A 16 Bar Cut: The History Of American Musical Theatrean Original Script And Monograph Document

2006

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A 16 BAR CUT:  
THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATRE  

_An Original Script and Monograph Document_  

by  

ROCKFORD ALLEN SANSOM  
B.F.A., Acting, University of West Florida, 2003  
B.A., English Literature, University of West Florida, 2003  

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Fine Arts  
in the Department of Theatre  
in the College of Arts and Humanities  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida  

Summer Term  
2006
ABSTRACT

Believing that a thesis should encompass all aspects of a conservatory training program, I will write and perform—in collaboration with my classmate Patrick John Moran—a new musical entitled A 16 Bar Cut: The History of American Musical Theatre as the capstone project for my Master of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre.

A 16 Bar Cut will be a two-man show that tells the entire history of American musical theatre from the ancient Greeks to today in a tongue-in-cheek manner. The goal of the project is to pay homage to an original American art form in a night of zany silliness and hilarity. The show will feature an informative perspective on the rise and current status of American musical theatre, several new songs, complete irreverence, and grown men singing, dancing, and making utter fools of themselves.

Creating my thesis show will test and stretch my knowledge base of the musical theatre art form and virtually every skill that I have developed in my course of study. Since A 16 Bar Cut centers on the historical journey of musical theatre, constructing the new work will demonstrate my understanding of musical theatre history and literature. Performing the show will also challenge my ability and craftsmanship as an actor, singer, and dancer. Not only will I create a through-line character—a heightened, silly, professorial version of myself, but I will also create approximately fifty additional characters used throughout the show. The vocal and dance requirements for my track will also be numerous and demanding. And since the show travels through the major movements of musical theatre history, I will have to dance, sing, and act in the various styles and qualities of each movement and time period.

Other significant challenges will center on script development. The first obstacle will be synthesizing music theatre into a single evening while maintaining an arc, storyline, and Patrick
and my specific point of view about the genre. Another complexity to the show will be accessibility to the audience—how to be respectful to and informative about musical theatre, while at the same time being entertaining and funny to a wide array of audience members who will vary in musical theatre knowledge.

In addition, developing a two-man thesis will require a complete collaboration with Patrick Moran. Since musical theatre is rarely—if ever—a solo art, working as a team will expand and exercise my collaborative abilities. And producing the show with Patrick will test supplementary skills such as marketing, resourcefulness, design and technical elements, etc.

The Research and Analysis portion of my monograph document will be structured according to the M.F.A. Thesis Guidelines as applicable to my specific project. The (A) Research section will consist of a biographical glossary on all of the composers and lyricists referenced in *A 16 Bar Cut*. Librettists’ information will be included when their work is pertinent. Additionally, each composer, lyricists, and librettists will be discussed in regards to their significance in musical theatre history. The (B) Structural Analysis section will describe the show’s organization and construction and how the structural problems mentioned above are solved. The (C) Role Analysis section will have three sub-sections focusing on my different roles in the production as a playwright, producer, and actor.
For my mother, Brenda

For my father, Jerry

For my sister, Katie

And for my brother, Patrick
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In every creative and collaborative effort, there are always a plethora of people that give so much of their time, energy, and effort, and they never receive enough thanks and glory—such is the case with my thesis. I never could have succeeded in my thesis project nor could I have survived the last ten months of my life without each of these wonderful people. This acknowledgment page is my feeble attempt to give them the thanks and glory that they so richly deserve. In no particular order, many thanks go to:

Justin Fischer for his talent, genius, musical guidance, and willingness to be paid pennies instead of what he is really worth; Chris Staffel and Josephine Leffner for offering to house manage; Debbie Tedrick for generously offering her vast musical theatre library and for her willingness to help with anything; Chris Layton for proving to me that there are voices in my head; the Orlando Repertory Theatre for hiring and promoting artists; James Cleveland for having the most talented ears I know and for getting paid in vodka; Dave Upton for picturesque lighting and for getting paid in beer; Simone Smith for seamless sewing and for getting paid in chocolate; John Bell for admitting me into the MFA program, helping to make me a theatre artist, agreeing to chair my committee, taking extra time from his life to workshop the script, encouraging me to always do my best, keeping me sane this year, and for being my friend; Jim Brown for many deep discussions at Subway, letting me be your teaching assistant, and for serving on my committee; Nick Wuehrmann for opening up the world of operetta, connecting me to myself as a performer, and for serving on my committee; Steve Chicurel for teaching me to sing more than the vowels; Gary Flannery for being the only person that truly took the time to teach me to dance; Earl Weaver for making me a historian and for all the free therapy; all the UCF professors I’ve mentioned for making me proud to be their student; my classmates: Mark
Hardin, Rebecca Johnson, Katie Kelly, Chris Layton, and Patrick Moran for learning with me, teaching me, and putting up with me for two years; Rebecca Johnson for joining Patrick and my crazy roommate world and for letting us use your furniture; Isaac and Lizzy Kreiger for the vocal and life coaching; Karen Hiscoe for knowing all the answers; Gary Cadwallader for being a shining beacon of hope in an otherwise maddening sea of insanity; Musetta Jensen for being my dearest friend and costume advisor; Linda Esser-May for kicking me around in my youth and for the brilliant poster; Mark Hardin for knowing that true friends will take pictures of you in drag; Donna and Daniel Moran for making me feel so welcome in their family, sewing my dresses, and helping with the set; my crazy extended family for being you; my best pal Patrick for being the best collaborator and friend I could ever wish for; my dad, mom, and sister for unconditional love, driving across the country to hear me sing, and encouraging me to follow my dreams (I’ll be sure to tell Larry King that you were supportive.); and any one I have forgotten. I will remember you when I get the book deal.
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INTRODUCTION

Within the context of my Master of Fine Arts thesis, A 16 Bar Cut: The History of American Musical Theatre is a play, a performance, and a process. For the completion of my thesis project, I fulfilled three distinct creative endeavors. Collaborating with my colleague Patrick John Moran, we conceived and developed an original, two-man musical that humorously navigates the entire history of American musical theatre from its Greek roots to its current status. I performed my role in the world premiere of our script on May 5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} 2006, at the Orlando Repertory Theatre. And I have also composed this extensive monograph document that supports the process of the original script and performance.

Since the entire thesis project is contingent upon the musical that Patrick and I created, I have included the script as the first chapter of this monograph document. We have presented our script under the formatting guidelines of Musical Theatre International—the nation’s largest musical theatre licensing company. The subsequent chapter, “Research Glossary,” begins the formal monograph document portion of my thesis and follows the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. This chapter is a glossary of composers, lyricists, and relevant librettists that are referenced in the A 16 Bar Cut script, whose historical information was invaluable in the writing process. Each glossary entry consists of the artist’s biographical information and their contribution to musical theatre.

The following five chapters pertain to the challenges of the thesis process. “Structural Analysis” explores the intricacies of the script and reveals the structural strategies that Patrick and I implored in script development. The “Role Analysis” chapter dissects the three primary creative roles that I faced in this project: author, producer, and actor; each sub-section investigates the role’s journey and its problems, successes, and failures. The “Production &
Performance Journal” chapter is a series of chronologic entries that capture the daily thesis process. These entries and the experience that coincides with them helped form my views in “Role Analysis.” In addition, I have included the standard “Evaluation” chapter, which reproduces the assessment from my Thesis Committee Chair, John Bell. And I end with a “Conclusion,” which contains my assessment of the thesis project and its relevance to my education and career.

Because of the complex and innovative nature of my thesis, the appendixes to my monograph document are extensive. The first four appendixes show the writer’s process: the first outline of the script and the three versions of “Tenor Envy.” I have also included notes on each “Tenor Envy” version; these notes act as a small journal of the composition process. The “Production Budget,” the “Costume and Prop Plots,” the “Press Release,” and the “Poster” appendixes all reveal my work as author, designer, and producer. “Favorite Production Photos” is simply for fun. And “Songs Referenced in the Script” catalogues the previously published material that Patrick and I use in the script; I have separated this material, so it does not confuse the “Reference” section. These additions are informative and necessary components to my monograph document, which further elaborate on and reveal the entire scope of my thesis process.
A 16 BAR CUT:
THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATRE

An Original Musical
with Three Original Songs

by

Patrick John Moran
and
Rockford Sansom

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Written permission is required for live performance of any sort. This includes readings, cuttings, scenes, and excerpts.

ORIGINAL CAST

Rocky..........................................................Rockford Sansom
Patrick..................................................Patrick John Moran
Justin..................................................Justin S. Fischer
Voiceover..................................................Christopher Layton

ORIGINAL CREATIVE TEAM

Additional Arrangements & Musical Supervision.............................................Justin S. Fischer
Sound Design..................................................James Cleveland
Light Design..................................................Dave Upton

A 16 BAR CUT: THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN MUSICAL THEATRE had its first public performance on 5 May 2006 at the Orlando Repertory Theatre in Orlando, FL. This performance was a final thesis project used to complete the Master of Fine Arts degree in Musical Theatre at the University of Central Florida Conservatory Theatre. John C. Bell served as thesis committee chair.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

PATRICK JOHN MORAN is a native from the good-old state of New Jersey. He received his B.A. in Theatre Performance from Greensboro College and his M.F.A. in Musical Theatre Performance from University of Central Florida. His favorite roles include Finch in How to Succeed… (Greensboro College), Al, et al in Working and Man 4 in You’re Gonna Love Tomorrow (UCF/Seaside Music Theater), Nicely-Nicely in Guys and Dolls and Roger in Grease (Shenandoah Music Theatre), Linus in You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown (Galveston Island Outdoor Musicals), Leopard/Crocodile in Just So and Pierre/ LaTour in the Regional Premiere of Under the Bridge (Orlando Repertory Theatre). Patrick would like to thank his family and friends for all the support and opportunities he has received. He would also like to thank anyone who is willing to financially support him over the next few years.

ROCKFORD SANSOM is originally from the Pensacola, Florida. His favorite credits include Man 1 in My Way: A Tribute to Frank Sinatra, Salerio in The Merchant of Venice, Snout in A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Oklahoma Shakespeare Festival), Rhino in Just So, Jacques in the Regional Premiere of Under the Bridge (Orlando Repertory Theatre), Humpty Dumpty, et al in Alice in Wonderland, Serge in Art (2Strange Little Girls), Mother Ginger in The Nutcracker (Ballet Pensacola), Man 1 in You’re Gonna Love Tomorrow, and Mike, et al in Working (UCF/Seaside Music Theatre). He has an MFA in Musical Theatre from the University of Central Florida, a BFA in Acting and a BA in English Literature from the University of West Florida, and has studied at the Yale School of Drama. He would like to thank his family, his friends, and his crazy-redneck-hillbilly-extended family for providing so much comic material.
CAST

Rocky………………………………………………………………………a pretentious scholar & baritone
Patrick……………………………………………………………………..a thickly veiled scholar & tenor
Justin…………………………………………………………………………a patient accompanist
Voiceover…………………………………………………………..a god, a boxing announcer, & Zach from A Chorus Line

PLACE

Shortly after the turn of the 21st century

NOTES FROM THE AUTHORS

Throughout the script, we use our own fun and festive names, Patrick and Rocky, and our friend Justin uses his own very nice name as well. However, each cast member should use his own real name when performing the show—no matter how much you may like our names. We have also included several topical references in the script. Their humor will eventually dwindle over time, so we encourage each new production to change these references and keep the script as up-to-date as possible.

