Production Proposal
Sock’n’Buskin Theatre Company

Almost, Maine
By John Cariani
Synopsis

*Almost, Maine* follows nine different love stories taking place in the same town, at the same time, 9pm on a Friday night during the long Maine winter. Egos are bruised, and hearts are broken as love is lost and found. But the bruises can heal, and the hearts can be mended, almost. *Almost, Maine* explores the mysteries and the complicated nature of the human heart.

**Prologue** – Pete and Ginette
A couple who have been dating for a little while who have a different idea of what “being close” means
Set: Park Bench – Props: Snowball (styrofoam ball), Snow (cotton balls)

**Scene 1** – Glory and East
A woman who has come to say goodbye and a man whose lawn she’s camping on
Set: Door – Props: Paper bag filled with pieces of slate, Maine brochure, Map

**Scene 2** – Jimmy and Sandrine
A heating and cooling guy, and his ex-girlfriend he still has feelings for
Set: Table, Two Chairs – Props: Beer Bottle, Engagement Ring, Serving Tray

**Scene 3** – Marvalyn and Steve
A woman who protects herself from pain and a man who cannot feel pain
Set: Bench or a few chairs, Ironing Board – Props: Iron, Laundry Basket filled with Clothes, Two Notebooks, Pen

**Scene 4** – Gayle and Lendall
Long-time girlfriend and boyfriend who are having trouble taking the next step in their relationship
Set: Door, Arm Chair or Couch – Props: 6-11 Large Red Bags Filled with Clothing/Pillows, One Small Red Bag, Engagement Ring with Box

**Interlogue** – Pete
From the “Prologue,” sitting on a park bench by himself
Set: Park Bench – Props: Snowball (styrofoam ball), Snow (cotton Balls)

**Scene 5** – Randy and Chad
Good friends who have had their share of bad dates and have a hard time seeing what is right in front of them
Set: Two Camping Chairs, Cooler – Props: Beer Cans

**Scene 6** – Phil and Marci
A hardworking man who has trouble balancing different parts of his life and his hardworking wife who’s tired of it
Set: Park Bench – Props: Two Pairs of Skates with Guards, a single Boot

**Scene 7** – Hope and Man
A woman who has travelled the world and a man who has stayed in a small town
Set: Door – Props: Suitcase

**Scene 8** – Rhonda and Dave
A tough woman who has never experienced love and the man who secretly loves her
Set: Door – Props: Snowmobile Helmets, Wrapped Painting (canvas with a red heart painted on it)

**Epilogue** – Pete and Ginette
From the “Prologue,” they’ve figured out what “being close” means
Set: Park Bench – Props: Snowball (styrofoam ball), Snow (cotton Balls)
Director’s Statement of the Themes and Messages

The main theme of Almost, Maine is love and how things can change in a heartbeat. That is what John Cariani uses to connect the nine unconnected stories. Most of the characters are only in one 10-15 minute scene, and although the appearance is brief, the audience gets a sense of the characters’ emotions and how their love is affecting them. I like to describe this play as an album of love songs, because once one scene is done you move onto the next and you feel a whole different kind of love. This play is about normal people, there’s no real fantasy, there’s no magic. It’s just people and feelings. Like in life, Almost, Maine offers no easy answers, but instead gives the audience the chance to connect and empathize with the characters. Hopefully, the audience will see themselves in at least one of these characters.

The end of the scene is never the end of the story, it’s more like the beginning of a new chapter because love never really ends, it just changes. That could be by taking the next step in a relationship, admitting feelings, or realizing that the love that was once there is no longer there anymore. The truth is, you carry love with you no matter where you go, and you can’t forget someone you were once in love with.

Overall Concept and Aesthetic

Love is complicated, which is why I want this version of Almost, Maine to be simple, so that the audience can focus on story. I don’t plan on having any flashy sets, crazy costumes, or lighting techniques. I want everything to be simple. I want the audience to walk away talking about the performance that the actors put on.

Colour Scheme

When it comes to the colour of the set and the costumes I want them all to follow a cool and neutral colour scheme. There are a few reasons for this. One, it’s Maine at 9pm in the winter. It’s cold, everything is covered with snow, nothing is really bright. I want the costumes to reflect the weather and the feeling of Maine. I lived in Thunder Bay for a year and a tiny town for another, and the best way to describe these places in the winter is greyish-blue. Two, which is the main reason for the cooler colour palate, is that I want red to mean love. Whenever there is red, it means that someone is in love, when there is no red that means there is no love. For example, Scene 7 involves Hope travelling from far away to go back to the man she is in love with, so I imagine her wearing a bright red jacket to show how in love she is. While Scene 6 is about Phil and Marci realizing that they are not in love anymore, so I would not want any red in this scene. The audience should know that red is special, and it should stand out from everything else.
This play would best be suited for a smaller space, such as a black box theatre. It allows for a more intimate experience and the audience can be closer to the action. I want to have the large set pieces at the back of the stage, as if it were a live scrapbook of the play. During scene changes, the set pieces will be moved from the back of the stage to the front and then returned to their original position once the scene is complete. I want to pay attention to small details such as the colour of all the set pieces. They would be cool and neutral colours because furniture cannot be in love. Even the number on the door will be significant. I know in this picture it says 35 but just imagine it says 143, because that means “I love you.”

