriate Websites.
- How is a choreographer's and a dancer's individuality expressed in the dances they create and in their performance of dance?





*West Side Story* with Josie de Guzman, Ken Marshall, Hector Jaime Mercado, and Debbie Allen, 1980

## Hirschfeld and DANCE continued

- Show the Hirschfeld images to your parents. Ask for their responses to the images and how the images compare to the experiences they have had as part of an audience.

### Grade 8

- Visit the Dance Collection at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, and view films of performances by one of the artists Hirschfeld depicted over the course of his or her career.
- View classic movie versions of Broadway shows and movie musicals featuring artists depicted by Hirschfeld over the course of their careers.
- Conduct research on the history of salsa dancing, as depicted in Hirschfeld's 1980 drawing of *West Side Story*.

### Grade 12

- Use school library, public libraries, research libraries, Internet resources, interviews and performance on video to research the lives and careers of dancers Hirschfeld portrays.
- Trace the history of performance of one social dance or piece of choreography that Hirschfeld has depicted—where and by whom it has been performed. Make use of all research resources available, including film, videotape, and interviews of contemporary dancers who have performed this work. Catalog how the performances have changed over the years, and speculate on how society's prevailing values can affect performance styles.

## Careers and Lifelong Learning

### Grade 2

- Draw a picture of someone performing one of the following jobs:
  - » Choreographer
  - » Dancer
  - » Musical accompanist
  - » Costume designer

Discuss what it might be like to do this type of work for a living.

## Be a "Characterist"

Choose a famous dance luminary, either a choreographer or a dancer. Research his or her life, dance style, and appearance. Use your research to create a black-and-white line drawing of your subject, focusing especially on how your drawing style can evoke both the dance genre of your subject and his/her unique personal characteristics. Use your drawing as the stimulus for creating a solo character dance that captures the essence of this luminary.



Sweet Charity with Gwen Verdon, Helen Gallagher, and Thelma Oliver, 1966

Hirschfeld and DANCE continued

■ Choose one of the jobs above. Create a one minute dance improvisation of someone performing that job. Ask your teacher to photograph your improvisation. How does your photograph compare with Hirschfeld's drawing of this type of artist? How does it compare with your drawing?

### Grade 5

■ Attend a professional dance performance. Study the program to see the various professions listed, such as:

- » Choreographer
- » Dancer
- » Composer
- » Costume designer
- » Set designer
- » Lighting designer
- » Rehearsal director
- » Stage manager
- » Technical director

■ Discuss these different professions and think about the question. How many people does it take to produce a dance performance? Discuss how these jobs are interrelated.

### Grade 8

■ Identify the different dance occupations Hirschfeld describes through his drawings.

■ Research and explore the training and education necessary to take on those occupations.

■ Research and explore the relationships between various professions in and related to dance (e.g., dance company manager, publicist, marketing director, house manager). How do these professions differ from similar professions in other arts?

### Grade 12

■ Make a list of characteristics you would need to be a successful:

- » Choreographer
- » Dancer
- » Marketing director for dance
- » Dance administrator

■ Study Hirschfeld's images of dancers and choreographers. What characteristics does he give them?

# Hirschfeld and THEATER



*A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Robert Helpmann and Moira Shearer, 1954

## Theater Making

### Grade 2

- Recognize and mirror the emotions on display in Hirschfeld's images. Recreate the physical poses or tableaux that the characters create.
- Study the Hirschfeld images of a scene from a play or musical. Discuss how a drawing tells a story by answering the five W's (Who? What? When? Where? Why?) about the image. How does this drawing tell a story? What is the beginning/middle/end of the story? What are the main characters? Recreate this story in storytelling.
- Describe the props the characters are using in the image.
- Describe the costumes the actors are wearing in the image.
- How do the props and costumes help to tell the story? What do they tell us about the characters?
- Create a tableau mirroring one of the Hirschfeld images. Take a photo of your tableau; compare it with the Hirschfeld image. How is the photograph of a performance different from a drawing of a performance?
- Hirschfeld drew both images of actors and images of actors creating characters. What's the difference between an actor and a character? Can you see that difference in Hirschfeld's theater drawings? Compare Hirschfeld's 1964 drawing from *Fiddler on the Roof* (p. 58), which shows the actors creating characters in performance, with newspaper photographs that show actors in everyday life.