A 16 Bar Cut is a joyous romp. In our show, all the rules are broken. Talk to the audience. Sit in an old man’s lap. Pull people on stage. If the audience talks, talk back. The entire evening should appear thrown together. Resist the temptation to over design; you will lose some of the inherent playfulness. Because of the quick changes, the costumes should be poorly made pieces and bad wigs. The acting is big and fast, but it should not be at the expense of truth. Understanding vocal, dance, and acting styles is a definite necessity. Above all, be silly and love musical theatre.
Act One

Pre Show

(The house lights go down as if the opening announcement is about to begin. PATRICK and ROCKY do not realize that the microphone is on.)

ROCKY

Look at that guy.

PATRICK

Where?

ROCKY

Third row, fourth seat. He doesn’t even know we’re talking about him.

PATRICK

Oh, look at the girl in the pink top. Fifth row center.

ROCKY

Wow…(ROCKY and PATRICK continue with a pre show improvisation. Eventually they get told that the microphone is on.) What?

PATRICK

Welcome everyone to tonight’s production of *A 16 Bar Cut: The History of American Musical Theatre*. We ask that you please turn off all cell phones, pagers, beepers, wrist watch alarms, personal digital assistants, laptops, ipods, pace makers,

ROCKY

C Bs,

PATRICK

walkie-talkies,

ROCKY

fuzz busters,

PATRICK

and babies.
ROCKY
Please unwrap any candy that you would like to give to the performers. And at the end of the show, don’t be afraid to throw wads of money at the poor starving actors. If you like the show, please tell your friends. Or better yet, drag them here yourself. Now please sit back, relax, and enjoy *A 16 Bar Cut: The History of American Musical Theatre.*

(Segue)
Opening: “It's Greek To Me, Me, Me”

(The curtain opens on an eerie stage with PATRICK and ROCKY in black robes with Greco-Roman masks. They chant unintelligible, spooky sounds.)

VOICEOVER
(Recorded) In Ancient Greece, thespians offered song and dance as a form of worship to the god Dionysus. With an omniscient chorus chanting to the sounds of Grecian instruments, the theatrical titans, Aristophanes, Euripides, and Sophocles, first told their stories. But what is the true lineage of the art form known as musical theatre? How have the scholars…

ROCKY
Will you listen to him?

PATRICK
He’s makin’ our show sound like some Greek tragedy!

ROCKY
Lighten up, dude.

PATRICK
The best part of musical theatre is all the glitz, glamour, and production numbers. (To ROCKY) Let’s spectacle this show up.

ROCKY
We’ll take it from here.

VOICEOVER
You go girls!

BOTH
OPEN UP THE CURTAIN

(The traveler opens to reveal a gaudy and poorly made set as PATRICK and ROCKY strip off their robes to reveal wonderfully colorful costumes with their names bedazzled in jewels on the back. They grab hats and canes.)

COMEDY TONIGHT!

ROCKY
SOMETHING FAMILIAR,

PATRICK
SOMETHING PECULIAR,

BOTH

9
SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE,
A COMEDY TONIGHT!

SOMETHING APPEALING,
ROCKY

SOMETHING APPALLING,
BOTH

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE,
A COMEDY TONIGHT!
NOTHING WITH GODS, NOTHING WITH FATE.
WEIGHTY AFFAIRS WILL JUST HAVE TO WAIT.

ROCKY
NOTHING THAT’S FORMAL,

PATRICK
NOTHING THAT’S NORMAL,

BOTH
NOTHING PRETENTIOUS OR POLITE:
TRAGEDY TOMORROW, COMEDY TONIGHT!

PATRICK
Welcome to our show everyone. I’m Patrick.

ROCKY
And I’m Rocky, and we are both scholars as well as lovers...

PATRICK
…but not that way…

ROCKY
…of musical theatre. We’ve been performing and studying musical theatre for years, and we thought “Why keep this all this show tune knowledge to ourselves?”

PATRICK
(In pain) The songs never stop! (He exits.)

ROCKY
So we decided to write a show about it.

PATRICK
(PATRICK pokes his head out.) And make you sit through it.

EMCEE (ROCKY)
WILLKOMMEN! BEINVENUE!
WELCOME!
FREMDER, ÉTRANGER, STRANGER,
GLUCKLICH ZU SEHEN.
JE SUIS ENCHANTÉ.
HAPPY TO SEE YOU,
BLEIBE, RESTE, STAY.
WILLKOMMEN! BEINVENUE!
WELCOME!
IM CABARET, AU CABARET, TO CABARET!

(PATRICK has entered with a chair.)
Meine Damen und Herren, Mesdames et Messieurs, Ladies and Gentlemen! You are about to see *A 16 Bar Cut: The History of American Musical Theatre*. In our show the costumes are fabulous, the show tunes are fabulous, even the chorus girls are fabulous.

(ROCKY looks at PATRICK who is thrusting his pelvis like a *Cabaret* girl.)

PATRICK

I’m Frtizy.

ROCKY

See, I told you the chorus girls were fabulous. Tonight, we will explore every era, genre, and style of musical theatre, even the major players.

PATRICK

In one evening.

ROCKY

No, Fritzy, bad! (PATRICK exits with the chair and ROCKY’S cane.) I have also taken the liberty of setting out a time line for us to use as we explore musical theatre history. We started with the Greeks, and we will end…

PATRICK

(As an aside to ROCKY.) Wait, wait. I don’t like that phrase.

ROCKY

What phrase? (The music stops.)

PATRICK

Time line. It’s got no heart, no soul, no flair!

ROCKY

Okay Mr. Flair, what do you want to call it?
PATRICK

We’ll call it our “chorus line.”

(Both PATRICK and ROCKY hit a famous Chorus Line pose on the chorus line.)

Justin, the big finish.

OH, I’M NO ONE’S WIFE, BUT
OH I LOVE MY LIFE
AND ALL THAT JAZZ.

BOTH

That Jazz.

(PATRICK exits with ROCKY’S costume.)

(Segue)
Scene One: “Cirque du Sucker”

ROCKY
(At the beginning of the chorus line) So, let’s start at the very beginning of musical theatre—a very good place to start. (He laughs at his own cleverness.) The Greeks and Romans. After the Greeks created the chanting Greek chorus, the Romans essentially stole the idea for their shows.

PATRICK
I’m bored. I wanna sing again.

ROCKY
We can’t sing again until we get to the circus in the mid 19th century; it’s the first spectacle.

PATRICK
But I wanna sing now!

ROCKY
Not yet.

PATRICK
But what really happened between the Greeks and the circus?

ROCKY
The Renaissance.

PATRICK
Like I said, what really happened between the Greeks and the circus?

ROCKY
You know, you could probably learn a few things from these early times in history.

PATRICK
What is there to learn? We have the Greeks chanting to music, the Romans stealing the idea, Shakespeare adding in some dance with naughty songs, and then we have the circus.

ROCKY
Ah, but you forgot about op…

PATRICK
And opera? I don’t have a pole big enough to stick up my ass to talk about opera.

ROCKY
Fair enough –let’s move onto circus.

PATRICK
Hurray! I’ll go grab the poodles and the hoops of fire!

ROCKY
Patrick, the circus wasn’t all silliness. It was a legitimate kind of theatre…sort of…with animals.

PATRICK
Rocky, the circus was pure entertainment. It was exactly like it is today. It only existed to sucker people out of their money.

ROCKY
(Trying to find some legitimacy.) There’s a ringmaster who’s a grand entertainer and showman.

PATRICK
Rocky, you’re thinking too much. P.T. Barnum said it best himself.

THERE IS A SUCKER BORN EV’RY MINUTE,

ROCKY
Patrick!

PATRICK
EACH TIME THAT SECOND HAND SWEEPS TO THE TOP LIKE DANDELIONS UP THEY POP,
THEIR EARS SO BIG, THEIR EYES SO WIDE,
(PATRICK kicks ROCKY in the butt. ROCKY gets an idea and exits.)

AND THOUGH I FEED ‘EM BONAFIED BALONEY,
WITH NO TRUTH IN IT,
WHY YOU CAN BET I FIND SOME RUBE TO BUY MY CORN,
‘CAUSE THERE’S A SURE AS SHOOTIN’ SUCKER BORN A MINUTE,
AND I’M REFERRIN’ TO THE MINUTE YOU WAS BORN.

ROCKY
(ROCKY enters with a Barker’s hat.)
The circus was full of great attractions. Not only were there lions and tigers and bears…

PATRICK
Oh my!

ROCKY
There were acrobats, singers, dancers, and of course, the novelties. (ROCKY becomes a carnival barker) Come one and all and see the amazing, the fantastical, and the unimaginable.

(PATRICK approaches)
That’ll be one dollar.

(PATRICK hands ROCKY a dollar and exits as if entering the carnival museum.)
QUITE A LOTTA ROMAN TERRA COTTA,
LIVIN’ LAVA FROM THE FLANKS OF ETNA,
STATUARY, RIDE OF DROMEDARY,
SEE THE TEMPLE TUMBLE AND THE RED SEA PART.
MACNAMARA’S BAND, THE FATTEST LADY IN THE LAND,
A PICKLED PREHISTORIC HAND, A STRAINED OF POCHANTAS’ HAIR,
CROW SIoux WHO’RE GOIN’ TO BE SHOWIN’ YOU SOME ROWIN’
THROUGH A MODEL OF THE RAPIDS ON THE DELAWARE!

ARMADILLAS, CLEVER CATAPILLIARS,
REPRODUCTION OF THE CYCLOP’S RET’NA,
CRYSTAL BLOWIN’, AUTOMATIC SEWIN’,
VENUS ON A SHELL AND OTHER WORKS OF ART.
EDUCATED FLEAS, A TRIBE OF ABORIGINES,
TWO LADIES JOINED ACROSS THE KNEES,
THE MONA LISA MADE OF ICE,
HOT-TEN-TOTS, WE’VE GOTTEN IN FORGOTTEN SPOTS,
A COTTON GIN,
A NIGHT WITH LOT IN SODOM, BETTER SEE THAT TWICE!
ONE IGUANA, SNAKES AND OTHER FAUNA,
GOT NO BEARDED LADY, BUT WE’RE GET’NA.
WHEN YOU DUCK OUT, TAKE ANOTHER BUCK OUT,
RUN AROUND THE BLOCK AND SEE A,
RUN AROUND THE BLOCK AND SEE A,
RUN AROUND THE BLOCK AND SEE A NEW SHOW START!

