The Principle Wife

book and lyrics by

Taylor Vaughn & Mark Greenhalgh

music by

Jonathan Keith

THE PRINCIPLE WIFE VENTURES, INC.

The Covey Center for the Arts

present

The Principle Wife

An Inspiring New Musical of How Love Endures

Book and Lyrics by
Taylor Vaughn & Mark Greenhalgh

Music by
Jonathan Keith

Directed by
Tanya Behunin

featuring

Twyla Wilson
Ethan Kelso
John Donovan Wilson
Erin Wilson
Mattie Grace
Tanner James
Yahosh Bonner
Christopher Higbee
Julie Webb Burgess

Production Team

Executive Producer
TAYLOR VAUGHN

Authors
TAYLOR VAUGHN
and
MARK GREENHALGH

Composer
JONATHAN KEITH

Director
TANYA BEHUNIN

Artistic Director
JAY CLARK

Music Director
GAYLE LOCKWOOD

Orchestra Conductor
JAY RICHARDS

Choreographer
JAMIE KALAMA

Assistant Choreographer
MCKENNA HOATHER

Assistant Choreographer
JARED MURILLO

Stage Manager
CHANDRA ORME*

Assistant Stage Manager
ALYSSA KETLER

Assistant Stage Manager / Deck
JACOB BURR

Costume Designer
JANNETTE LUSK-UNTERBORN

Lighting Design
DARREN MAXFIELD

Sound Design
DAN MORGAN

Set Design
JAY RICHARDS

Prop Master
MARIAN MCCANN

Assistant Prop Master
MARK GREENHALGH

Hair and Makeup design
MCKENNA HOATHER

Rehearsal Pianist
CAMERON SMITH

Deck Chief
DAVE BROWN

Deck Hand
CARTER BLEYL

General Manager
RICHARD RADSTONE
C47 CONTENT LAB

Legal Counsel
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Character Artwork
PETER GALLAGHER

Public Relations
MELANIE BUDGE
MICHELLE MOORE

Advertising / Graphic Design
TERRI RADSTONE
C47 CONTENT LAB

**Courtesy of Actors' Equity Association.*

Orchestra

Conductor

JAY RICHARDS

Concertmaster

AARON ASHTON

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in alphabetical order

AMBRYNN BOWMAN
MARCE BOWMAN
JAMES BRINKMAN
EMILY BROWN
JULES COLUMBEL
SAM DAY
MELISSA DRAPER
CHRIS EGBERT
DONNI EVANS
KELIN GIBBONS
KAREN HASTINGS
BRIAN HICKS
JOSH HOLDER
NATHAN HURST
NATHAN JACKMAN
WENDY KOLLER
ELLA LARSON
MIKE MEMMOTT
BECCA MOEN
CASSIE OLSON
CANDI WAGNER

From the Director

First and foremost, THANK YOU to the Covey Center and the city of Provo for welcoming our world premiere of *The Principle Wife* into your community. To the creators of *The Principle Wife,* Taylor Vaughn, Mark Greenhalgh and Jonathan Keith, thank you for trusting me to weave the fabric together of a story which people are afraid to mention, but which so desperately needs to be told. There have been so many untruths, misrepresentations of plural marriage out there *(Sister Wives, Big Love, Under the Banner of Heaven,* etc.) portraying the principle our ancestors were asked to live but with totally false interpretations.

Thank you to our talented and hard-working performers, including our fabulous live orchestra, and crew. They provide the support necessary to keep the fabric strong. We are so thankful they are all part of our team.

Sincere gratitude goes out to you, to our audience members for having the courage to support our efforts to tell this important story. Our mission from the beginning has been to be truthful storytellers; to help you appreciate the history this beautiful love story emulates, and to show that each of us can do hard things that come up in life, especially strong, diligent women. *The Principle Wife* has proven to be relatable to diverse, modern audiences, not just to the Latter-day Saints whose ancestors were asked to live "the principle" when there was nothing popular about it.