### Grade 5

- Identify or imagine the following in Hirschfeld's theater images, providing visual evidence:
  - » Conflict
  - » Resolution
  - » Relationships between the characters
  - » Intentions of the characters
  - » Character traits and emotions
  - » Obstacles hindering the characters
  - » Setting
  - » Time period

*Fiddler on the Roof* with Julia Migenes,  
Austin Pendleton, Tanya Everett, Joanna Merlin,  
Zero Mostel, Gino Conforti, and Maria Karnilova,  
1964



■ Choose one of the figures in a Hirschfeld drawing. Create a monologue to reflect the character's inner thoughts at a particular moment. Use proper usage, grammar guidelines, and script structure. Create a monologue dealing with a conflict, containing a beginning, middle and end.

■ Working only from Hirschfeld's drawing, create a character biography based on the figure you've chosen. Read or see the play or musical from which the image is taken. How does your biography match the actual character?

**Grade 8**

■ Study the Hirschfeld theater images. Can you tell if the image is from a tragedy? Comedy? Farce? Musical theatre? Opera? What about the drawing leads you to your decision? What evidence can you provide to support your opinion?

■ Choose one of the Hirschfeld images. At what point in the show does this scene occur? The beginning, middle, or end? What about the drawing leads you to think so?

**Grade 12**

■ Study the Hirschfeld theater images, especially those of scenes from plays or musicals. Can you identify any of these?:

» STYLES – Realism, magic realism, abstract realism, docudrama, musical theater. What evidence do you have to support your observations?

» FORMS – Poetry, ensemble plays, collage plays, linear narrative, non-linear narrative. What evidence do you have to support your observations?

» CONVENTIONS – Narration, chorus, masks, ritual, flashbacks, play within a play. What evidence do you have to support your observations?

What drawing techniques does Hirschfeld use to portray any of these styles, forms, or conventions? Are his visual arts techniques different for different theater forms and styles?

■ Choose one of the figures in a Hirschfeld drawing. Create a monologue to reflect that character's emotional inner life—his or her needs, intentions, motivations.

■ Choose one of the Hirschfeld images that portray a scene in a play or musical. Although Hirschfeld concentrates on actors' faces and bodies, what does he show us of the set? How does it relate to the actors? How does it help to tell the story? What does Hirschfeld's indication of the set tell us about the time, place, and historical period? Working only with Hirschfeld's drawing, create a floor plan of the set. Create a model of the set.



*Peter Pan* with Mary Martin and Cyril Ritchard, Richard Wyatt, and Don Lurio, 1954

■ Theater is unique. Each performance we see is happening only once; it will never happen in the exact same way again. But theater pieces can live again through revivals. Popular plays and musicals are often produced years after the original presentation in new productions that reflect the new performers, new creative staff and the time in which it is produced. Because Al Hirschfeld had such a long career he was able to witness and record many original productions and their revivals. Compare Hirschfeld's images of the productions of *Peter Pan* from 1954 and 1998, and *West Side Story* from 1957 (p. 26) and 1980 (p. 52). List the differences and similarities in the productions as Hirschfeld saw them. How do the drawings reflect the times in which they were created?



Cathy Rigby as Peter Pan, 1998

### Theater Literacy

#### Grade 2

■ Choose a Hirschfeld image that portrays a scene in a play or musical. As a class, let's imagine the story of the play. Who are the characters? What are their names? How does the story begin? Can you tell when in the story of the show the scene takes place? What about Hirschfeld's images leads you to think so?

- What are the characters feeling in the scene Hirschfeld depicts?
- What about their posture, gestures, and facial expressions tells us about the characters' feelings? Create a list of feelings and emotions from the drawing.
- What is the movement like? Fast, slow, smooth or choppy? What does gesture, movement, and body language tell us about the character? What kind of person would move in this way?
- From the character's body, can you tell what his or her voice might sound like? Describe the voice using theater vocabulary (e.g., volume, pitch, and tempo).



Carol Channing in *Hello Dolly*, 1964

■ Describe the costumes and set in the scene Hirschfeld draws. What do they tell you about the story? About the characters?

#### Grade 5

■ Study a scene from a play or a musical that Hirschfeld has portrayed. Can you tell the status of the different characters? Can you find archetypes such as the hero or villain? What evidence do you have to support your observations?

■ What is foreshadowing? Can you tell from this scene what might happen later in the play or musical?

■ If you were going to tell a friend about the performance based solely on Hirschfeld's drawings, how would you describe it? What questions might you have for the artistic team (e.g., the designers and director)?