(PATRICK enters.)
Well, what did ya’ think?

What the hell did I just pay for?

ROCKY          PATRICK
THEIRS IS A      QUITE A LOTTA
SUCKER          ROMAN TERRA COTTA,
BORN EV’RY      LIVIN’ LAVA FROM
MINUTE,          THE FLANKS OF ETNA,
EACH TIME THAT SECOND STATUARY,
HAND SWEEPS TO THE TOP RIDE A DROMEDARY,
LIKE DANDELIONS SEE THE TEMPLE TUMBLE
UP THEY POP,     AND THE RED SEA PART.
THEIR EARS SO BIG,
THEIR EYES SO WIDE,
AND THOUGH I FEED ‘EM ARMADILLAS,
BALONY,
WITH NO TRUTH    CLEVER CATAPILLIARS,

QUOTATION MARKS
IN IT,
WHY YOU CAN BET
I’LL FIND SOME RUBE
TO BUY MY
CORN,
‘CAUSE THERE’S A SURE
AS SHOOTIN’
SUCKER BORN A
MINUTE,
AND I’M REFERRIN’
TO THE
MINUTE YOU WAS
BORN.

VENUS ON A SHELL AND OTHER
WORKS OF ART.
ONE IGUANNA,
SNAKES AND OTHER FAUNA,
GOT NO BEADED LADY,
BUT WE’RE GET’NA,
WHEN YOU DUCK OUT,
TAKE ANOTHER BUCK OUT,
RUN AROUND THE BLOCK AND SEE A,
RUN AROUND THE BLOCK AND SEE A,
RUN AROUND THE BLOCK AND SEE A
NEW SHOW
START.

(Segue)
Scene Two: “Vaude-strely”

PATRICK
Second verse, same as the first! A little bit louder and a little bit worse!
(He sings without accompaniment)
QUITE A LOT OF ROMAN TERRA COTTA…

ROCKY
No! We’ve got to move on. Go check the chorus line to see what’s next.

PATRICK
Why do I have to do it?

ROCKY
Because you’re farther. (He exits with his hat.)

PATRICK
Fine. (He crosses to the chorus line.) Next is vaudeville.

ROCKY
Oh, vaudeville. This is when musical theatre really starts getting interesting.

PATRICK
Ooooo. Is this when we do Bombay Dreams?

ROCKY
No, and don’t ever speak of that show again.

PATRICK
Well, wasn’t vaudeville just like circus but with people?

ROCKY
Technically, vaudeville is a transition from circus to what we think of as musical theatre today. But instead of telling one story, vaudeville was an evening of multiple acts with different songs and skits. It would open with a dumb act…

PATRICK
Wait. Wait. Why don’t we do vaudeville instead of talking about vaudeville?

ROCKY
What do you mean “do vaudeville?”

PATRICK
(Musical Fanfare) Ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for coming to our vaudeville show. While you’re finding your seats, we have for you tonight the opening of our show—the Dumb Act.
(PATRICK points to ROCKY.)
ROCKY

What?

PATRICK

There you have it folks, the Dumb Act.

ROCKY

I don’t want to be the Dumb Act! That’s the worst insult in vaudeville.

PATRICK

Take it as a hint. We move onto the Singing Sister or Dancing Brother Act.

ROCKY

Oh, I get it.

PATRICK

A five, six, seven, eight

(Acting like a Singing Sister Act, ROCKY sings in falsetto while PATRICK dances a jig.)

ROCKY

INKA DINKA DOO
A DINKA DEE, A DINKA DOO
OH, WHAT A TUNE FOR CROONING

PATRICK

Following that great act, we have some acting greats in a short comedy sketch.

ROCKY

Thank you. I learned from the best.

PATRICK

Really, who’d you learn from?

ROCKY

Well, I’m not gonna give you her name, but I’ll tell ya’ she was a knock out.

PATRICK

A knock out, wow! I wish I could find a girl like that.

ROCKY

Why, you lookin’ for a girl in particular?

PATRICK
Nope, just lookin’ for any girl who’s not particular.

ROCKY
Well, the best way to solve your women trouble is to find a place of worship.

PATRICK
A place of worship, huh? You gotta place of worship?

ROCKY
Yep, she lives two blocks that way.

PATRICK
The next vaudeville act was the Eccentric Act.
(PATRICK dances like Elaine Bennice from *Seinfeld* to “Inka Dinka Doo.”)

ROCKY
Was that really necessary?

PATRICK
I’m sorry if some of us are more talented than others.

ROCKY
Keep going.

PATRICK
Next is the special spot reserved for either an up-and-coming star or a falling star—usually a falling star that’s two weeks away from an over-dose.

ROCKY
And I see we have our falling star in the front row. (ROCKY picks out a man in the front row.) Ladies and Gentlemen, Bea Arthur. Stand up and give us a wave Bea.
(The audience member waves.)

PATRICK
Thanks so much for coming out today, Bea. Be sure to call us from the home. The next part of a vaudeville show is very important—a brief intermission.

(PATRICK and ROCKY turn up stage and immediately turn down stage.)

The opening of Act Two is the Big Act—usually involving the most money possible. And tonight we have emptied our pockets for this lavish spectacle. Justin.

(JUSTIN crosses center stage and blows into a party-favor kazoo. He bows and crosses back to the piano.)

ROCKY
Thank you, Justin.

PATRICK

We move on to the Star Spot.

ROCKY

Oh, this is where all the greats performed: Sophie Tucker, George Burns, Al Jolson

PATRICK

Fanny Brice, Eddie Cantar, and the great George M. Cohan.

BOTH

GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY
REMEMBER ME IN HAROLD SQUARE
Done!

PATRICK

And now the end of our vaudeville evening—the Dog Billing. Take it away Rocky.

ROCKY

But the Dog Billing was for the boring acts that actually encouraged people to leave.

Again, take the hint.

ROCKY

Why I oughta!

PATRICK

Thank you!

BOTH

Thank you so much. Thank for coming to the vaudeville show. (They bow.)

ROCKY

Interestingly, minstrelsy came of age the same time vaudeville was popular.

PATRICK

Minstrelsy? What’s that?

ROCKY

I’m glad you asked; it’s essentially the black version of vaudeville.

PATRICK

Oh, right. (He exits.)
ROCKY
At this time in history, black performers weren’t allowed to share the stage with white performers. So black performers started their own form of theatre called minstrelsy. Unfortunately, white performers invaded minstrelsy and would put on black make up called blackface and act like happy plantation slaves.

(PATRICK enters with a table full of make up and plays around with it, while he hums an old plantation tune.)

It’s really quite disgusting, but minstrelsy is important to theatre history because its music and dance advanced the form. The music of Stephen Foster and the invention of the cakewalk dance were theatre staples of the day. Now I just want to add a disclaimer. Black face is not an accepted form of entertainment anymore; it’s actually illegal now. Patrick, what in God’s name are you doing?

PATRICK
I’m making black face.

ROCKY
You’re what!?

PATRICK
I have my walk around in like five minutes.

ROCKY
Patrick, you cannot put on black face and perform a walk around!

PATRICK
Why you gotta bring a brother down?

ROCKY
You’re a piece of work. (He takes the table and starts to walk off stage.) I’m going to pretend this never happened. Now go over to the chorus line and see what’s next. (He exits.)

PATRICK
Why do I have to do everything? Let’s see what’s next, what’s next? Rocky, I’m confused. All the different types of theatre are overlapping at this point in history. What comes next?

(Segue)
Scene Three: “The Operetta Opus”

(ROCKY enters with a cape and top hat in full operetta glory.)

ROCKY

AH! SWEET MYSTERY OF LIFE,
AT LAST I’VE FOUND THEE,
AH! I KNOW AT LAST THE SECRET OF IT ALL;
ALL THE LONGING, SEEKING, STRIVING,
WAITING, YEARNING,
THE BURNING HOPES, THE JOY AND IDLE TEARS THAT FALL!

(PATRICK howls like a dog.)

I am singing.

PATRICK

Is that what that sound is?

ROCKY

I am demonstrating the next movement in Musical Theatre history…Operetta—a theatrical production that has the same grandeur of opera, but it’s lighter, more popular, and has a sense of humor.

PATRICK

Boring.

ROCKY

It is NOT boring.

PATRICK

Operetta is for old people who attend matinees. You know, the people who were alive when it was written.

ROCKY

You are not worthy of operetta. Please, exit my stage!

(PATRICK exits. ROCKY, as if not already, becomes very pretentious and somewhat manic.)

Ladies and gentlemen, (PATRICK howls again.) Ladies and gentlemen, operetta is one of the highest and grandest art forms that is still practiced today. Although operetta was most popular in the late 19th century, contemporary composers cannot hold a candle to it. The music is lush and expansive; the lyrics are sublime yet witty, and the characters… (ROCKY takes a very dramatic pause. The kind you only see in operetta.) …as an actor, I have yet to find characters as layered and challenging as I have found in operetta. It is an art form that I hold near and dear to my heart.

PATRICK

22
ROCKY
Shut-Up!! Anyway, I consider myself somewhat of an ambassador for operetta, and as a treat, I would like to sing for you the entire first act of Franz Lehar’s operetta *The Merry Widow*. I, of course, will be performing all the roles. Justin, if you please.

(PATRICK enters wearing a famous yet badly made *Merry Widow* hat and an overly large *Merry Widow* gown.)

PATRICK

VILIA, O VILIA!
THE WITCH OF THE WOOD!
WOULD I NOT DIE FOR YOU,
DEAR, IF I COULD!
“VILIA, O VILIA, MY LOVE AND MY BRIDE!”
SOFTLY AND SADLY HE SIGH’D,
SADLY HE SIGH’D VILIA.

ROCKY

Patrick, operetta is my genre.

PATRICK

Well excuse me for trying to keep these people awake. (To audience.) Do you like my hat? It’s a *Merry Widow* hat, all the rage in the early 1900s.

ROCKY

Exit the stage and return that boat cover of a costume to the *Titanic* set.
(He refers to PATRICK’S “dress.”)

