

## A “Wicked” Impact

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A tale of two girls: both unique in countless ways, yet the bond of sisterhood allows them to overcome their differences. In an age where society pits so many women against each other and forces them to compete for the spotlight, the upcoming *Wicked* movie highlights the importance of sisterhood, friendship, and acceptance. While *Wicked* portrays the unexpected bond between two unlikely friends, cast members Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo have found their real-life fairytale friendship. The pair have displayed the beauty and power that comes with a true sisterhood, both on and off-screen.

On November 22nd, *Wicked* will hit movie theaters across the globe. The movie is an adaptation of the Broadway sensation *Wicked*, which has been running at the [Gershwin Theater](#) for over 20 years. The musical is a prequel to the classic *Wizard of Oz* movie, creating a backstory to how “Glinda the Good Witch” and the “Wicked Witch of the West” came to be, along with other iconic *Wizard of Oz* characters.

The story focuses on the relationship between [Glinda and Elphaba](#), two starkly different characters. Glinda is vibrant, fashionable, and obsessed with being popular. Elphaba is quiet and reserved, her demeanor reflected in her all-black outfits. Elphaba finds herself an outcast because of the green color of her skin. The two are thrown together at university and immediately loathe each other. However, as they explore who they are and what they truly believe, they develop an unbreakable bond.

Glinda is played by Ariana Grande, who started acting from a young age before creating a successful pop music career. While she strayed from acting, *Wicked* marks Grande’s return to theater. Elphaba is played by Cynthia Erivo, a musical powerhouse. [Erivo](#) has made a name for herself in the musical world, starring in the Broadway musical *The Color Purple* and portraying Harriet Tubman in the movie *Harriet*. To top it all off, Erivo is only an Oscar away from completing the coveted goal of an EGOT, (an accomplishment in which an actor wins an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony during their lifetime). *Wicked* will be eligible for nomination at the Oscars, and Erivo herself has a chance to be nominated and potentially complete her EGOT, sealing her name in the list of entertainment legends.

Throughout filming, Erivo and Grande have developed a friendship and bond that closely resembles their on-screen bond. From interviews to public outings, the two can constantly be seen arm in arm, dressed in their respective green and pink.

Those unfamiliar with the theater world will likely learn of *Wicked* through Ariana Grande’s global fame. However, rather than monopolizing this fame-garnered attention, she pulls Erivo into the spotlight alongside her. When reporters are solely interested in questioning Grande, she directs those questions to the pair and brags about how incredible Erivo is every chance she can get. Erivo has [described their relationship](#) as “the most delightful thing ever.” The two spend quality time together outside *Wicked* events and text daily to check in and support one another.

Whether onstage, behind the scenes, or in the audience, theater has a way of greatly impacting those involved. It creates an indescribable bond between all who experience it, just like the bond between

Grande and Erivo. Grande has consistently spoken about how Glinda has been her dream role since she was young. She decided to include her full name, Ariana Grande-Butera, in the film credits. When asked why she made this decision, [Grande replied](#), “I feel like I came home to myself in a lot of ways, through what I learned from Glinda.”

However, the pair has faced backlash for their visibly emotional reactions during interviews and events. Due to the prevalent stereotype in which women are seen as overly emotional and dramatic, no matter what they do, the Internet has taken to mocking Grande and Erivo’s reactions.

Yet, some find beauty in an emotional woman that much of the world does not acknowledge. Pouring their heart and soul into something as impactful as the story of *Wicked* warrants an emotional reaction from the duo. These women have shown they are strong enough to wear their hearts on their sleeves and share their inner selves with the world, an attribute that is significant when portraying a beloved character. The two are simply experiencing the rewards of a lifetime of hard work and dedication to their craft.

On a larger scale, there is a certain hostility that accompanies a woman in the arts. There is an expectation that women have to be willing to tear down others to uplift themselves, which can lead to extreme toxicity in any type of profession, not just theater. Both the Broadway show and the movie have given actresses of all backgrounds the chance to play a leading role. The story is able to portray both Glinda and Elphaba as powerful, larger-than-life characters, and the storyline’s most prominent theme is one of sisterhood, which is not seen in many other pieces of media. This unique focus has been a driving factor, resulting in *Wicked*’s diverse audience for so many years.

*Wicked*’s storyline is centered around the love and friendship of two women. While there are male love interests that appear throughout the film, it never draws attention away from Glinda and Elphaba. Both Erivo and Grande have reflected those morals in real life, never focusing too much on themselves or overshadowing the other, consistently being models of grace and humility. The two truly embody the *Wicked* quote that “everyone deserves the chance to fly.”