■ Without reading or seeing the play or musical Hirschfeld is drawing, use one of his images as the foundation for an improvisation. First, using only the drawing, decide with your partners what is happening during the scene—what is the story, the conflict between the characters and their emotions. Take two minutes and create a short improvisation. Take a photo or video of your improv and compare it with Hirschfeld's drawing.

#### Grades 8 & 12

■ Place the Hirschfeld theater images in the context of theater history. When were these productions on stage? Based on your observations, what evidence can you provide to support your conjecture? Research the period of theater history to find out what other shows were produced on Broadway at this time.

■ The theater critic Frank Rich called Al Hirschfeld "the bard of the evanescent, capturing magic on the wing before it vanishes forever." (*Hirschfeld's New York*, p. 10) What did he mean? Why is theater an evanescent art form?

■ Louise Kerz Hirschfeld said, "Long before videocameras, it was Al doing the accurate recording of our greatest shows. ... Because of his incredible attention to visual detail and near photographic eye, Hirschfeld's drawings provide a wealth of visual history, not only of the theater but of American cultural life." (*Hirschfeld On Line*, p. 21) How can the totality of Hirschfeld's images be seen as a timeline of theatrical history? Choosing several Hirschfeld drawings at random, can you place them in a chronological timeline? Research the productions to support your timeline.

■ Al Hirschfeld said, "I have always loved to draw the explosive kind of actors: the ones who never closed a door; they slammed it. They were bigger than life—Charlie Chaplin, Ray Bolger, Carol Channing, Zero Mostel, Katharine Hepburn ... they



Charlie Chaplin, 1975 (left)  
The Al Hirschfeld Theatre,  
2007

know what they looked like, they exaggerated themselves and consequently looked like their caricatures. ... Modern actors, in contrast, are trying to reproduce life accurately, photographically." (*Hirschfeld: Art and Recollections*, p. 23) Using library or Internet resources, research the lives and careers of the actors Hirschfeld mentions. What about their styles and attributes made them "explosive"?

- Are there current performers who can be described as "bigger than life"? What actors popular today would Hirschfeld have loved?

### Making Connections

#### Grade 5

- Study one of the scenes Hirschfeld drew. Discuss how these art forms come together with theater in the scene:

- » Written and spoken word
- » Music
- » Visual arts
- » Dance

#### Grade 8

- Using Internet or library resources, research the training, lives, and careers of one of the theater artists Hirschfeld drew.
- Create a theatrical map of New York City. Use a city map to locate theatrical landmarks where artists who are represented in Hirschfeld drawings worked (e.g., venues in the Broadway theater district, Time Square, Lincoln Center). Where are you in relation to these venues?
- Al Hirschfeld has a theater named after him. Locate the theater. What was it called prior to be named "The Hirschfeld"?
- Find out two locations where Broadway theater rehearsals take place. Mark these locations on your map.



“Al Hirschfeld told me once “that his goal in his work was to make the drawing with a single line.” On many occasions we can see how well he succeeded, leaving us not only with the gift of his art but the genius of his craft, and true legacy to us all: **SIMPLICITY!**” Mandy Patinkin



Bernadette Peters and Mandy Patinkin in *Sunday in the Park with George*, 1984

#### Grade 12

- Al Hirschfeld captures a moment in time in his drawings, like a photograph.

Discuss the similarities and differences between visual art and theater.

- Al Hirschfeld used a visual art—drawing—to describe another art form, the theater. How does the theater explore visual arts? Read a play about visual arts, such as *Sunday in the Park with George* by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* by Steve Martin, or *Art* by Yasmina Reza. Study Hirschfeld’s drawing from *Sunday in the Park with George*. How does he portray that work’s exploration of the art form of painting on stage?

- Read the play or musical Hirschfeld has drawn scenes from. Which scene is Hirschfeld portraying? What do you think is Hirschfeld’s opinion of the characters? What do you think is Hirschfeld’s opinion of the play or the musical itself? What about his drawing leads you to think so?

#### Careers and Lifelong Learning

##### Grade 2

- Draw a picture of someone performing one of the following jobs:

- » Actor
- » Director
- » Playwright
- » Set designer
- » Costume designer
- » Producer

Discuss what it might be like to do this type of work for a living.