PATRICK

Fine. (To the audience.) Enjoy your nap folks. (He exits)

ROCKY

Why don’t we skip the *Merry Widow*; it’s ruined for me. We’ll move on to the two most famous men associated with operetta—Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan and Sir William S. Gilbert. The “S” stands for Schwenk. (ROCKY giggles.) Anyway…

(PATRICK is heard off-stage and comes running on dressed as a Native American.)

PATRICK

I AM CALLING YOU-OO-OO-OO-OO-OO!
WILL YOU ANSWER TOO-OO-OO-OO-OO-OO?

ROCKY
Now what are you doing?

PATRICK
Well, I was trying to entertain everyone with Rudolf Friml’s the “Indian Love Call” from the operetta *Rose-Marie*.

ROCKY
We’ve moved on to G&S. Try to keep up. (PATRICK starts to exit.) Hey Tiger Lily, Kathy Rigby just called, there’s another revival.

PATRICK
Funny. (He exits.)

ROCKY
I apologize for the interruption; it’s so hard to find good help these days. When discussing Gilbert and Sullivan, there are a few things that always pop into mind. The mixture of the lovers’ heavenly arias, the witty comic patter songs, and the fantastical stories that all merge together to form a sublime yet accessible evening of theatre. (ROCKY gets too excited for words.) OH MY I have a glorious idea. I will perform for you one of the infamous patter songs from *The Pirates of Penzance*. But first, I must get my silly hat. You cannot do a patter song without a silly hat. G&S loved silly hats! Excuse me.

(ROCKY exits. PATRICK enters dressed for *The Mikado*.)

PATRICK

THREE LITTLE MAIDS FROM SCHOOL ARE WE
PERT AS A SCHOOL GIRL WELL CAN BE
FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH GIRLISH GLEE
THREE LITTLE MAIDS FROM SCHOOL

(ROCKY enters dressed for *The Pirates of Penzance*)

WOH, WOH, WOH. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

PATRICK
Well obviously I’m dressed up to talk about Gilbert and Sullivan and their contribution to operetta. I’m Yum-Yum from *The Mikado*. She’s the lead.

ROCKY
Well you thought wrong, Connie Chung.

PATRICK
I’m sorry; you’re dressed as a pirate. Who is living in the magical world of pretend?

ROCKY
(Like a pirate) Aaarrrrgh-right. We can both do it.
Ha Ha!

But we’re singing my song!

Dooh!

Justin, you need a silly hat!

(JUSTIN puts on a sailor hat from *H.M.S. Pinafore* and starts to play.)

(Verse I)

WE KNOW THE VERY MODEL OF A MAJOR OPERRETLICAL;
THERE’S ARIAS AND PATTER SONGS AND PLOTS THAT ARE DRAMATICAL.

WE KNOW WHO WROTE THIS SONG AND WE WILL QUOTE THEM QUITE
HISTORICAL;
IT’S GILBERT AND ITS SULLIVAN; WE’LL LIST THEIR SHOWS IN ORDICAL.

WE’LL LIST THEM FIRST TO LAST OR LAST TO FIRST OR ALPHABETICAL.

WE HOPE WE’RE NOT CONFUSING; IT’S ALL VERY THEORETICAL.

WITH GILBERT AND WITH SULLIVAN, WE’RE TEEMING WITH A LOT
O’NEWS.

WE TRUST THIS INFORMATION DOESN’T MAKE YOU WANT TO TAKE A
SNOOZE.

WE TRUST THIS INFORMATION DOESN’T MAKE YOU WANT TO TAKE A
SNOOZE.

WE TRUST THIS INFORMATION DOESN’T MAKE YOU WANT TO TAKE A
SNOOZE.

WE TRUST THIS INFORMATION DOESN’T MAKE YOU WANT TO TAKE A
SNOOZE.

25
WE’RE VERY GOOD WITH STYLE, AND WE LOVE TO PUT ON SILLY HATS.

PATRICK

SIR GILBERT AND SIR SULLIVAN WERE ALSO VERY FOND OF THAT.

ROCKY

WITH ARIAS AND PATTER SONGS AND PLOTS THAT ARE DRAMATICAL,

PATRICK

WE KNOW THE VERY MODEL OF A MAJOR OPERRETICAL!

BOTH

WITH ARIAS AND PATTER SONGS AND PLOTS THAT ARE DRAMATICAL,

WE KNOW THE VERY MODEL OF A MAJOR OPERRETICAL!

(Verse 2)

ROCKY

A RUNNING PLOT IN OPERETTA IS THE QUIRKY PARADOX;
THE TENOR ALWAYS GETS THE GIRL

PATRICK

BECAUSE HE HAS A REAL THICK…

ROCKY

Patrick!

(The music stops.)

PATRICK

Sock. I was going to say, “sock.” It’s an old adage that tenors wear thick socks for good luck. I’m wearing one right now. (PATRICK pulls up both of his pant legs to reveal thick socks.) Continue.

ROCKY

WHEN SINGING OPERETTA YOU WILL FIND THE SCORE IS STRENUOUS.

PATRICK

THE SONGS GO ON FOREVER, NEVER ENDING; THEY’RE CONTINUOUS.

ROCKY

LIKE SULLIVAN WE STOLE THIS MUSIC STYLE FROM THE VIENNESE,

PATRICK

AND GILBERT WE JUST COPIED ALL THE ENDINGS FROM HIS RHYMING SCHEME.

ROCKY

26
NOW FINALLY WE’RE CLOSING IN ON WHAT THIS SONG IS REALLY FOR;

PATRICK
A LIST OF SHOWS THAT STARTS WITH THAT INFERNAL NONSENSE PINAFORE.

BOTH
A LIST OF SHOWS THAT STARTS WITH THAT INFERNAL NONSENSE PINAFORE.
A LIST OF SHOWS THAT STARTS WITH THAT INFERNAL NONSENSE PINAFORE.
A LIST OF SHOWS THAT STARTS WITH THAT INFERNAL NONSENSE PINAFORE.
A LIST OF SHOWS THAT STARTS WITH THAT INFERNAL NONSENSE PINAFORE.

PATRICK
AS YOU CAN TELL OUR CLEVERNESS AND RHYMING SKILLS ARE NOT THE NORM,

ROCKY
THIS HELPS US WHEN WE OVER-ACT THE OPERETTAS WE PERFORM.

PATRICK
WITH ARIAS AND PATTER SONGS AND PLOTS THAT ARE DRAMATICAL,

ROCKY
WE KNOW THE VERY MODEL OF A MAJOR OPERRETICAL!

BOTH
WITH ARIAS AND PATTER SONGS AND PLOTS THAT ARE DRAMATICAL,
WE KNOW THE VERY MODEL OF A MAJOR OPERRETICAL!

ROCKY
Are you ready to begin the list?

PATRICK
After you.

(Verse 3)

ROCKY
THERE’S PINAFORE AND PENZANCE, THEN THERE’S PRINCESS IDA, TO BEGIN;
THEN IOANTHE, RUDDIGORE, FORGETTING THOSE WOULD BE A SIN.

PATRICK
TO GRAND DUKE AND THE GONDILERS WE FEEL ABLIGED TO TIP OUR HAT,
HAVE PATIENCE WITH THE SORCERER; IT’S EARLY G & S, AT THAT.

ROCKY
UTOPIA AND YOEMAN OF THE GUARD ARE GOOD TO SOME DEGREE,
BUT TRI’AL BY JURY’S SHORT, AND THEREFORE LIKED BY ALL THE BOURGEOSIE.

PATRICK
AND THAT’S THE CATALOGUE OF SHOWS THAT YOU WILL FIND ON THEIR MARQUEE;
OF G AND S’S BRILLIANCE, THERE IS NOTHING LEFT HERE TO DECREE.

BOTH
OF G AND S’S BRILLIANCE, THERE IS NOTHING LEFT HERE TO DECREE.
OF G AND S’S BRILLIANCE, THERE IS NOTHING LEFT HERE TO DECREE.
OF G AND S’S BRILLIANCE, THERE IS NOTHING LEFT HERE TO DECREE.

ROCKY
AND NOW THE WORLD OF G AND S IS NO LONGER A MYSTERY,

PATRICK
SO OPERETTA IS THE KIND OF SHOW THAT YOU WILL GO TO SEE.

BOTH
WITH ARIAS AND PATTER SONGS AND PLOTS THAT ARE DRAMATICAL,
YOU KNOW THE VERY MODEL OF A MAJOR OPERRETICAL!

WITH ARIAS AND PATTERN SONGS AND PLOTS THAT ARE DRAMATICAL,
YOU KNOW THE VERY MODEL OF A MAJOR OPERRETICAL!

(PATRICK takes off robe and wig and hands them to ROCKY. He exits.)

(Segue)
Scene Four: “Ol’ Man Ziegfeld”

PATRICK
Following Operetta, we move to… (PATRICK looks at the chorus line) Turn of the Century? (PATRICK shouts off-stage) We’re already at the end of the show?

ROCKY
(Off-stage) The turn of the Twentieth Century.

PATRICK
Huh?
( PATRICK starts looking around. He wonders off-stage and drops off his costume.)

ROCKY
The 1900s, dumb-ass!

PATRICK
Where are you?

ROCKY
Stage left.

PATRICK
Oh, the 1900s. Okay. The early 1900s were a time where everything from vaudeville, revue, minstrelsy, and operetta was put together and placed into one grand evening of entertainment under the name of the George White Scandals.

ROCKY
(Enters in a huff.) You mean the Follies.

PATRICK
What?

ROCKY
The Ziegfeld Follies.

PATRICK
Come again?

ROCKY
Florence Ziegfeld?

PATRICK
Huh?
ROCKY
Flo?

PATRICK
Who?

ROCKY
Lots of girls in sequence and peacock feathers?

PATRICK
Oh, yeah but it’s called The *George White Scandals*.

ROCKY
Patrick, *The Ziegfeld Follies* was the greatest variety show in the early Twentieth Century.

PATRICK
No Rocky, *The George White Scandals* was the greatest variety show in the early Twentieth Century.

ROCKY
*Follies*.

PATRICK
*Scandals*.

ROCKY
*Follies*!

PATRICK
*Scandals*!

(*West Side Story “Prologue #1.”*)

VOICEOVER
(Recorded) In tonight’s rumble, stage left, the great theatrical titanic Florence Ziegfeld of *The Ziegfeld Follies*. And stage right, the hoofing bellboy George White of *The George White Scandals*.

(*West Side Story “Prologue #2.”*)

FLO (ROCKY)
I, Flo Ziegfeld, opened my first *Follies* production in the summer of 1907 with a total cost of $13,000. The show proved to be so popular that it sparked an ongoing run of *Follies*’ shows. Beat that, whitey!