Lighting
This production would not need very complicated lighting. During the scenes, it would just need normal white flood lights. Transitions, and the end of Scene 1, would need to have blue, green, and purple lights that could switch between colours to mimic the Northern Lights. These lights would be known as The Magical Moment.

Music
Almost, Maine does have its own soundtrack. It is not necessary to use this soundtrack and is not covered under the performance rights, however I feel that it really sets the play up and that the production would benefit from its use. Here is a link to some samples of the music: http://www.almostmaine.com/notes.html

Costumes
Since the play is set in the present day, most of the costumes can be taken out of the actors’ closets. I want the actors to have a role in deciding what their characters wear because they are the ones who are creating their characters. They might have a clear idea as to what their character wears and I would be all for them bringing those ideas into reality. There are some limitations
that I will set, such as only certain characters can wear the colour red, and I do have a specific idea in mind for some characters. For example, in Scene 4 Gayle says that she had been sitting at home alone not really doing anything, so I would want her to wear something comfortable, like sweatpants. And since each actor will be playing more than one character, costumes will also be the main way of distinguishing between characters.

Tentative Timeline

I think that it would be best to put on this show in February, sometime around Valentine’s day. The entire show is about love, it just works out perfectly. Ideally, rehearsals would start 8-12 weeks before opening night. Below is the approximate schedule for an 8 week rehearsal time.

| Weeks 1-3 | • Read through  
| | o at the read through I will tell the actors to come up with back stories for their characters and to come prepared with that for that character’s scene rehearsal  
| | • One rehearsal for each of the nine scenes  
| | o by the end of the first three weeks the entire show should be blocked  
| | o during these rehearsals we will discuss character development, costumes, and props  
| | • Two full cast rehearsals  
| | o the first full cast will happen after the first act is blocked and the second full cast will happen after the second act is blocked  
| Week 4-6 | • One rehearsal for each of the nine scenes  
| | o actors should be off book for these rehearsals, they can still call for lines  
| | o spend these rehearsals refining the details of the characters, not as much about blocking but more about the characters personality traits and the intent behind their actions  
| | • At least one full cast rehearsal a week  
| | o this is when we will start running the full show and getting a sense of the run time  
| | o during the full runs the actors can still call for lines  
| | o during this time actors will start bringing in costume pieces and the cast will take a trip down to the costume room  
| | o by the end of week 6 all, or at least most, of the costumes should be done and the cast should start running the show with props  
| | o begin rehearsing with music  
| Week 7-8 | • At least one full cast rehearsal a week  
| | o actors should be completely off book by this time, no more calling for lines  
| | o performing the show as full out as possible  
| | • Extra rehearsals for any scenes that need it  
| | • All costumes and props should be complete
Production Team/Roles to be Filled

**Director:** Sarah Ashton  
**Stage Manager:** Sarah Sheils  

**Cast:** There will need to be a cast of 9 people, 5 male and 4 female, and each actor will appear in at least two scenes

1. Pete (Prologue) and Phil (Scene 6)  
2. East (Scene 1) and Randy (Scene 5)  
3. Jimmy (Scene 2) and Man (Scene 7)  
4. Steve (Scene 3) and Chad (Scene 5)  
5. Lendall (Scene 4) and Dave (Scene 8)  
6. Ginette (Prologue), Waitress (Scene 2), and Hope (Scene 7)  
7. Glory (Scene 1) and Gayle (Scene 4)  
8. Sandrine (Scene 2) and Marci (Scene 6)  
9. Marvalyn (Scene 3) and Rhonda (Scene 8)

Since this play is comprised of love stories there will be some stage kissing involved. However, I have combined the roles in a certain way so that if some people are not comfortable with stage kisses they can still be cast in the show.

**Stage Hands:** There will not be a need for many stage hands because most of the actors will be able to move the set pieces themselves, however it will be helpful to have one or two

**Script and Rights**

The script, the music, and the rights for this production can all be purchased from the same place, Dramatists Play Service, Inc. [https://www.dramatists.com/cgi-bin/db/single.asp?](https://www.dramatists.com/cgi-bin/db/single.asp?)

- Each copy of the script is $9
- The performance fee is $100 per performance
- The music can be purchased for $20
- The royalty for the music is $20 per performance

Here is a link to a version of the script: [Almost, Maine Script](https://www.dramatists.com/cgi-bin/db/single.asp?)

If for some reason this link does not work, do not hesitate to contact me and I will provide a PDF version of the script.
Conclusion

I am proposing this show because of how insanely passionate I am about it. I’ve been in love with it since high school and have been planning my concept for months. The entire show is in my head, everything is planned out, I just need the resources to put it on. This show is my passion project, it’s my midlife crisis. I don’t think that everything Sock’n’Buskin produces needs to be heavy and have some deep philosophical meaning. Theatre is an escape where people don’t have to worry about their lives for two hours, they can invest fully immerse themselves in what’s going on in front of them. It’s nice to go and watch some sweet show about the many different aspects of love. Since the show is light, it will appeal to a large audience. My friend and I read one of the scenes in the library and these three guys we didn’t know said that it was great. Everyone has experienced some sort of love, whether it be friendship, true love, or heartbreak. The show is fun and has a nice size cast with relatively equal roles. If there are any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to email me at the address provided on the first page. Thank you for taking the time to read this proposal and for considering Almost, Maine for the 75th season of Sock’n’Buskin.