

## "The Greatest Show: A Musical Adaptation" - River Tech School

Audition on December 12th at 12 pm.

### Main Roles:

- **Narrator (M/F)** - A guiding voice that elegantly bridges scenes with poetic interludes, adding depth and context to the play
- **P.T. Barnum (M)** - The visionary showman and the central character whose dream of creating something extraordinary sets the entire narrative in motion. His journey explores the balance between ambition, family, and the creation of a community.
- **Charity Barnum (F)** - Barnum's devoted wife who supports her husband's dreams but struggles with the sacrifices their family must endure. Her character provides a grounding perspective on the true cost of dreams.
- **Caroline Barnum (F)** - The elder daughter of P.T. and Charity. Represents innocence and curiosity. Her presence often reminds Barnum of the simpler joys in life.
- **Helen Barnum (F)** - The younger daughter of P.T. and Charity. Her character adds a layer of hope and symbolizes the future that the adults are working to shape.
- **Phillip Carlyle (M)** - Barnum's protégé who falls in love with Anne Wheeler. His struggle is the societal expectations versus personal desires.
- **Anne Wheeler (F)** - A trapeze artist who becomes Phillip's love interest. Her character confronts the social stigmas of the time and challenges the concept of forbidden love.
- **Lettie Lutz (F)** - A powerful vocalist and a key member of Barnum's troupe. Her journey is about finding strength in her talents and stepping into the light with confidence and dignity, encouraging others to appreciate their own worth.
- **Tom Thumb (M)** - A performer in Barnum's troupe who, despite his small stature, has large dreams. His storyline is a testament to defying society's expectations.
- **Jenny Lind (F)** - Known as the "Swedish Nightingale," her partnership with Barnum showcases the broader implications of Barnum's dream and the potential for personal connection to change one's course.

Those are the main roles. But we will need **dancers** and **singers**, too.

### **Song List:**

- A Million Dreams
- The Other Side
- The Greatest Show
- This Is Me
- Rewrite the Stars
- Tightrope
- Never Enough
- From Now On
- Come Alive

### **Dance List:**

- A Million Dreams
- The Greatest Show
- This Is Me
- From Now On
- Come Alive

## Scene 1: The Dream Begins – “A Million Dreams”

*Characters: Narrator, Barnum, Charity, Caroline, Helen*

**Narrator:** (Before scene) "Welcome, one and all, to a world of wonder and dreams, where the impossible becomes possible, and every soul has a story to tell. Our tale begins with a man whose vision is as grand as the stars."

**(Scene opens with P.T. Barnum and his family in their humble living room)**

**Barnum:** Every night I imagine a world, a canvas in the sky painted with the light of those who dare to dream.

**Charity:** (*leaning in*) And do you see us in that painted sky?

**Barnum:** Not just us, my love, but a family larger than we could fathom.

**Caroline:** What color am I in this dream, Papa?

**Barnum:** You, my dear, are the brightest yellow, the color of dawn and of new beginnings.

**Helen:** And me? What color am I?

**Charity:** You, my dear, are the softest blue, the hue of the boundless sky that promises adventure.

**Barnum:** (To Helen) That's right. And you, you're the radiant red of a heart filled with love and courage.

**Charity:** It sounds like a dream worth sharing.

*(“A Million Dreams” begins as the family shares their dreams, interacting and encouraging each other's visions with back-and-forth dialogue, building up to the choreography reflecting their unity and support.)*

## Scene 2: The Gathering of Dreams

*Characters: Narrator, Barnum, Lettie, Tom, Jenny, Anne, and various onlookers.*

**(A vibrant street scene in New York City, with various performers showcasing their talents.)**

**Narrator:** (Before scene) "As our visionary, P.T. Barnum, sets his sights on creating the greatest show, he embarks on a quest to gather an ensemble unlike any other. Watch as destiny brings together the souls that will ignite the dream."

**Barnum:** (Approaching each character one by one, with charisma and a visionary spark) "What if I told you that your unique talents, the very things that make you different, are exactly what the world needs to see?"

