

Three Penny Opera: Scene Breakdown and notes

12/5/04

B. Bjorklund, Scene Designer

Act	Scene	Page	characters	Notes
	General			
	Prologue The Market- Evening (Monday Night)	1	Street Singer and beggars, thieves, whores JENNY	Overture, Ballad of Mack the Knife Signage/ Sign Box/ "The Three Penny Opera" Basically, a song about the character of Macheath/ Mac the Knife/ the crime and corruption and culture of the Market
1	Scene One Peachum's Beggar's Outfit shop Morning (Tuesday morning)	3	Beggars on floor sleeping, Peachum Filch Mrs. Peachum	Morning Anthem (Peachum wakes the beggars) Signbox: The Merchant J.J. Peachum has opened a shop in which the poorest of the poor may achieve an appearance designed to melt the hardest of hearts. "The Beggar's Big Brother" Map of London on wall? Showing 14 begging districts Ironing board?- Mrs Peachum Curtained area behind are four showcase models of begging outfits. In Act 3, the beggars all hide behind the showcase when the coppers come) (Cheerful cripple, Nervous Twitcher, Sightles, and?? Screen for Filch to change behind "Instead of a Song" pg 8 Entrance/ exit/ access to other parts of building- bedrooms, etc. A desk
1	Scene 2 An Empty Stable (Tuesday Evening)	9	Macheath, Polly, Matt, Bob the saw, Walt Dreary, Crookfinger Jake Re. Kimble Commissioner of Police: Tiger Brown	Signage: In the heart of SOHO, the bandit Mack the knife celebrates his marriage to Polly Peachum, daughter of the "Beggar's Big Brother" "Ballad of Mack the Knife- Interlude" A Barrel, The crooks enter with furniture, dishes, things to renovate the stable into a fancy place A window to view the moon over Dock Street (p10) A small piano (whose legs are sawed off) Enormous painting of a nude. (p10) Large Table- fully prepared for a banquet (from the St. James club) "Wedding Song" p11 "Pirate Jenny" p14 "Army Song" p 17- Brown and Macheath reminisce about war together in India A Bed wrapped as a gift- from the gang to Mac and Polly "Wedding Song- Reprise" (Gang) About the bed "Love Song" p20 Polly and Mac
1	Scene 3 Peachum's Beggar's Outfit shop (Wednesday Afternoon)	20	Peachum, Mrs Peachum, Polly, Filch	Musical Intro Signboard: Peachum, Knowing the Hardness of the World, finds the loss of his daughter a ruinous blow.

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				<p>"Ballad of Dependency" (Mrs Peachum)</p> <p>"First Three-Penny Finale: The world is mean" Polly, Peachum and Mrs Peachum p24. The world is mean and man uncouth, and sad to say, I tell the truth. End of Act I.</p>
2	Scene 1 The Stable (Thursday Afternoon)	27	Polly, Mac Then Matt, Bob, Walt, Jake	<p>"Overture"</p> <p>Signage: Mack the Knife takes farewell of his wife, Polly, and flees to the highgate Moors to escape her father.</p> <p>"Melodrama and Polly's song" / Segue" (Polly & Mac"</p> <p>"Music to Interlude"</p> <p>This scene is when Polly tells Mac he must leave- Brown & Peachum have struck a deal. Mac turns the business over to Polly. He leaves.</p>
2	Interlude A street Thursday Evening (short scene- 1/2 page)	31	Mrs. Peachum & Jenny	<p>Mrs. Peachum offers money to Jenny to turn Mac over to the cops.</p> <p>"Ballad of Dependency" p32 Mrs Peachum (about Macs dependency- his fatal flaw!)</p>
2	Scene 2 Brothel in Wapping Early Evening (Thursday) Rain.	32	Girls- Molly, Dolly, Betty, Coaxer, Jenny, Jake, Betty Then Smith & Mrs Peachum	<p>Signage: The coronation bells have not yet rung, but Mack the Knife is already with his women in wapping. One of the girls informs on him. A window. Sofa. Chair. Table. more. Door.</p> <p>Mac comes to the Brothel. Jenny reads his palm and then leaves- "Watch out when the bells of Westminster Abbey ring"</p> <p>"Tango Ballad" Macheath and Jenny p 35.</p> <p>During the ballad Jenny appears outside the window with Smith the constable and Mrs. Peachum.</p> <p>Song continues- apparently Jenny became pregnant long ago and both she and Mac began to roam.</p> <p>Macheath jumps out the window to avoid Smith's handcuffs. Mrs. Peachum and constables are waiting. The scene finishes outside. They take Mac away.</p>
2	Scene 3 Newgate Prison Barred cell (Thursday Night)	37	Brown, Mac, Constables, Smith. Then Lucy. Then Polly. Then Mrs Peachum. Then Peachum.	<p>Signage: Betrayed by his women, Mack the Knife is delivered from "prison through the love of still another woman.</p> <p>"Ballad of the easy life" The bulging pocket is the easy life.</p> <p>We discover Mac is married to Lucy as well.</p> <p>"Barbara Song" (Lucy) p39 This is Lucy's lament about how she fell to Mac.</p> <p>Lucy and Polly confront each other and then Mac.</p> <p>"Jealousy Duet" Polly and Lucy p42</p> <p>Mrs Peachum arrives looking for Polly. They leave. Smith has fallen asleep. Lucy steals his keys and lets Mac out.</p> <p>They wake Smith and run. Chase ensues. Brown arrives and sits in the vacant cell. Peachum enters to collect his reward money and finds Brown. Blackout.</p> <p>"Second Threepenny Finale" p45 Macheath & Peachum & Mrs Peachum</p>

