

2019-2020 Theatre Season

Heroes and Villains

Blinn College Division of Visual/Performing Arts and Kinesiology
Brenham Campus

Mitch Albom's

Tuesdays with Morrie

Adapted for the Stage by Jeffrey Hatcher



Resource Guide

This resource guide serves as an educational starting point to understanding and enjoying Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie*. With this in mind, please note that the interpretations of the theatrical work may differ from the original source content.

Performance Dates

April 30 & May 1
May 2 & 3

7 p.m.
2 p.m.

High School Preview Performances

April 30 & May 1

1 p.m.

**Dr. W.W. O'Donnell Performing Arts Center
Brenham, Texas**

*Tickets can be purchased in advance online at www.blinn.edu/BoxOffice,
by calling 979-830-4024, or by emailing BoxOffice@blinn.edu*

Directed by

Jennifer Patrick

Technical Theatre Direction by

Kevin Patrick

Publicity by

Brad Nies

Costume, Make-up & Hair Design by

Jennifer Patrick

And Featuring

Kevin Patrick
as **Morrie Schwartz**

Produced by Special Arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc.





Synopsis of Mitch Albom's
Tuesdays with Morrie

This moving drama is the autobiographical story of an accomplished journalist driven solely by his career and his former college professor who is battling Lou Gehrig's Disease. The journalist is reunited with his hero, and what starts as a simple visit turns into a weekly pilgrimage and a last class in the meaning of life.

Written by Mitch Albom

Renowned journalist and best-selling author Mitch Albom was born in Passaic, New Jersey on May 23, 1958. He grew up close to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where he lived until moving to New York to attend the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. In 1985, Albom was hired as lead sports columnist for the Detroit Free Press. While in Detroit, he became one of the most award-winning sports writers of his era. Albom had already written two books by the time he penned *Tuesdays with Morrie*, and he followed up with seven successful books after. In 2002, he worked alongside playwright Jeffrey Hatcher to write the stage version of *Tuesdays with Morrie*, which opened off-Broadway at the Minetta Lane Theatre on November 19th of that year.

Adapted for the Stage by Jeffrey Hatcher

American playwright and screenwriter Jeffrey Hatcher grew up in Steubenville, Ohio. Influence by his high school drama teacher, Hatcher attended Denison University in Granville, Ohio before moving to New York. He eventually moved to Minneapolis where he continued writing. He has earned many awards for his works, most notably his version of Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Hatcher has penned five screenplays, which include *Stage Beauty* (2004), *Casanova* (2005), and *The Duchess* (2008). He is a member of The Playwrights' Center, The Dramatists Guild of America, the Writers Guild of America, and New Dramatists.

Tuesdays with Morrie:

The Play

The stage version of *Tuesdays with Morrie* was written by Mitch Albom and Jeffrey Hatcher. Hatcher had earned success as a playwright with his work *Three Viewings* a few years before and was no stranger to New York City's off-Broadway theatre. The play premiered at the New York Stage and Film Festival



in the summer of 2002, and the show opened at the Minetta Lane Theatre on November 19, 2002. It starred Alvin Epstein as Morrie and Jon Tenney as Mitch, and the work was directed by David Esbjornson, a director known for his presentation of Edward Albee's play, *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* *Tuesdays with Morrie* closed on February 23, 2003 after having played 108 regular performances.

Tuesdays with Morrie: The Movie

Based on Mitch Albom's book by the same title, the television film adaptation of *Tuesdays with Morrie* was released on December 5, 1999. Talk-show host Oprah Winfrey served as executive producer, and the film starred renowned actors Jack Lemmon as Morrie and Hank Azaria as Mitch. It was directed by drama and documentary producer Mike Jackson, and the film was awarded four Primetime Emmy awards. Lemmon was nominated for a Golden Globe award, and he received the Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor Award by the Screen Actors Guild.





The Real Morrie Schwartz

Morris "Morrie" S. Schwartz was born the son of Russian-Jewish immigrants on December 20, 1916 in New York City. Although he was raised Jewish, Schwartz adopted multiple beliefs from various religions during his adult life. After graduating from New York's City College, Schwartz attended the University of Chicago where he was awarded a Ph.D. in sociology. He began his teaching career at Brandeis University in 1959, and he retired in 1995 after being diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's Disease. After Mitch Albom saw Schwartz interviewed on a television episode of *Nightline with Ted Koppel*, Albom was reunited with his former university professor and began flying to Schwartz's home in Massachusetts for weekly Tuesday visits. Each visit Albom had with Schwartz is documented in his best-selling book, and each serves as a life lesson that Schwartz shares while reflecting on the final stage of this life. During his career, Schwartz co-authored three books: *The Mental Hospital: A Study of Institutional Participation in Psychiatric Illness and Treatment* (1950), *Social Approaches to Mental Patient Care* (1964), and *The Nurse and the Mental Patient: A Study of Interpersonal Relations* (1966). In addition, Schwartz wrote two books: *Letting Go: Morrie's Reflections on Living While Dying* (1996) and *Morrie: In His Own Words* (1997). Morrie Schwartz passed away on November 4, 1995 in Newton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts.

Hey, Teachers!

This theatre is a proud member of the Theatre Collective of the Brazos Valley. This organization has been kind enough to develop the following rules of theatre etiquette. Please review these rules with your students to assure that all audience members enjoy the show!

1. Be on time by being in your seat 10 minutes before the performance is scheduled to begin. Live theatre begins at the published performance time with a darkened theatre and actors frequently in the aisles ready for entrances. Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the theatre and in locations chosen by the theatre.
2. Remain seated until intermission and until curtain calls are completed to allow performers free access to the exits. If an emergency requires leaving your seat, please remain outside the theatre until allowed to return by the theatre's volunteer staff.
3. Finish and/or discard all food and drinks before entering the theatre. Community theatres in the Brazos Valley use volunteers to clean debris from the theatre and restrooms. Please be respectful of these volunteers by disposing of your own trash.
4. Silence or turn off all electronic devices, including cell phones, beepers, and watch alarms. You are encouraged to share your theatre experience via social media, but you must refrain from sharing or texting during the performance. The glow from all media is easily discernable in the dark theatre and is distracting to your neighbors and the actors.
5. Video and flash photography of live performances is not allowed. Community theatres in the Brazos Valley do not purchase the rights to tape live performances. Actors will generally be available for photographs after the show.
6. Tickets and programs will be provided for all students who need to receive credit for attending theatre performances. The Theatre Collective of the Brazos Valley provides a stamp for proof of attendance after every performance.
7. To allow all patrons easy access to theatre seating, saving more than one seat for a latecomer or volunteer is not allowed.
8. Please refrain from talking during the performance.
9. Your courtesy is much appreciated as it allows for the ultimate experience of theatre productions for all our patrons.

Sources

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