

It's Not Your Town, It's ...

A Pulitzer Prize winner, a “microcosm of the life cycle,” a community theater staple, popular for its minimalist staging requirements and its often (overly) sentimental portrayals of small-town life – Thornton Wilder’s 1938 classic, *Our Town*, is all of this and, potentially, more. Based as it is on the actual town of Peterborough, New Hampshire, it’s hard for anyone to make the fictional town of Grover’s Corners seem like anywhere else but a place in New England. Life, love, birth and death all coincide to tell the stories of the Gibbs and Webb families, and how their interactions speak to all of us about ourselves. Does this dated chestnut still hold truth for a modern audience? Can it play to anyone who does not recognize themselves in this cozy, often homogenized, version of the American family? Burbage Theatre Company, hot off their successful run of *Thom Pain/This Is Our Youth*, aims to take on the challenge.

Originally slated to produce another American epic, Steinbeck’s *East of Eden*, Burbage abruptly announced a change in lineup. Director Mark Peckham explains that casting issues forced his hand and that “it became clear that we were going to have to choose a different show.” Peckham approached BTC artistic director Jeff Church with the idea of replacing *Eden* with *Our Town*. “For several years I’ve been itching to get my hands on *Our Town* and was thrilled when Jeff was open to the idea!”

When asked about the overfamiliarity of the script, Peckham replied, “While *Our Town* is familiar to many theatergoers, our goal is to present a contemporary version of the town that a 21st-century audience can recognize and relate to on a personal level. We will definitely have some surprises in store!”

BTC presents Thornton Wilder’s Our Town, Mar 15 - Apr 7.