(*West Side Story “Prologue #3.”*)
GEORGE (PATRICK)

I, George White, started out in *The Ziegfeld Follies of 1911*. In 1915, I was seen as a hoofer with a featured spot. And in case you didn’t know, Flo, a hoofer is a tap dancer who can go all night long. (GEORGE starts a tap step.)

*(West Side Story “Prologue #4.”)*

FLO

Throughout the *Follies*, I had amazing collaborators—the best that money could buy: choreography by Julian Mitchell, sets by Joseph Urban, and music by Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Rudolph Friml, and Victor Herbert. It’s so good to have money!

GEORGE

Well, throughout the *Scandals*, I had even better collaborators: Erte, costumes; Joseph Urban, sets; and the music of Gershwin, Howard, DeSylva, and Brown. Money may be good, but shows are better with people who have talent.

*(West Side Story “Prologue #5.” GEORGE exits.)*

FLO

In *The Follies of 1919*, the great Irving Berlin wrote a song that would become the unofficial Ziegfeld anthem, “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody.”

(FLO sings, “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody” as PATRICK crosses dressed as a *Follies*’ girl)

A PRETTY GIRL IS LIKE A MELODY  
BY MORNING, NIGHT AND NOON. 
SHE WILL LEAVE YOU AND THEN COME BACK AGAIN. 
A PRETTY GIRL IS JUST LIKE A PRETTY TUNE. 

*(West Side Story “Prologue #6.” GEORGE enters as FLO exits.)*

GEORGE

In *The Scandals of 1922*, George Gershwin wrote the hit song to close Act One, “I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise.”

(GEORGE sings “I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise” as ROCKY crosses dressed as a *Scandals*’ girl.)

I’LL BUILD A STAIRWAY TO PARADISE,  
WITH A NEW STEP EV’RY DAY!  
I’M GOING TO GET THERE AT ANY PRICE;  
STAND ASIDE; I’M ON MY WAY!  
I’VE GOT THE BLUES,  
AND UP ABOVE IT’S SO FAIR.
SHOES, GO ON AND CARRY ME THERE!
I’LL BUILD A STARWAY TO PARADISE,
WITH A NEW STEP EV’RY DAY!

(West Side Story “Prologue #7.” FLO enters.)

FLO

The Follies were full of the stars of the day: Fanny Brice, Sophie Tucker, and Bert Williams.

GEORGE

The Scandals had stars of the stage and screen: Ann Miller, the Three Stooges, and the great Ethel Merman.

Ha, Merman.

GEORGE

Excuse me?

BOTH

Sing Off!

VOICEOVER

And now, a sing off between Bert Williams and Ethel Merman.

BERT WILLIAMS (ROCKY)

WHEN LIFE SEEMS FULL OF CLOUDS AND RAIN,
AND I AM FILLED WITH NAUGHT BUT PAIN,
WHO SOOTHEL MY THUMPING, BUMPING BRAIN?
NOBODY! (BERT exits.)

ETHEL MERMAN (PATRICK)

(LIFET enters.)

LIFE IS JUST A BOWL OF CHERRIES,
SO LIVE AND LAUGH AT IT ALL.

(ETHEL gives a triumphant “humph” and exits, while ROCKY enters.)

ROCKY

Patrick, this is ridiculous. Ziegfeld produced the Follies until his death in 1931.

(PATRICK enters.)

PATRICK

HA! The Scandals lasted until 1939, sucker!

ROCKY

But the Follies continued about 30 years after Flo’s death.

PATRICK

32
Damn it! You win again…this time!

(West Side Story “Prologue #8.”)

ROCKY
And if all that weren’t good enough, Flo produced one of the greatest musicals of all time

PATRICK
Carrie?

ROCKY
No, Patrick. Show Boat.

PATRICK
Show Boat? (He gets it.) Oh, the show boat, right.

ROCKY
It’s the first show that took the drama and gritty reality of a non-musical play and put it into a musical.

PATRICK
Oh, wow.

ROCKY
The characters deal with gambling, alcoholism, and addiction, and they fully address the issue of racial inequality.

PATRICK
Oh, I must have missed that last part.

ROCKY
Patrick, don’t you know anything about Show Boat?

PATRICK
Ha! Oh course I do. The show boat has been made into several movie versions over the years—some even critically acclaimed.

ROCKY
That’s right, Patrick.

PATRICK
Told ya’ (He exits.)

ROCKY

33
There are many songs from *Show Boat* that have become standards in musical theatre literature. But one song has become an anthem to a people and a time. Justin, if you please.

   OL’ MAN RIVER
   DAT OL’ MAN RIVER,
   HE MUST KNOW SUMP’IN,
   BUT DON’T SAY NOTH’IN,
   BUT OL’ MAN RIVER,
   HE JES’ KEEP ROLLIN’ A…

   (PATRICK walks on during the song and sets a chair down center stage. He exits and re-enters with a sailor hat, a life vest, a periscope, and a cup of water. He stands on the chair.)

   PATRICK

   Iceberg, right ahead!

   ROCKY

   Patrick!

   (PATRICK throws the water in ROCKY’S face.)

   PATRICK

   The ship is sinking! Women and children first!

   ROCKY

   What the hell are you doing!

   PATRICK

   I’m reenacting the most pinnacle scene from the show boat.

   ROCKY

   *Show Boat* never hit an iceberg.

   PATRICK

   The Titanic most certainly did hit an iceberg.

   ROCKY

   We are not doing *Titanic*.

   PATRICK

   Yes, we are. The show about the boat—*Titanic*.

   ROCKY

   I’m going to go towel off. Why don’t you look at the chorus line, get a clue, and move on to the next scene.
(ROCKY exits. PATRICK sings a “Mi, Mi, Mi.” ROCKY shouts from off-stage.)

And don’t finish my song!

(PATRICK looks at JUSTIN and motions for him to continue.)

JUSTIN

HE JUST KEEPS ROLLIN’ A LONG.

(ROCKY enters, and PATRICK points at JUSTIN.)

ROCKY

Too many divas, not enough spotlights. Let’s move on.

(Segue)
Scene Five: “The Golden Up-Tempo”

(PATRICK looks at the chorus line.)

PATRICK
Oh, I like this one. (To audience) We’re now up to the twenties, thirties, and forties—what we choose to call the Golden Age of Musical Theatre.

ROCKY
Actually, where the Golden Age starts and stops is very debatable; the lines of theatre history are very blurry.

(PATRICK turns up stage and speaks to ROCKY as an aside.)

PATRICK
I know that but did you look at this audience? They’re not readers. You’ve got to tell them everything: where everything begins and ends. Otherwise, it’s just a big ball of confusion.

ROCKY
Patrick

PATRICK
And then they start charging the stage, demanding their money back.

ROCKY
Patrick

PATRICK
But I’ve already spent their money on (inhale, inhale) and a little glug, glug, if you know what I mean.

ROCKY
Patrick, just because you turn up stage doesn’t mean that the audience can’t hear you.

PATRICK
Oh…well this is awkward.

ROCKY
(To the audience) You’ll have to forgive him folks; he rode the short bus.

PATRICK
Wait a minute, I know all about the Golden Age.

ROCKY
Well please enlighten us, oh wise one.
Thank you. The Golden Age is the age of the musical comedy. Boy gets girl. Boy loses girl. And boy gets girl back with a big song and dance happy ending. And if you look at the world at that time, America needed to be distracted and entertained. There was the depression, World War II, and prohibition.

Oh, and that was the worst one of all.

Amen.

Because we all know that a little bit liquor gets you through a lot of theatre. Hell, I’m drunk right now.

Anyway, there was still operetta, variety, and spectacle in the Golden Age. But nothing was more popular or more beloved than the songs from the good-old-fashioned musical comedy and the people who created them: George Gershwin, Noel Coward, Irving Berlin, Rocky

Rodgers and Hart, Jerome Kern, and Cole Porter

BOTH

ANOTHER OP’NIN’, ANOTHER SHOW
IN PHILLY, BOSTON OR BALTIMO’E
A CHANCE FOR STAGE FOLKS TO SAY “HELLO”
ANOTHER OP’NIN’ OF ANOTHER...
...KISS ON THE HAND MAY BE QUITE CONTINENTAL
BUT DIAMONDS ARE A GIRL’S BEST...
...FRIENDSHIP, FRIENDSHIP
JUST THE PERFECT BLENDSHIP.
WHEN OTHER FRIENDSHIPS HAVE BEEN FORGOT
OURS WILL STILL BE...

...’SWONDERFUL! ‘SMARVELOUS!
YOU SHOULD CARE FOR...

...MY FUNNY VALENTINE,
SWEET COMIC VALENTINE,
YOU MAKE ME SMILE WITH MY...
PATRICK
...HEART BELONGS TO DADDY,
DA DA DA DA DA, DA DA DA... 
...FASCINATING RHYTHM 
YOU’VE GOT ME ON THE GO!
FASCINATING RHYTHM I’M...

ROCKY
...BEWITCHED, BOTHERED AND BEWILDERED AM...
...I GET NO KICK FROM CHAMPAGNE,
MERE ALCOHOL DOESN’T THRILL ME AT ALL,
SO TELL ME WHY SHOULD IT BE TRUE
THAT I GET A KICK OUT OF...

PATRICK
...SUMMER TIME AN’ THE LIVIN’ IS...
...HAVING A HEAT WAVE 
A TROPICAL...
...SOUTH AMERICA! BABALOU,
BABALOU, AY YAY, BA BA...
...BONGO, BONGO, BONGO,
I DON’T WANT TO LEAVE THE CONGO,
OH, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO...

ROCKY
...NIGHT AND DAY YOU ARE THE ONE,
ONLY YOU BENEATH THE MOON AND UNDER THE...

PATRICK
...SUN IN THE MORNING AND THE MOON AT NIGHT...

ROCKY
...TEN CENTS A DANCE,
THAT’S WHAT THEY PAY ME,
TOUGH GUYS WHO TEAR MY...

PATRICK
...COAT, AND GET YOUR HAT
LEAVE YOUR WORRY ON THE DOORSTEP
JUST DIRECT YOUR FEET
TO THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE...
...GO HOME, GO HOME,
GO HOME WITH BONNIE JEAN
GO HOME, GO HOME,
I’LL GO HOME WITH BONNIE...
ROCKY
...JOHNNY COULD ONLY SING ONE NOTE AND THE NOTE HE SANG WAS THIS...
...I (PATRICK harmonizes with ROCKY)

BOTH
I LOVE A PARADE,
A HANDBOUL OF VETS, A LINE OF CADETS OR ANY BRIGADE, FOR...

PATRICK
...I GOT RHYTHM,

ROCKY
I GOT MUSIC,

PATRICK
I GOT MY GAL
WHO COULD ASK FOR ANYTHING MORE,
WHO COULD ASK FOR...