- **Lettie Lutz:** (Initially hesitant but intrigued) "To step into the light... it's a dream I scarcely dare to imagine."
- **Tom Thumb:** (With a mixture of humor and determination) "A chance to be more than just a curiosity? Could it be?!"
- **Jenny Lind:** (Elegant, yet looking for something more) "I have sung for crowds, but never for a dream like this."
- **Anne Wheeler:** (Bold and defiant) "I fly high above the ground, but you speak of a flight even beyond that."

**Barnum:** (With a twinkle in his eye) "Together, we won't just entertain; we will inspire, we will create a world where the wonders never cease."

### Scene 3: The Persuasion – “The Other Side”

*Characters: Narrator, Barnum, Phillip, Anne, Tom, Ensemble.*

**Narrator:** (Before scene) "Barnum's troupe is taking shape, but one piece is still missing – a partner from the high society. Enter Phillip Carlyle, a man caught between the allure of high society and the call of the unknown."

**Barnum:** (Approaching Phillip with enthusiasm) "Mr. Carlyle, a man of your talents shouldn't be confined to the shadows of the theater. Imagine what you could do on a stage without limits."

**Phillip Carlyle:** (With a mix of skepticism and curiosity) "The theater is my world. Your circus... it's a different universe."

**Barnum:** (Encouragingly) "Exactly! And it's a universe where the stars shine brighter. Why just fit in when you were born to stand out?"

- **(As the song "The Other Side" begins, engage in a dynamic back-and-forth, both in dialogue and song, with Barnum showing Phillip the thrill and freedom of the circus world.)**

**Anne Wheeler:** (Enters briefly during the song, catching Phillip's eye with a moment of connection before she exits.)

**Phillip Carlyle:** (Watching Anne, subtly) "Your troupe... there's something really special about them, isn't there?"

**Tom Thumb:** (As the ensemble enters) "That's the spirit! Welcome to a world where the spectacle is boundless and every moment is a chance to rewrite the stars."

Barnum laughs as Lettie, Tom, and the rest of the ensemble enter.

#### **Scene 4: The Dream Begins - "This is the Greatest Show"**

*Characters: Narrator, Barnum, Lettie, Tom, and the rest of the Ensemble.*

**Lettie Lutz:** To think, the world will finally see the wonder we've been nurturing in the shadows.

**Tom Thumb:** It's our courage that brought us here, ready to light up the darkness.

**Jenny Lind:** That's so true, for tonight is about more than a spectacle; it's about showing the very heartbeat of our dreams!

**Anne Wheeler:** Our performance will be a harmony of hopes and aspirations, a dance that celebrates the boldness in each step!

**Phillip Carlyle:** (Joining in with newfound enthusiasm) "And with every step, we'll show them a world where the impossible becomes possible. We're not just performers; we're dreamers lighting the way!"

*(As they prepare to step out, the beat of "This is the Greatest Show" pulses through the air, each performer embodying the spirit of their shared dreams.)*

**Extras boo and throws stuff on the actors as they yell, "Go home, freaks!"**

## Scene 5: Embracing Identity - "This Is Me"

Characters: Lettie, Ensemble Member 1, Ensemble

*(Lettie Lutz steps forward with a spark of determination in her eyes, the ensemble arrayed behind her, a collective strength in their stance.)*

**Lettie Lutz:** Ignore the naysayers, we won't let the mob define us. In the light of day, let courage lead the way.

**Tom Thumb:** (Stepping up, encouragingly) We're here, bold and brave, not just performers but pioneers of comfort and hope.

**Anne Wheeler:** No more shadows, no more shame...

**Ensemble:** (Uniting in support) Together, we can move mountains.

**Barnum:** Let us introduce ourselves. To the greatest show on earth.

**Phillip Carlyle:** No more fears, no more hiding! This is who we are!

*(The ensemble moves into an uplifting dance, each movement a testament to their resilience and unity. The song "This Is Me" blossoms into a celebration of identity and the bravery of self-expression.)*

## Scene 6: Unlikely Love – “Rewrite the Stars”

Characters: Narrator, Phillip, Anne

**Anne:** (Reflective) "In this world we're making, every step feels like a dance on a tightrope. It's exhilarating, yet terrifying."