The Principle Wife is a prime example of passion, candor and commitment. This play is intensely special to me, not only because I was given the opportunity to direct it, but because as a company of artists we have pulled together to make this dream come true. Writers, Taylor Vaughn and Mark Greenhalgh started writing this play 32 years ago when they were graduate students at The American Film Institute. The script went through–I cannot even tell you how many—revisions, edits, and workshops. It was optioned three times in Hollywood as a film, but for some reason the time was not right. Then ten years ago this month the team grew to three when Jonathan Keith joined the artistic team to help create a musical out of this love story. Their collaboration with lyrics and music was magical. It all clicked and beautiful, moving songs were created. Michael Kerker–AVP, Musical Theater–ASCAP, when seeing a stage reading of *The Principle Wife* said, "You have an absolutely beautiful show here, ready to be produced. Where do you want to open? It can open anywhere! New York? L. A.? It is ready!" For some reason, we were supposed to stage our world premiere right here in Provo, Utah! Perhaps it is because the story takes place in southern Utah.

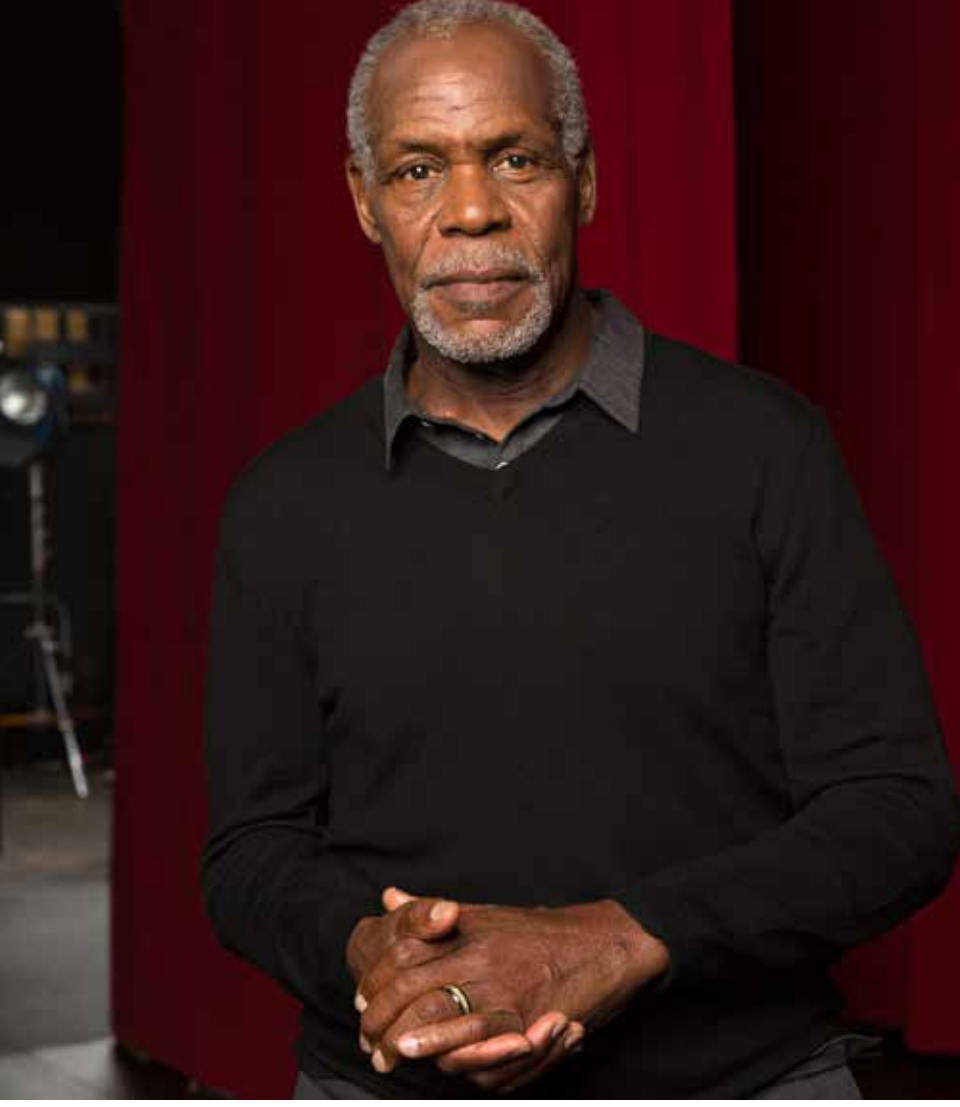
Thank you, again, for being a part of our Principle Wife team. Your reactions, your support and word-of-mouth recommendations are needed to carry this beautiful story to the rest of the world. But you are the first! There is something special about being the first.