ROCKY
...THAT OLD DEVIL MOON
THAT YOU STOLE FROM THE SKIES. IT’S THAT...

PATRICK
...ANYTHING YOU CAN DO, I CAN DO BETTER.
I CAN DO ANYTHING BETTER THAN...
...YOU’RE THE TOP!
YOU’RE THE COLISEUM
YOU’RE...

ROCKY
(ROCKY plays to a cute girl or little-old-lady in the front row.)
...ANOTHER BRIDE ANOTHER JUNE
ANOTHER SUNNY HONE YMOON
ANOTHER SEASON, ANOTHER REASON FOR MAKIN’...

PATRICK
...SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME.
I’M A LITTLE LAMB WHO’S LOST IN THE WO D.
I KNOW I COULD...
...BE...
...ALWAYS TRUE TO YOU, DARLIN’ IN MY FASION,
ALWAYS TRUE TO YOU, DARLIN’ IN MY...
(ROCKY sings to JUSTIN)
ROCKY

...PLAY, ORCHESTRA, PLAY,
PLAY SOMETHING LIGHT AND SWEET AND…
...NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT,
AND IF YOU GET IT, WON’T YOU TELL ME…

BOTH

...THERE’S NO BUS’NESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS
LIKE NO BUS’NESSS I KNOW

ROCKY

EV’RYTHING ABOUT IT IS APPEALING.

PATRICK

EV’RYTHING THE TRAFFIC WILL ALLOW

BOTH

NOWHERE COULD YOU GET THAT HAPPY FEELING,
WHEN YOU ARE STEALING THAT EXTRA BOW
THERE’S NO PEOPLE LIKE SHOW PEOPLE
THEY SMILE WHEN THEY ARE LOW

ROCKY

YESTERDAY THEY TOLD YOU YOU WOULD NOT GO FAR

PATRICK

THAT NIGHT YOU OPEN AND THERE YOU ARE

BOTH

NEXT DAY ON YOUR DRESSING ROOM THEY’VE HUNG A STAR
LET’S GO ON WITH THE SHOW.

(Segue)
Scene Six: “The Dynamic Duo”

ROCKY
We now hit 1943 and another show that really advances musical theatre to a new level. Even though Show Boat had raised the standard, as you saw in the ‘20s and ‘30s, there was still a lot of fluff.

PATRICK
Like the Beach Boys’ musical Good Vibrations?

ROCKY
Kind of, but not yet. We move to a new team of writers—a team that re-envisioned musical character, structure, and emotional depth. A team that in their second try scored critical and commercial success unparalleled even to this day.

PATRICK
That’s right.

ROCKY
Since then they have worked with each other on numerous projects—each one surpassing the next. And they have both become a part of the American lexicon.

PATRICK
God, I love them. It’s Captain and Tenille.

ROCKY
It’s not Captain and Tenille. It’s Sonny and Cher.

PATRICK
(He does a Cher impression and sings without accompaniment.) IF I COULD TURN BACK TIME

ROCKY
It’s Rodgers and Hammerstein II.

PATRICK
Woh, woh woh! Rodgers and Hammerstein is complete fluff. I mean, you’ve got singing sailors, harmonizing children, Oklahoma!

ROCKY
Okay, Oklahoma! may be kind of happy...

PATRICK
You mean gay?
(Blank Stare) It’s art. It developed musical theatre unlike any show before it. It’s the first time we see choreography advance the plot.

Okay.

And like Showboat, the music and lyrics reveal character.

All right.

There’s also blatant sexuality…

Sex is good.

…dealing with Laurie’s coming of age and Jud’s attempted rape.

Oh, that’s a bit much.

So in order to pay homage to this most important piece of work, Patrick and I have decided to explore these themes and ideas of Oklahoma! by performing the entire musical in our own condensed version entitled: Oma

(Whispered) Exclamation Point.

Justin, the overture.

(They both hurriedly exit and get into costume. AUNT ELLER (ROCKY) enters and sits in a chair churning butter. CURLY (PATRICK) enters singing.)

OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING
OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY
I GOT A BEAUTIFUL FEELING
EVERYTHING GOING MY WAY
Hey Aunt Eller.

Hey Curly.

AUNT ELLER (ROCKY)

CURLY

Is Laurie goin’ to the box social?

AUNT ELLER

Yeah, but not with you. She hates you and your little surrey with the fringe on top.

CURLY

Aunt Eller, is that a sexual joke?

AUNT ELLER

(She churns butter.)

Maybe?

CURLY

Are you coming on to me?

AUNT ELLER

(She churns faster.)

Maybe?

CURLY

Well tell Laurie I hate her too. (He does an arabesque and exits.)

AUNT ELLER

Tell her yourself. Wait, wait, who’s there? Why, Will Parker, where have you been? (She exits.)

(WILL PARKER (PATRICK) enters Shuffling off to Buffalo)

WILL PARKER (PATRICK)

EVERYTHING’S UP TO DATE IN KANSAS CITY
THEY’VE GONE ABOUT AS FAR AS THEY CAN GO. (Exits)
(Off-stage) Ado Annie? Where are you?

ADO ANNIE (ROCKY)

I love boys! I love boys!
I’M JUST A GIRL WHO CAN’T SAY NO.
I’M IN A TERRIBLE FIX

(PATRICK crows like a rooster off stage.)

I hear a cock. I gotta go. (She exits.)
WILL PARKER
Ado Annie. Wait. I can’t turn stop. (He exits Shuffling off to Buffalo.)

LAURIE (ROCKY)
(He enters balletically.)
MANY A NEW DAY WILL MEET MY EYE.
MANY A NEW DAY WILL FIND ME.

CURLY
(He enters. ) Laurie? What are you doing here?

LAURIE
Curly, if we are seen together, “People Will Say We’re in Love.”

CURLY
Well, then go to the box social with me.

LAURIE
I can’t. I promised Jud I would go with him to spite you.

CURLY
Well, I guess I need to talk with Jud.

LAURIE
Well, I guess you do. (She exits.)

CURLY
Jud! Jud? Where are you?

ROCKY
(Off stage) I’m coming. I’m coming. (JUD (ROCKY) enters.)

CURLY
Jud.

JUD (ROCKY)
Curly.

CURLY
Jud. I come to ask you to not go with Laurie to the box social.
Well, let's have a shooting contest over her.

CURLY

Sounds fair.

JUD

See those dirty nude pictures over there?

CURLY

(He looks and reacts in slight horror.) What in tarnation? Is that even possible? Is that a man?

JUD

There's nothing wrong with being curious!

CURLY

Don't I know it?

(Slight light laughter. Awkward pause. The next few lines overlap.)

CURLY

So Laurie...

JUD

The girl, right. If you take her, something bad will happen.

CURLY

Yeah, right (He exits.)

JUD

(Shouting so CURLY can hear.) No really.

CURLY

(Off-stage) Nuh-huh

JUD

Yuh-huh. I sing a ballad about it. (Exits in a huff)

ALI HAKIM (PATRICK)

(He enters.) Peoples. Peoples! I strange Middle Eastern man, but not really sure how ended up in Oklahoma. Come buy things. Come buy things. (LAURIE enters) Laurie. Oh how good to see you. Here I have gift. Take this elixir. Will help you dance through your inner-most thoughts. Thank you, come again. Hey Ado Annie, I got something for ya’! (ALI HAKIM crows as he exits.)

LAURIE

45
(She looks at the bottle) "An Egyptian Elixir - Out of My Dreams" and into my heart. (She holds the bottle up to her heart.) Humm, I wonder...

(She sniffs the bottle and passes out off stage harder than a drunken frat girl who is ready to give it up)

(PATRICK enters as DREAM BALLET LAURIE and wears a sign that says “Dream Ballet Laurie.” She runs around with silly choreography to the music of “Many a New Day.” She exits.)

(Dead pause. ROCKY pokes his head on stage.)

ROCKY
Is it over? Onto Act II.
(WILL PARKER and ADO ANNIE enter.)

WILL PARKER
OH THE FARMER AND THE COWMAN SHOULD BE FRIENDS

ADO ANNIE
OH THE FARMER AND THE COWMAN SHOULD BE FRIENDS

BOTH
End of song!

ADO ANNIE
Well, well, well, Will.

WILL PARKER
Ado, where were you?

ADO ANNIE
I was hungry, so I had some Arabian Sausage.

WILL PARKER
Why can’t you just have a cornhusk from home?

ADO ANNIE
Oh, Will.

WILL PARKER
Don’t “Oh, Will” me. With me it’s all or nothing.’ No other man.

ADO ANNIE
What?
WILL PARKER
You heard me, No couscous in the cornfield.

ADO ANNIE
No, I won’t have it. (She exits.)

ADO ANNIE
No.

ADO ANNIE
No.

ADO ANNIE
No.

WILL PARKER
Ado I’m hungry; make me a sandwich. (Pause) Ado? Ado? (He huffs and exits Shuffling off to Buffalo.)

(JUD enters. He carries a blow-up Laurie doll for which he provides the voice and movement. They trot along as if in a surrey.)

JUD
Hello Laurie.

LAURIE (JUD)
Hello Jud.

JUD
You look very very pretty tonight, Laurie.

LAURIE (JUD)
Thank you, Jud.

JUD
Laurie, there’s something I’ve always wanted to say to you.

(JUD drops his voice like Barry White as PATRICK dressed for CURLY jumps on stage and sings 1970’s porn music.)

Baby, you’ve always been the one for me. So, why don’t I pull this surrey over, and you and I can do it horsy style?

(He starts to molest blow-up Laurie.)
LAURIE (JUD)
No. Please. Don’t.

JUD
Baby, you know you want to jockey with Jud; it’s all good.
(Blow-up Laurie slaps JUD and knocks him down.)

LAURIE (JUD)
No means no.

(CURLY enters and picks up blow-up Laurie.)

CURLY
Laurie, are you okay? Is he hurting you?

LAURIE (CURLY)
Yes, save me.

CURLY
Laurie, let’s go get married!

LAURIE (CURLY)
Okay. (CURLY starts to exit.)

JUD
No, Laurie’s mine!
(They move in super slow motion. JUD goes to stab CURLY, but JUD trips and falls on his knife.)

CURLY
Oh, that’ll leave a mark.

LAURIE (CURLY)
Did you just kill Jud?

CURLY
No, he fell on his own knife, (He puts his hand out and up as if he were in court.) I swear, your honor.

(A joyful celebration takes place as PATRICK and ROCKY each take turns dancing with blow-up Laurie. They both enter the audience during the song.)

