

# SETTING THE SCENE: COME BACK, LITTLE SHEBA

“While there is no doubt that *Come Back, Little Sheba* sits in the world of late 40s early 50s American Naturalism, there is another world that exists in the play – the world where dreams, disappointments and deeply private thoughts and moments exist. It was this world that I was eager to bring out in our production which I knew would call on the talents of an inventive and empathetic design team.

As anyone who has seen the production can see, Christina’s brilliant set which is anchored in realism but fans up and up into a world of never ending windows, Bonnie’s lighting which unites and separates both realities with such clarity and Zach’s jazzy score which both bridges and underscores with such empathy have given this production exactly what I had hoped for and more.”

— **JACKIE MAXWELL**  
**DIRECTOR**

“Inge’s scene description asks us to imagine a neighbourhood where houses are too close together, and the light filters through alleys and back porches. This is what I turned to when Jackie steered me away from a ‘realistic’ box set, which is in any case always completely unnatural with its theatrical version of a domestic interior. The furniture and interior details are completely real, but that reality drops away to free the story and the actors from the limits of supposed naturalism.”

— **CHRISTINA PODDUBIUK**  
**SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER**



*Julia Course as Marie on the set of Come Back, Little Sheba*

“When thinking about the lighting design for *Come Back, Little Sheba*, Jackie and I looked at paintings from the period. We didn’t want to use any particular painter as a reference, but we wanted to approach the play in a painterly way. It was important to create colour and time of day in some sort of reality, but equally as important to approach the lighting in terms of mood and emotion. The goal was to create a heightened reality to work with the emotional content of the story.

The windows that Christina so beautifully designed allowed us to have a backdrop that became a canvas for night and day, but also allowed us to feel like there was a potential world of love and hope that existed inside and outside of the walls of the house.”

— **BONNIE BEECHER**  
**LIGHTING DESIGNER**

“Composing original music for a play means that the score has to be utterly specific to the world of the production. At our first meeting, Jackie impressed upon me the importance of human breathing, which subsequently guided everything from instrument choices to tempi.

I spent many hours with pictures of Christina’s set to find music that could mirror its interplay of naturalism and abstraction, and in rehearsal, watching the actors make the play their own. The finished score suggests the late 40s while using more contemporary techniques to let the audience into these characters’ private lives.”

— **ZACHARY FLORENCE**  
**COMPOSER**



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« Here is a short cue from the beginning of the second act of *Come Back, Little Sheba*. It starts as a period pastiche (that’s veteran Shaw musician Tom Skublics playing the Elvis-style tenor sax solo) and then moves into a more contemporary musical vocabulary to take us back into the subconscious world of dreams and disappointments that Jackie describes.