I am curious, which character, which song you see/hear tonight will be your favorite; which character will you most relate to; which song will be the one to stick in your head long after you leave the theater? Will it be, "Always and Forever," "This is How it's Done," "We're Part of a Team," "Can We Begin Again?," "What Does a Woman Want"… everyone seems to have a different favorite.

The Principle Wife is our story, but it is soon to be your story as you will recognize yourself within its history. Thank you for being here and helping us to realize this dream.

With so much gratitude,

Tanya Behunin



A Very Special
THANK YOU

A big **thank you** to Danny Glover for joining our last Stage Reading—which led to where we are today.

Danny let us know that part of our story is indicative of what happened in the South after the emancipation proclamation in 1865: that many newly-freed slave women traveled to the North—sponsored by black men—who agreed to marry them sight unseen when they arrived and whose marriages endured.

The fact that such a great talent would recognize the impact of our story is both humbling and a sincere honor.

We thank Danny for making a special trip to Utah today, specifically to join us for our opening and to let everyone know how special our show is.

About Danny

Actor, producer and humanitarian Danny Glover has been a commanding presence on screen, stage and television for more than 30 years. He is widely known for his lead role as Roger Murtaugh in the *Lethal Weapon* film series. He also had leading roles in his films included *The Color Purple, To Sleep with Anger, Predator 2, Angels in the Outfield,* and *Operation Dumbo Drop.* Glover has prominent supporting roles in *Silverado, Witness, A Rage in Harlem, Dreamgirls, Shooter, Death at a Funeral, Beyond the Lights, Sorry to Bother You, The Last Black Man in San Francisco, The Dead Don't Die, Lonesome Dove* and *Jumanji: The Next Level.* He is also an active supporter of various political causes.

In addition to his film work, Glover is civil rights advocate, longtime supporter of union rights and United Nations Ambassador. In 2022, the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences honored Glover with the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award. Additionally, Glover has received numerous accolades, including the NAACP's President's Award and the Cuban National Medal of Friendship by the Cuban Council of State. He has also received nominations for four Primetime Emmy Awards, four Grammy Awards, and a Daytime Emmy Award.

Cast

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Rebecca Tanner
TWYLA WILSON*

Benjamin Tanner
ETHAN KELSO

Bishop McGuire
CHRISTOPHER HIGBEE

Vilate McGuire
JULIE WEBB BURGESS

Jessica Tanner
COSETTE CHRISTENSEN
CLARA MCCARTER

Elizabeth Tanner
LILLIAN CHARLTON
LONDON PALMER

Ensemble, u/s Sarah
ALYSSA BAUMGARTEN

Ensemble, u/s Rebecca
KEELY CONRAD

Ensemble, u/s Elsa
ABIGAIL HIGBEE

Congressman, Ensemble Ensemble Swing
JEFFREY HOATHER

Ensemble, Ensemble Swing
MCKENNA HOATHER

Congressman, u/s Benjamin
KC JOHNSON

Congressman, Ensemble Swing, u/s Doc Kimball
JARED MURILLO

Ensemble, u/s Vilate
ERICA SCHOEBINGER

Congressman, Ensemble, u/s New Bishop
TIM SCHWARZ

New Bishop, Congressman
YAHOSH BONNER

Doc Kimball, Congressman, u/s Erastus
TANNER JAMES

Erastus Lowe
JOHN DONOVAN WILSON*

Jacob Bradshaw
CAMERON ORME

Joshua Bradshaw
COLEMAN HIGBEE

Sarah Bradshaw
ERIN WILSON*

Zebedee Wilcox
MAX HIGBEE

Elsa Hendervroggen
MATTIE GRACE

Hannah Tanner
MORGAN HATCH
JULIET ROSE LAMMI

**Actors appear courtesy of Actors' Equity Association.*

Scene Synopsis

Act 1

Scene 1
Benjamin and Rebecca's wedding day
"No Matter What"

Scene 2
Eight years later in the Tanner Home
in St. George, Utah
"No Matter What" continued

Scene 3
Washington D.C.
"Damsels in Distress"