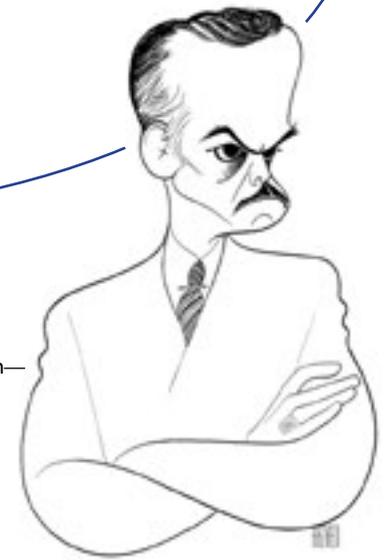
- Choose one of the jobs above. Create a one minute improvisation of someone performing that job, showing that occupation’s main duties. Photograph your dramatization. How does your photograph compare with Hirschfeld’s version of this type of artist?

- Hirschfeld said of his first visit to the theater, “I was enchanted with it. It transported me to another world. ... You might say that I was stage-struck. I was mesmerized by the stage.” Read *Pamela’s First Musical* by Wendy Wasserstein. Compare Pamela’s reactions with Hirschfeld’s. Have you ever seen live theater? How did you feel the first time you saw a work of theater?



Cameron Mackintosh manipulates the cast and creative team of *Putting It Together*, 1993 (left)

Eugene O'Neill, 1988 (right)



**Grade 5**

- What particular skills would you need to be an—
  - » Actor
  - » Director
  - » Playwright
  - » Set designer
  - » Costume designer
  - » Producer

Study Hirschfeld's images of men and women doing some of these jobs. What characteristics does Hirschfeld give them?

- Research and write about a particular theater related job. Along with the skills needed to have that occupation, what training do you need? Name some famous people who have held that position. Invite a theatrical professional to your classroom to discuss the different jobs in the theater.

**Grade 8**

- Study the Hirschfeld image from the show *Putting It Together*. Cameron Mackintosh was the producer of that show. Knowing what you've learned about a producer's job, which figure in Hirschfeld's drawing do you think is Mackintosh?
- Compare two Hirschfeld theatrical images in terms of rehearsal vs. performance. How does Hirschfeld portray the atmosphere of a rehearsal as opposed to a performance? Based on your own experiences, what are the differences in rehearsal and performance?
- Identify a theater artist Hirschfeld draws. Research his or her life and career, focusing especially on education and training.

**Grade 12**

- Research what education or training one might need to become an—
  - » Actor
  - » Director
  - » Playwright
  - » Set designer
  - » Costume designer
  - » Producer
- Research the history and importance of the theatrical unions they belong to.



Mildred Dunnock and Lee J. Cobb in *Death Of A Salesman* (original 1949 production), 1970



Duffy Square

### Community and Cultural Resources

#### Grade 2

- While Hirschfeld focused most of his energies on Broadway, he loved all aspects of New York theater. Where do you fit in? When you perform in your school or in your community, how are you a part of the NYC theater scene?
- Talk to an actor or theater artist in your community or in a post show discussion. How do they see themselves as part of a community?

#### Grade 5

- Using appropriate Websites create a guided tour through the life of a theater artist that Hirschfeld portrays.
- Take part in a walking tour of the Broadway theater district. Identify these landmarks: Broadway theaters, The New York Times Building, One Times Square, the statue of George M. Cohan in Duffy Square, the TKTS booth. Why is Times Square called Times Square? Along with the *The New York Times*, Al Hirschfeld worked for other newspapers including the *New York Herald Tribune*. Why is Herald Square called Herald Square?

#### Grade 8 & 12

- Use theater archives and the collections of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center to compare Hirschfeld drawings of plays or musicals with photos of the original productions.
- Create a theater exhibit of Hirschfeld drawings side by side with theater photographs. Visit the theater collection at the Museum of the City of New York for ideas about creating a theater exhibit.

## Be a "Characterist"

Choose a well known actor. Research his or her life, contributions to the theater, best-known parts and, if possible, watch a video of his or her performance. What are the aspects of the actor's performance that most exemplify his or her personality and character? Use your research and brainstorming notes to create a black-and-white line drawing of your subject.

# RESOURCES



*Les Misérables* with Terrance Mann, Colin Wilkinson, and cast, 1987

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## *DVD/VHS*

*The Line King: The Al Hirschfeld Story*. Directed by Susan W. Dryfoos. Homevision, 2004.

## *Web Sites*

The Margo Feiden Galleries: [www.alhirschfeld.com](http://www.alhirschfeld.com)

*Time* magazine article: [www.time.com/time/columnist/corliss/article/0,9565,417721-2,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/columnist/corliss/article/0,9565,417721-2,00.html)

PBS American Masters: [www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/hirschfeld\\_a.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/hirschfeld_a.html)

Library of Congress Exhibition: [www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/hirschfeld/](http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/hirschfeld/)

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