**Phillip:** "But isn't that the thrill of it? To dance on the edge, where the heart races with every beat, every leap."

**Anne:** "And if we fall? And the world refuses to catch us?"

**Phillip:** "Then we'll learn to fly. We'll write our own story, Anne, not bound by the ground but inspired by the sky."

**Anne:** (Contemplative) "A story written in the stars... It's a beautiful thought, but the world I come from, it's not so forgiving."

**Phillip:** "Then let's create a world that is. One where the stars align not just above us, but within us."

*(“Rewrite the Stars” begins as they dance, expressing the complexity of their feelings, each dance movement a conversation itself, portraying their love and the societal barriers they face.)*



## Scene 7: The Balancing Act – “Tightrope”

Characters: Charity, Barnum

(Charity is with her daughters, looking out the window as Barnum comes home late.)

**Charity:** *(softly)* The girls were asking for you again tonight. They miss their father.

**Barnum:** Did they wait up for me?

**Charity:** They tried not to. *(turns to face him)* Phineas, we're losing touch with the life we promised each other.

**Barnum:** I'm building something, Charity. Not just for me, but for us.

**Charity:** But at what cost? We're a painting that's slowly losing its color.

**Barnum:** I can fix this. I will bring the color back tenfold.

**Charity:** Not if you lose the brush that paints our family first.

*(“Tightrope” begins as Charity reflects on her hopes and the fears of her wavering family life, the song interspersed with dialogue showing her inner struggle and her commitment to her family.)*

## Scene 8: The Star Shines – “Never Enough”

Characters: Barnum, Jenny

(Anne and Phillip enter together. Jenny Lind is introduced to the audience. Barnum is visibly anxious about her reception.)

**Anne:** The seats are filled, the air thick with anticipation.

**Jenny Lind:** Nervous, Mr. Barnum?

**Barnum:** I'm staking a lot on you, Ms. Lind.

**Jenny Lind:** And I on you. But it's more than stakes and risks, isn't it? It's about touching hearts.

**Phillip:** *(nodding)* Good luck, Ms Lind. This is your night.

**Jenny Lind:** Then let's give them a performance that will echo through the ages.

*(“Never Enough” is Lind’s solo)*

## Scene 9: The Fall

*Characters: Barnum, Carlyle, Anne, Lettie*

**Narrator:** (Before scene) "Sometimes, the brightest lights cast the darkest shadows. For Barnum, a series of misfortunes begins to unfold, each more challenging than the last."

### [At the Performance Hall]

- **Jenny Lind:** (To Barnum) "Mr. Barnum, I can't be a part of your show anymore. My heart is calling me elsewhere, away from all this."
- **Barnum:** (Confused) "But Jenny, we're at the peak of our success!"
- **Phillip Carlyle:** "Some dreams must end for others to begin."
- **Anne Wheeler:** Good bye, Jenny.

### (Transition: Ensemble members rush in with urgent news)

### [At the Burnt Circus Site]

- **Tom Thumb:** (Breathlessly to Barnum) "Mr. Barnum, Mr. Barnum, there's been a disaster! The circus... it's burned to the ground!"
- **Barnum:** (In disbelief) "Burned? But... how? Everything we've built..."
- **Tom Thumb:** "It's all gone, sir. Everything. The fire... it spared nothing."
- **Barnum:** "From the pinnacle of a dream to the ashes of despair..."
- **Lettie Lutz:** "I'm afraid that's not all, sir."
- **Barnum:** (In disbelief; Shakes his head)

### (Transition: Charity enters with the kids)

### [At Barnum's Home]

- **Charity:** (Solemnly) "Phineas, we've lost our home. Without the circus, we can't pay the bills. The girls and I will go stay with my parents for a while. We need some time away."
- **Barnum:** (Desperate) "Charity, please, I can fix this. We can rebuild."
- **Charity:** "It's not just about buildings or the circus. It's about rebuilding us, our family. That's what needs your attention now."