Scene 4
Tanner Home and Town Square
"A Time to Dance"
"A Better Time"

Scene 5
Tanner Home
"No Matter What Reprise"

Scene 6
The Next Morning on
the Tanner's Front Porch

Scene 7
Inside the Tanner Home
and the McGuire Home
"The Answer Was No"

Scene 8
Tanner Home
"Thy Will Be Done"

Scene 9
Bradshaw Cabin
"A Second Wife"

Scene 10
Tanner Home
"This is How It's Done"

Scene 11
Later that Evening

Scene 12
During the Night
"Just Hold On"

Scene 13
Tanner Orchard
"Part of a Team"

Scene 14
Tanner Home and Orchard
"Second Time Around"

Scene 15
Outside the Tanner Home
"A Better Time Reprise"

Scene 16
Erastus' Room and Tanner Home/Orchard
"If I Felt the Rain"

Scene 17
Tanner Kitchen and Sarah's Room

Scene 18
Tanner Home
"If I Felt the Rain Reprise"

Intermission

Act 2

Prologue
Washington D.C. and Tanner Home

Scene 1
Tanner Home and Train Station
"Another Wife"

Scene 2
Tanner Home
"This is How It's Done Reprise"

Scene 3
Outside the Tanner Home

Scene 4
Tanner Orchard Four Months Later
"Elsa's Song"

Scene 5
Erastus' Office

Scene 6
Tanner Home

Scene 7
Train Station
"Begin Again"

Scene 8
Tanner Homestead
"What Does a Woman Want?"

Scene 9
The Next Morning

Scene 10
Church and Tanner Homestead
"Just Hold On Reprise"

Scene 11
Community Quilting Bee
Six Weeks Later / Mountain Camp
"Wanting Him, Wanting Home"

Scene 12
Tanner Orchard
"Come With Me"
"Rebecca's Soliloquy"

Scene 13
Elsa's Room

Scene 14
Mountain Camp

Scene 15
Rebecca's Dining Room
"This is How It's Done *(2nd Reprise)*"

Scene 16
Epilogue
"How Do You Say Goodbye"
"We Will Walk Together/Love Everlasting"

Thank You...

We would like to offer a special thanks to those people and organizations who have provided special support to our production. Whether in sharing their time, treasure or professional expertise, their help has been immeasurable.

AMERICAN HERITAGE SCHOOL
American Fork, Utah

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
Provo, Utah

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Los Angeles, California

PASADENA PLAYHOUSE
Pasadena, California

CENTER STAGE
PERFORMING ARTS STUDIO
Orem, Utah

SIMMONS PIONEER MEMORIAL THEATRE
PROP SHOP
University of Utah
Salt Lake City, Utah

SUSAN DUEHLMEIER

Cast Biographies

Tayla Wilson
Ensemble, Swing
Originally from British Columbia, Canada, Tayla is excited to be a part of the beautiful show Ragtime! Her recent credits include Ms. Hannigan in Annie (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Sweet Charity (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in The Drowsy Chaperone (Theatre Calgary), Dance Captain/Swing in Cinderella (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Ragtime (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Bye Bye Birdie (Theatre Calgary), and Ensemble/Swing in Mamma Mia! (Theatre Calgary). Tayla graduated from BFA with a BFA in Musical Theatre from Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Tayla would like to thank her family and friends for their support, her favorite role in the life is mama to her two amazing kiddos, and her husband Ryan for being her rock. Tayla would like to dedicate her part in this show to her sister, who is the most beautiful human she knows.

Erica Kaber
Ensemble, Swing
Erica is thrilled to be performing in Ragtime! Erica recently finished her off-Broadway debut in Ever After at the Theatre Center in Philadelphia, PA. Other recent credits include Ensemble/Swing in Sweet Charity (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Cinderella (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Ragtime (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Bye Bye Birdie (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Mamma Mia! (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Annie (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Sweeney Todd (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Sweet Charity (Theatre Calgary), Ensemble/Swing in Ever After (Theatre Center), and Ensemble/Swing in Ever After (Theatre Center). Erica is a graduate of the University of Arizona Theatre Conservatory. Erica would like to thank her family and friends for their support, and her husband, Jonathan, for being her rock. Erica would like to dedicate her part in this show to her sister, Tayla.