BOTH
Everybody now
(The audience sings along.)
OKLAHOMA!
WHERE THE WINDS COME SWEEPIN’ DOWN THE PLAIN
WHERE THE WAVIN’ WHEAT
CAN SURE SMELL SWEET
WHEN THE WIND COMES RIGHT BEHIND THE RAIN

OKLAHOMA!
EVERY NIGHT MY HONEY LAMB AND I
SIT ALONE AND TALK
AND WATCH A HAWK
MAKING LAZY CIRCLES IN THE SKY

PATRICK
(SKYYYYYYYYY)

BOTH
WE KNOW WE BELONG TO THE LAND
AND THE LAND WE BELONG TO IS GRAND
AND WHEN WE SAY "YEOW"
A YIPPY YIPPY YEAH YEOW
WELL ALL BE SAYIN’
YOUR DOIN’ FINE OKLAHOMA,
OKLAHOMA, O-K-L-A-H-O-M-A,
OKLAHOMA! YEAOOW!

ROCKY
You know, I really don’t think these people are paying attention to anything we’ve said about Rodgers and Hammerstein II.

PATRICK
I know. (He picks a person from the audience.) Sir, I did not hear you singing!
(PATRICK and ROCKY playfully pick on audience member.)

ROCKY
Well, there’s only one way you can tell if they’ve been paying attention.

PATRICK
A pop quiz?

ROCKY
No, a pop game show!

PATRICK
Now it’s time for...
(Game Show music plays. PATRICK exits while ROCKY moves center stage. Note: the follow sequence uses extensive improvisation.)

BILLY (ROCKY)
Thank you, Thank you so much. I’m your host Billy Bigalow. (He shakes hands with audience members.) It’s so nice to meet me. Thank you.

(PATRICK enters with ROCKY’S sports coat, which is stuffed with game-question note cards. PATRICK continues to set up the stage for the game show; he sets up two stools and two cowbells. Once PATRICK has finished setting up, he exits.)

BILLY
In order to play R and H, I’ll first need two lucky volunteers from the audience. (BILLY brings up the two “lucky volunteers.”)

(To a contestant) Well, thanks so much for coming up. Tell everyone your name. (The audience member gives his/her name.)

I’m sorry, you’re on stage, so you must project; we’re too cheap to give you a mike. (The audience member repeats his/her name.)

Not as easy as it looks, is it? And what’s your name. (The second audience member gives his/her name.)

Wow, we are not deaf. Calm it down. Before we begin, let me introduce my under worked and overpaid score keeper- Vanna VonTrapp. (PATRICK enters dressed as a cheap Jersey girl with big hair.)

How are you tonight, Vanna?

VANNA (PATRICK)
(In a thick Jersey dialect) AAwweesome!

You look lovely tonight.

BILLY
Thank you, Billy.

VANNA

BILLY
It’s time to play, R - AND - H. The only game show that has more show tunes than a gay piano bar. Player One, your buzzer will be a cowbell from Oklahoma! (VANNA presents Player One with a cowbell.)
And Player Two, your buzzer will be this Asian cowbell from *The King and I*.
(VANNA presents Player Two with an identical cowbell.)

I will ask you questions dealing with Rodgers and Hammerstein II. There are two types of questions: music questions, where you will have to sing and finish the lyrics; and book questions, where we will test your knowledge on the R&H canon.

**BILLY**
Vanna, will you help me demonstrate with some sample questions?

**VANNA**
AAwweesome!

**BILLY**
Okay. Here is the sample book question for you to answer: The musical *Oklahoma!* is set in what current US state? Vanna?

**VANNA**
*Oklahoma!*

**BILLY**
Very good. (VANNA’S breasts bounce in delight.) That correct answer would earn you one point. Now, for the music question. Vanna will sing the first part of the lyric, and I will have to sing back the rest of the lyric. Here is the sample question:

(All of the game show questions are performed without accompaniment.)

**VANNA**
OOOOOOOOOK...

**BILLY**
LAHOMA.
You see? Fun, isn’t it? Now let’s get started. Vanna, are you ready?

**VANNA**
AAwweesome!

**BILLY**
Cowbells ready? The first question is a music question:

**VANNA**
DO A DEER...
(Answer: A FEMALE DEER)
BILLY
This is a book question: This 1945 musical by R&H had a controversial plot dealing with wife beating and suicide, and starred John Raitt in his Broadway debut.
(Answer: Carousel)

This question is a music question, Vanna?

VANNA
I ENJOY BEING...
(Answer: A GIRL)

BILLY
Next is a book question: Based on the novel The King of Siam, this show was written in 1951 for the actress Gertrude Lawrence.
(Answer: The King and I)

The next question is another book question: Name the only R&H musical that was originally written for TV, then transported to the stage.
(Answer: Cinderella)

And finally the last music question, Vanna?

VANNA
I GONNA WASH THAT MAN
(Answer: RIGHT OUT OF MY HAIR)

BILLY
Very good folks, but we have one more question for you before we can determine the winner; it’s worth ten points. Here is the final question that’s worth ten points: This 1947 R&H musical was the first show that Agnes DeMille choreographed and directed, and flopped. The hits songs from the show are "A Fellow Needs a Girl," "Allegro," "So Far," and "The Gentleman is a Dope.
(Answer: Allegro)

BILLY
(To the winner) Congratulations! You’ve won R and H! Vanna, tell them what s/he’s won.

VANNA
For your expert knowledge of Rodgers and Hammerstein, you’ve won a signed eight by ten of Carol Channing!

BILLY
(To the loser) Thank you so much for playing. Even though you’ve lost, we’ve decided to let you stay and watch the rest of the show. Now sit down.

ROCKY

52
Ladies and Gentlemen, we’ll be taking a quick five-minute break, so that I can pee, Patrick can learn his lines for Act II, and so you can openly mock the guy who just lost. See you in a minute.

(PATRICK and ROCKY blow a kiss to the audience a la Love Connection. The act closes with a reprise of the game show music.)

**End of Act I**

-Intermission-
Act Two

“Entr’acting”

PATRICK
Hello, everyone? Hi. We do have to apologize to all of you. We had all these great concessions set out for all of you, but, um, Barbara Cook stopped by before the show. I can honestly say that I have never seen someone double fist a gallon of ice cream and two cakes. So, ok. Enjoy the entr’acte performed by our great accompanist, Justin Fischer.

(During the speech, ROCKY brings out a table of percussion toys and takes his place behind the table. Justin starts playing the Entr’acte. PATRICK takes his place behind the table next to ROCKY. ROCKY plays a variety of instruments, performs them wonderfully. PATRICK only has a triangle. PATRICK goes to play his triangle, but he can’t seem to get it to work. At the end of the Entr’acte, PATRICK takes the table of toys off stage as ROCKY starts Act II.)

(Segue)
Scene Seven: “My Fair Laddie”

ROCKY
Welcome back, suckers. I see on the chorus line that we’ve reached the 1960s, which makes it the perfect time for the drug experimentation portion of our show. You’ll each find a bong underneath your seat…

PATRICK
(PATRICK comes running on.)
NO, no, ROCKY. I think we’re at the 1950s.

ROCKY
(ROCKY laughs while pleasantly trying to hide PATRICK’S rude interruption.)
Well, it looks like somebody started their drug experimentation during the intermission.

PATRICK
(Laughs – a quick change) Ha, ha – NO! You’re skipping the 1950s!

ROCKY
Well, nothing really happened in the 50s that’s worth mentioning.

PATRICK
Oh contraire, ma’friend. The 1950s marked an extraordinarily significant evolution in musical theatre style. At the beginning of the 1950s, Broadway was in the classic musical theatre sound. Broadway songs were the popular radio tunes of the day, and singers were still heavily rooted in operetta and the Golden Age. Yet by the mid 50s, the popular radio music started departing from what we know as musical theatre to make way for people such as Elvis Presley, The Four Seasons, and of course, The Beatles. Interestingly by the end of the 1960s, popular radio music had infused its way back onto Broadway and singers began belting and, for lack of a better term, (done with air quotes) “rocking out.” This new rock sound would eventually pave the way for Pop Opera that would later dominate the last half of the twentieth century.

ROCKY
Patrick, that was really well spoken.

PATRICK
Well, I take the grand art of musical theatre very seriously, Rocky.

ROCKY
You smoked up a little during the intermission, didn’t you?

PATRICK
I did not inhale! (PATRICK does his signature high-pitched absurd laugh.)
ROCKY
Pull it together, Cheech. We need to move on.
(ROCKY exits.)

PATRICK
Well my theory about the 50s-60s musical evolution gives me an idea. LIGHTS!
(PATRICK enters into the pool of light.)

It’s a story about a young classical tenor caught in the waves of musical theatre change. With the help of a stuffy old English bachelor, the young tenor must make a complete musical transformation and learn a new way singing and how to keep up with times. In an old Pygmalion story, I like to call My Fair Laddie. (PATICRK exits as ROCKY enters in a smoking jacket.)

HIGGINS (ROCKY)
“The Theatre Today” (An original song)
THE THEATRE TODAY, IS SWAMPED THEY SAY,
WITH SINGERS BY THE SCORE.
BUT I FEEL DROWNED IN OPERA SOUND
FROM THAT GOLDEN AGE OF YORE.

BERSTEIN IS BELABORED,
THERE’S TOO MUCH CLASSIC TOUCH.
HERMAN WRITES ONE TUNEFUL SONG
THAT REPRISES WAY TOO MUCH, THAT REPRISES TOO MUCH.
AND WITH LERNER AND LOEWE, YOU NEVER KNOW
THE CRAP THAT THEY’LL CONSTRUCT

BUT NOW WE’RE IN A NEW AGE
THERE’S LOESSER, STYNE AND STROUSE.
WITH THEIR BELTING SONGS, I NO LONGER LONG
FOR THAT ONE-HIT WILLSON LOUSE.

THE THEATRE TODAY, MUST CHANGE THEY SAY
THERE MUST BE DIFFERENT STYLE.
IF ACTORS DON’T FOLLOW, THIS CHANGE OF TOMORROW,
‘GUESS I’LL BE HERE FOR A WHILE.

ELIZO (PATICRK)
(Classically sung)
JUS’ COME TO ME, BEND TO ME, KISS ME GOOD DAY!
GIE ME YOUR LIPS AN’ DON’T TAKE THEM AWAY.

HIGGINS
(HIGGINS crosses to where the voice is coming from.)
Oh, my bloody God, who is making that ancient, awful noise?
ELIZO

(Like Eliza Doolittle. Off stage.) Aaaaa-oooo (He enters and speaks like an American)
Be careful, it’s a bar full of vicious queens in there.

HIGGINS

Oh, yes. I see. Do you do this for a living?

ELIZO

Sing? Oh, yeah.

HIGGINS

Is that what you call that dreadful sound?

ELIZO

Lay off, buddy. This voice has gotten me tons of work.

