



## Radio Transcript:

### *The Music Man*

Glimmerglass Music Festival

Have you heard the one about the traveling salesman? Well, there's this guy...he sells pipe dreams. He gets off a train in River City, Iowa, and charms his way into the hearts and minds of the town's good citizens by warning them of the evils that can be foisted on their children because of the presence in their midst of a pool table. That's right, a pool table that will lead these innocents to smoking cubebs in the billiard parlor, and begin using words like "swell."

This salesman is Harold Hill, and he's referred to as *The Music Man* --- maybe you've heard of him. Yeah or nay, his tale of bedazzlement and romance just west of the Mississippi river is being given a wonderful production at Glimmerglass Music Festival.

The story of *The Music Man* – when it opened on Broadway in 1957 – was set in 1912 and now updated for this production to the 1940s which adds a nice recognizable flavor for the audience.

With words and music by Meredith Willson, *The Music Man* is his homage to his native state. For some of us who encountered Iowans in the 1940s, they were regarded as a distinct population ....close-knit and proud. And for generations they remained so before we *all* became homogenized.

But back to the story. Enter River City... Harold Hill in his shiny blue suit and referring to himself a *Professor* Harold Hill, he proposes – for a small investment from each of the guardians of innocence – that he will form a boys marching band ...not unlike a band he witnessed as a child – a band with 76 trombones. Well, who could resist such an offer?

There is, however, one skeptic: Marion the librarian...herself the subject of a lot of gossip among the prim ladies of River City, because of the books she keeps on the library's shelves. .. books by authors with such names as Rabelais and Balzac.

Of course it's necessary that Harold Hill overcome any resistance Marion the librarian may have to his business venture...or any resistance she may have to any other undertaking he may have in mind.

Hey, folks...this musical at Glimmerglass is a must-see. The cast, chorus, and orchestra are marvelous. As Harold Hill, Metropolitan Opera star Dwayne Croft possesses acting skills that match his renowned vocal ability. An interesting sidelight about the casting of Dwayne Croft is that he is a native of Cooperstown, New York – home of Glimmerglass, and got his first taste of opera while in high school and in the Glimmerglass chorus.

In the role of Marion the Librarian, Elizabeth Futral is a delight and captures the tender feeling of the ballad *Goodnight My Someone*. And the duet between Marian and Harold 'Til There Was You...rapturous.

But Meredith Willson's score for *Music Man* is loaded with songs...marches, ballads, nonsense songs...solos, quartets, full chorus...many choreographed with precision...all captivating and all performed at the highest level.

This is a show brimming with joy. It's a good-natured story told with affection, and those good feelings are infectious to the audience many of whom would go on stage ... if there was room ...and march along with the cast to the beat of 76 trombones.

If I haven't expressed it, this show...is a charmer.

*The Music Man* plays in repertory until August 24<sup>th</sup> at Glimmerglass Music Festival, Cooperstown, New York.

This is Herbert Wolff for WAMC.