Sarah Bradshaw
Ensemble, Swing
Sarah Bradshaw, Jonathan Bradshaw, Tiffany Bradshaw, Jennifer Bradshaw, Tiffany Bradshaw, Jennifer Bradshaw, Tiffany Bradshaw, Jennifer

Author's Note

Our motivation for writing *The Principle Wife* was to respond to our friends and critics who continually asked us the question, "What's the deal with your Church and polygamy." In fact, we discovered people who thought that "very strict Mormons" still live a polygamous lifestyle and dress like the Amish or Mennonites. We also discovered that in some countries—even today—the dictionary definition for the word "Mormon" is "polygamist." Hence, the reason for our telling the story of *The Principle Wife* was three-fold:

First, to tell people—in an entertaining way—that plural marriage (aka, polygamy) ended more than a century ago.

Second: to dispel stereotypes and misinformation about the principle of plural marriage, even in the 1800's, that it was NOT associated with the archaic idea of concubines or cultish practices.

Third: to honor our forebears who found the faith and courage to follow something very difficult, but which they felt God was asking them to do.

- Our music of how love can overcome any obstacle, ultimately became the focus of how to best tell this story.

As descendants of polygamous ancestors, we found our research into the journals, histories and passed-down stories of these people to be inspiring, tragic, funny and frustrating; sometimes disastrous and other times successful in unexpected ways. Ultimately, it made us love these oft-forgotten people who sacrificed self for what they felt was the greater good. Their stories impelled us to tell what hasn't been said and what is continually misunderstood. Doing it with music became the gift that helped make *The Principle Wife* accessible to mainstream audiences.

Taylor Vaughn

Mark Greenhalgh

Disclaimer

The Principle Wife is a independent work of fiction, inspired by journals, histories and family stories of the authors. It is not meant to be a complete detailing of the principle of plural marriage once practiced by some members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This play is not produced or affiliated with the church in any way, but merely an attempt to present an archetypal story of this topic and honor the ancestors of the authors.

History

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY OF THE NEW MUSICAL

The Principle Wife

The Principle Wife has been a very organic project for us. We wrote it first as an original screenplay (for a feature film) to explore the question of how women—and men—could possibly live in a plural-marriage, otherwise known as a polygamous relationship. It was prompted by so many of our friends who, after they got to know us, would privately ask, "…so what's the deal with polygamy, I mean, really?" In all fairness, we were embarrassed that some of our ancestors lived polygamy. We shied away from the topic ourselves, sort of sweeping-under-the carpet the fact that there was a family photo of our great-grandpa with his three wives and multiple children that passed around family reunions some time. Pretty soon, that photo was given to all the siblings as a gift, and our embarrassment become a curiosity, if not a criticism. We simply wanted to know why… and how even our own ancestor could possibly agree to live this way.

Smashing Stereotypes

So many assumptions surrounding polygamy are rife with stereotype and salacious propaganda; we just wanted to know the truth. We wanted to know why they did it and then who it was that would actually be able to make it work enough to stay with it.

While developing our screenplay, we met with other writers in an ad-hoc writers' group in hopes to motivate the strongest story we could muster. We never strove to make a political or religious statement as much as explore the social dynamics behind the personalities that managed to hold these plural marriages together. It was completely amazing to us that men and women would want to live polygamy in the first place, let alone risk arrest as laws were eventually passed to prevent their ability to continue living it. It was in that spirit that we found the story of *The Principle Wife.*

Hollywood Hype & Hyperoble

Our screenplay was optioned by three different companies from Suzanne de Passe to Michael Apted's company to other independent producers looking to make a name for themselves. They said our story had "that thing" they were looking for. But *The Principle Wife* never found its way to physical production. Production companies eventually belied their interest when they got nervous with our subject matter, that it may be perceived as a religious piece. It never was.

Like the Broadway musical and feature film, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Principle Wife* is about a religious people, but it's not about pushing or teaching religious doctrine. We deliberately made it about love. Just love. Love was the only way we could explain how anyone—anytime—could possibly be willing to subject themselves to such a dynamic as polygamy. No matter how off-putting, contradictory, or antithetical polygamy's history, this was still a human story about emotional relationships. Our theme always came back to love; that love had to overcome any obstacle or else no one would ever agree to live it. With conflict, controversy and continual hardship, our story kept pushing us to ask, "how far will anyone go for love even when it seems intolerable."