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				in spots. The song is about the fact that people must first have food to eat- if not, they'll do anything required to get that first. "First feed the face and then talk right and wrong" End of Act 2. Blackout.
3	Scene 1: Peachum's Beggar's Outfit shop 3AM Friday Morning.	47	Beggars (painting sandwich signs). Peachum, Mrs. Peachum, Filch, Jenny	Signage: Late the same night Peachum prepares for action. He plans to disrupt the coronation procession. Peachum: "And I discovered something. I discovered that the powerful of the earth can create poverty; but they can't bear to look at it. They are weaklings and dolts- just like you. Peachum plans to have a beggars March at the Coronation. Brown enters to arrest them all. "Useless Song" (Peachum) p50. Peachum threatens Brown with hundreds of poor at the coronation. He'll call it off if Mac is jailed and hanged. Blackout "Useless Song" Reprise (in the blackout) It's useless. Our kind of life is too tough. Take it from Me it's useless. Trying ain't enough.
3	End of scene 1: A street	52	Jenny	"Solomon Song" Basically the message is that brains, trust, glamour, high position are an illusion- in the end they won't save you. Fade out at end.
3	Scene 2. Newgate prison Friday, 5AM Death Cell with Gallows	54	Smith, Constable, Brown, Mac, Jake, Matt	Signage: Friday morning, Five O'clock. Mack the knife, once again back with his women, has once again been betrayed by them. He is about to be hanged. They bring Mac into the Death Cell. Mac tries to bribe Smith. "Call from the Grave #1" (Mac) p55 Come and save Macheath... Mac sends Matt and Jake to bring back \$\$ for a payoff. "Call from the Grave #2" Mac p56 Peachums, Jenny, Girls, Beggars, Matt, Jake, Rev burst in through the door. "Death Message" Mac p58. Mac wishes all would pardon him. "Passage to the Gallows" - music only. Mac walks up the steps to the Gallows. Macheath in the end is pardoned by the queen in honor of her coronation- instead of all watching Macs hanging, perhaps they will attend to the coronation. "What is a jimmy in the hand beside a handful of stocks and bonds? What is the robbing of a bank compared to the founding of a bank? etc,

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				etc. "Third Threepenny Finale: The Mounted Messenger" Ensemble p 60 "Ballad of Make the Knife (Optional reprise) p61 Street Singer.
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Peachums:

4 Models (cheerful cripple, Blind beggar, Nervous Twitcher, ??
Rack of clothes
Stairs
Map of London ?
Wooden Ironing Board
Screen or ? for changing behind
Doorway to the shop
Desk/ Table (pg 21)
Places for Beggars to hide (pg 49)

The Stable:

Barrel
Table for 6-8
benches
large champagne bottle
Door
Bed
stools
Items to suggest a fancy drawing room

Brothel in Wapping

A window for Macheath to jump through to avoid Smith's handcuffs. see pg 36
ironing
washing themselves
sitting - stools
door to outside
table