**(Transition: Barnum is left in the quiet of the room, a man coming to terms with his reality.)**

- **Barnum:** (Reflecting) "I chased dreams of glitter and fame, only to lose the treasures I already had. The greatest show wasn't out there; it was here, in the hearts of those I love. How will I rebuild, not just the show, but my family and my life?"

**Narrator:** (After scene) "Amidst the rubble of his shattered dreams, Barnum finds a glimmer of hope. The path to redemption is not paved with applause, but with love, understanding, and a return to the values he once cherished. For it's in the heart of the family and the trust of friends that the truest dreams are woven."

## Scene 10: The Birth of s Show – “From Now On”

Characters: Barnum, Carlyle, Anne, Lettie

(Barnum is in a dimly lit bar, lost in thought. The troupe enters, their spirits low.)

**Barnum:** (With a sense of realization) "In the pursuit of my dreams, I overlooked the greatest adventure of all, right here with you in our home."

**Charity:** "Your dreams have always been dazzling, Phineas, but you lost track of the most wondrous sights—the ones we build together, as a family."

**Caroline:** "Dad, in your world of wonders, is there room for the little magic I bring?"

**Helen:** "We've got dreams too. Maybe they can help light up your big show."

**Barnum:** "Oh, yes, sweet, sweet girls. Absolutely. Our new dream, *our* dream, will be woven from the stories and magic we all bring together. I lost sight, I admit. Faced the dark. But this can't be the end.

**Charity:** "It's a new beginning, a chance to create something even more meaningful. Let's start anew, not for the applause, but to create something genuine and true."

**Anne:** "Let's build a show that's a reflection of us all, a tapestry of our lives and journeys."

**Lettie:** "It's time our hearts take center stage."

**Tom Thumb:** "Let's make a show that's grand not in size, but in spirit and connection."

**Phillip:** "Together, we'll build 'The Greatest Show' – an troupe of our shared dreams, hopes, and the love that unites us."

*(“From Now On” resonates as the ensemble comes together, reigniting their shared passion and reviving the spirit of the show. They rally with Barnum, each affirming their role and the reawakening of their collective dream.)*

## Scene 11: The Greatest Show Reimagined – “Come Alive”

*Characters: Barnum, Charity, Ensemble*

**Barnum:** (To his family, with heartfelt emotion) "This journey, every step, every dream, it's been brightened by the love we share. Our greatest show lies not under the spotlight, but in the warmth of family."

**Charity:** (Smiling) "Together, we've created something more beautiful than any spectacle. It's the love and bond we share that's the true marvel."

**Caroline:** "And our dreams, they don't just light up the stage, they light up our lives."

**Helen:** "Every laugh, every cheer, it's our song, our story!"

**Phillip:** (Looking at Anne) "In this world of wonders, I've found something even more extraordinary - a love that defies all limits."

**Anne:** (Gazing back at Phillip) "A love that shows us, no matter how high we soar or how daring our dreams, it's the heart that gives us wings."

**(The troupe begins the opening chords of “Come Alive,” now filled with layers of joy, love, and depth, symbolizing their collective journey. The music swells, evolving into a final, exuberant dance that celebrates their united journey, love, and the family they've built together.)**

**Ensemble:** "In this world of light and shadow, where dreams dance and hearts unite!"

**Barnum and Family:** "Here, every moment is a treasure, every day a tapestry of love and wonder."

**Phillip and Anne:** "In the embrace of love, every dream finds its truest home."

**Ensemble:** "This is the greatest show! Where every story finds its chorus, and every heart finds its home!"

**(As the final note rings out, the cast takes a bow. The curtains close slowly, leaving the audience enveloped in a sense of enchantment, inspiration, and the warmth of witnessing a celebration of love, family, and dreams.)**