Making Music With Our Magic

Ironically, our writers group suggested that the story we ultimately developed seemed more palatable as a musical. And after being so close to film production on multiple occasions, we concluded that nobody saw it the way we intended; and no one was willing to take a risk on what might be perceived as too religious. Consequently, we came to the place where we felt that our story would never get told the way it was supposed to be told unless we said it ourselves, produced it ourselves and did it without an outside company who might be too worried about preconceived audience judgement before the story's impact could really be felt and understood the way it was supposed to.

We agreed to turn it into a musical, especially since we always wanted to write a musical but didn't have a connection with a composer. We subsequently met with three different composers in the next several months, all in hopes to flesh out a potential triad-partnership and create a full-scale musical. It wasn't until a serendipitous introduction to a young fourth composer, that we found a musical voice to tell the story of *The Principle Wife* for the stage. As odd as that may sound, the result has been as surprising and inspirational to us as it has been to audience.

More Impactful in Person

We have been able to mount five different stage readings through the course of the development of our story. The number one response we get from reading-audiences is that they are surprised; surprised, not only because the subject matter is so foreign to current culture, but because they would have never expected this kind of story to work, let alone as a musical…but it does.

Below are the steps we've taken in the process of completely changing *The Principle Wife* from a screenplay to a full-on stage musical.

- Work-shopped at Brigham Young University
- Stage reading at the Pasadena Playhouse
- Workshopped at the University of Michigan while our composer, Jonathan, was getting his Masters in Pedagogy.
- Private stage reading at Larry King's home w/ amily and potential investors
- Stage reading at USC while Jonathan was getting his post-graduate PHd
- A second stage reading at the Pasadena Playhouse
- Stage reading at the American Heritage School w/Danny Glover & Cedric the Entertainer as key participants.

Our goal is to see *The Principle Wife* produced as a musical for the stage in the summer of 2023. It has been an astonishing process to juxtapose our story with actual facts behind how people truly learned to live and love in a seemingly impossible situation. As we have experienced audience responses to our readings and workshops, our musical has become more and more understood as and an enduring love story. Its premise that, love can overcome any obstacle, is both arguable and defensible as a final take-away. Some have even attached the moniker of being a "Mormon, *Fiddler on the Roof*." Feedback confirms that it's a show about a people of a strong faith, but it is not regarded as a religious piece.

Unexpected Supporters

We are anxious to attract the most productive stage opportunities on our journey to tell the world the story of *The Principle Wife*. Unexpectedly, Danny Glover and Cedric the Entertainer have verbally expressed a desire to be involved in our show in one form or another, whether as actors or as production supporters. Like so many people who eventually see a stage reading, their response is the same as Danny and Cedric: always surprised. People simply cannot believe we could make such a fetching story about a subject, which on the surface, has such a stereotypically negative identity associated with it.

With solid encouragement to keep moving forward, we found The Covey Center Theater in Provo, UT which has booked the first, fully mounted stage production of our show for approximately six weeks. In addition, the former Consul General of Hungary to the U.S. in Los Angeles (recognized as an Ambassador in Hungary) saw our reading as well. He was so surprised by an unexpected love story that he was quick to let us know that his country would go crazy for our show. He said that besides being an unexpected and wonderful story, The Principle Wife had all of the elements which would give it success in Budapest, Hungary. He said that it was American, a western, and on the surface, controversial. But, he said, "it was such a surprise that he knew it would sell out to audiences in Hungary no matter how long we decided to play it there, if we would."

A few days later, the Consul General of Hungary had us on the phone with a theater producer in Budapest. He had already discussed our show with the Producer so this call was to let us know that Budapest was ready to commit with us if we were ready to open our show internationally.

Love Can Overcome Any Obstacle

There are a few options in front of us, but we are looking for the best way to give *The Principle Wife* the most productive path to public awareness, success, and subsequently, the ability to successfully play any theater in the world. We realize that it's a ready prospect, but we love our show and are awestruck by how many other people naturally love it too. We believe *The Principle Wife* has what it takes to go all the way. There may be a few more steps getting there, but we're in it for the duration. This is our story, and our love, and with the nearly universal audience agreement that it's ready for prime time, we are anxious to share it with the world.