HIGGINS

Singing ensemble in the Hoboken Community Theatre’s Production of *The Mikado*

ELIZO

Hey, I was amazing at my solo line.

HIGGINS

I’m Harold Higgins, musical theatre scholar and the best vocal coach on Broadway. (Hands ELIZO his card) Why don’t you come to my private studio, and we’ll make that voice better than Barbara.

ELIZO

Barbara Cook?

HIGGINS

Streisand. You need a lot of work. (ELIZO exits during the song)

All right, ELIZO, let’s have Justin play through your repertoire. Off you go.

"Why Can’t the Broadway Actors Learn to Sing" (An original song)

**Why Can’t the Broadway Actors Learn to Sing**

WITH R&H, AND G&S THERE SONGS HAVE NO REAL PING.
WE’RE IN THE TIME WHERE BELTING IS THE NEW AND LATEST THING
OH WHY CAN’T THE BROADWAY ACTORS LEARN TO SING

YES I WILL TAKE THIS LITTLE LAD BENEATH MY WING
I’LL TEACH HIM ALL I KNOW AND HE WILL RISE AS KING
FROM BELTING HIGH TO GROWLING LOW WITH LOTS OF FORWARD RING
OH I’LL TEACH THAT BOY TO SING, SING, SING

(Lights come up on the piano where ELIZO is standing.)
GOOD NIGHT, MY SOMEONE

NEXT!

THE RAIN IN SPAIN…

Oh, God not that show.

IF I WAS A RICH MAN
YA DA DE DA DE DA DE DA
DE DA DE DA DE DA DE

(Spoken over ELIZO’S singing) What is that sound you are making? Please, Please I beg of you, make it stop! I see that I have my work cut out for me. Let’s start with some basic exercises. Let’s try an arpeggio on “YA.”

(ELIZO sings a few arpeggios)

Now, I am going to put these marbles in your mouth while you sing. These will help you.

(He places in two marbles in ELIZO’s mouth. HIGGINS continues to place two marbles in after every arpeggio.)

Mr. Higgins, what exactly does this do for me?

Rule number one: do not ask me what something does; just let it happen. Rule number two: it’s all about me. Now, let’s try to break you of that noise you call classical singing. (ELIZO spits the marbles into HIGGINS’S hand.) Let’s try another song.

ROSEMARY

God no. Again.

ROSEMARY

Try to force out the sound. From the ass.
ELIZO
(This time, ELIZO sings with a straight tone.)
ROSEMARY

Sing that again!

HIGGINS

(Repeats the straight tone.)
ROSEMARY

I think he’s got it? I think he’s got it! Here try this.

ELIZO

MOMMA’S TALKIN’ LOUD
MOMMA’S DOIN’ FINE
MOMMA’S GETTING’ HOT,
MOMMA’S GOIN’ STRONG,

HIGGINS

Yes he’s got it now,
Yes he’s got the stuff,
Yes he’s belting high,

ELIZO

MOMMA’S LETTIN’ LOOSE,
MOMMA’S GOT THE STUFF,
MOMMA’S LETTIN GO,
MOMMA, MOMMA, MOMMA
(ELIZO goes into a dream like trance directed at HIGGINS)

HIGGINS

I am not your mother; now keep going!

ELIZO

MOMMA’S GOT THE STUFF
MOMMA’S GOT TO MOVE
MOMMA’S GOT TO GO,

HIGGINS

To an audition! It’s time to have your first try out. Now go make daddy proud.

(HIGGINS exits. ELIZO turns to face the audience and crosses to center stage.)
ELIZO
Hello, I’m Elizo Do-a-lot. I’ll be singing a song by Kander and Ebb.
(He faces front and sings in a poor and overtly classical style.)
LIFE IS A CABARET OLD CHUM

AUDITIONER (ROCKY)
(Off-stage) NEXT!

(ELIZO bursts into tears and runs off-stage. HIGGINS appears.)

HIGGINS
Well, it seems like you disappointed me, just like Ann Reinking did. But don’t worry; I think that you’ve actually got talent. We’ve got one week until the final audition of the 1968 season. It’s for a new show about peace, love, and gratuitous nudity on stage.

ELIZO
Well, why don’t you just audition?

HIGGINS
Oh, to feel the breeze on my under carriage again. (HIGGINS swivels his hips.) But no, it’s your chance. Now let’s try this new belting exercise I have been working on. Support from the diaphragm, and hit the notes on an octave. Like this: a-A-a. (Octave jumps)

ELIZO

HIGGINS
(Interjected into the vocal exercises.) Good. Keep going. Just keep your confidence. Yes, yes. Now let’s try this new piece from the show that will make you a star! (To the audience) It’s the sixties now everyone; bongs at the ready.

ELIZO
WHEN THE MOON IS IN THE SEVENTH HOUSE
AND JUPITER ALIGNS WITH MARS

HIGGINS
(A la Phantom of the Opera) Sing!

ELIZO
THE PEACE WILL GUIDE THE PLANETS

HIGGINS
Sing!

ELIZO
AND LOVE WILL STEER THE STARS
HIGGINS

Sing my Angel of music!

BOTH

THIS IS THE DAWNING OF THE AGE OF AQUARIUS
AGE OF AQUARIUS, AGE OF AQUARUS,
AQUARIUS, AQUARIUS.
(During the song, they both strip off their clothes and throw them off stage.)

(Segue)
**Scene Eight: “70s, Dancer, 70s”**

PATRICK
Where are we on the chorus line now Rocky?

ROCKY
We just finished the 60s, where do you think we are? (PATRICK starts to do math in his head.) We’re in the 70s.

PATRICK
I would have gotten there…eventually.

ROCKY
The 1970s was a peak for influential choreographers who were also taking on the role of director. Following in the footsteps of Jerome Robbins, this was a time when shows truly told their story through dance.

PATRICK
So we’re doing dance now?

ROCKY
Yes, Patrick, we’re doing dance now.

PATRICK
WARM UP!!!
(PATRICK starts doing silly stretches throughout the following dialogue.)

ROCKY
The major choreographers were Bob Fosse, Gower Champion, Michael Kidd, Michael Bennett Paula Abdul

ROCKY
(ROCKY ignores him.) And the great Jerome Robbins, who peaked earlier than the others, but he set the bar. They all created their own individual dance style to add to musical theatre, which we will now perform for you in our own eclectic celebration of American musical theatre dance.

PATRICK
Don’t forget to stretch your fingers. You know. (He strikes a disco pose a la John Travolta.) We are in the seventies.

ROCKY
Forget about disco.
(PATRICK exists to get the bowlers.)
THERE’S GOTTA BE SOMETHING BETTER THAN THIS,
(ROCKY makes the John Travolta pose.)
THERE’S GOTTA BE SOMETHING BETTER TO DO.
AND WHEN I FIND ME SOMETHING BETTER TO DO,
I’M GONNA GET UP, I’M GONNA GET OUT,
I’M GONNA GET UP, GET OUT, AND DO IT!

ROCKY
(Vamped introduction to “All That Jazz”)
We begin with Bob Fosse, a choreographer-director who, by the mid seventies, had already made quite a name for himself. With shows like Pippin, Sweet Charity, and Chicago, he created his own new style. Everything is different: toes in, knees bent, contorted bodies, very dark and very sexy.

(Transitions to “Hot Honey Rag”)

BOTH
(Whispered during musical punctuation in “Hot Honey Rag”) Fosse, Bowler,

ROCKY
This hurts.

(Transitions to “Big Spender.” During “Big Spender,” they both run off either side of the stage. During the second vamp, both enter dragging chairs and speaking sexy dance terms (e.g., “Hey baby, why don’t you pas de bourree with me?” “Why don’t you and I have an isolated contraction?”)

BOTH
THE MINUTE YOU WALKED IN THE JOINT
I COULD TELL YOU WERE A MAN OF DISTINCTION
A REAL BIG SPENDER
GOOD LOOKIN’, SO Refined
SAY WOULDN’T YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHAT’S GOING ON IN MY MIND?
SO LET ME GET RIGHT TO THE POINT
I DON’T POP MY CORK FOR EVERY GUY I SEE
HEY BIG SPENDER, SPEND A LITTLE TIME WITH (Music cuts out)

Fosse.

(ROCKY exits with chairs and puts two bandanas in his pockets.)

PATRICK
I don’t know if I like Fosse. His dance style makes me feel dirty and violated.
THERE’S GOTTA BE SOME LIFE CLEANER THAN THIS,
THERE’S GOTTA BE SOME GOOD REASON TO LIVE.
AND WHEN I FIND ME SOME KIND OF LIFE I CAN LIVE,
I’M GONNA GET UP, I’M GONNA GET OUT,
I’M GONNA GET UP, GET OUT, AND LIVE IT!

63
You know what’s nice and clean, boys and girls? Ballroom dance. And do you know that Gower Champion was a ballroom dance champion? But what he will always be remembered for is the wholesome tap-dancing show *42nd Street*, where a chorus girl learns to whore herself out for the lead role in a Broadway musical.

(Transitions to “42nd Street”)

COME AND MEET
THOSE DANCING FEET,
ON THE AVENUE I’M TAKING YOU TO,
FORTY-SECOND STREET.

(ROCKY flaps out, and they both come together for the dance break)

BOTH
HEAR THE BEAT
THOSE DANCING FEET,
IT’S THE SONG I LOVE THE MELODY OF,
ON THE AVENUE I’M TAKING YOU TO,
FORTY- (tap break)
SECOND STREET.

(ROCKY taps off to get fuzzy dice and puts two bandanas in his pockets.)

ROCKY
God, I hate tap.

AND WHEN I FIND ME SOMETHING BETTER TO DO,
I’M GONNA GET UP, I’M GONNA GET OUT,
I’M GONNA GET UP, GET OUT, AND DO IT!

ROCKY
I like Michael Kidd, athletic and aggressive. Straight from the ballet world, he makes men look like men and women look like strong feminine men. He’s known for the movies *Hello Dolly!* and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, and the stage version on *Guys and Dolls*.

(Transitions to “The Crapshooters Ballet.” PATRICK enters with giant rear-view mirror dice.)

And don’t forget about that obscure musical favorite, *Can-Can*.

(Transitions to a quick *Can-Can* number. They pull out the bandanas and use them as a skirt.)

PATRICK
Why do we always end up like women?

ROCKY
Don’t even get me started. (He exits with the bandanas.)
PATRICK

THERE’S GOTTA BE SOME RESPECTABLE TRADE,
THERE’S GOTTA BE SOMETHING EASY TO LEARN.
AND IF I FIND ME SOMETHING A HALFWIT CAN LEARN,
I’M GONNA GET UP, I’M GONNA GET OUT,
I’M GONNA GET UP, GET OUT, AND LEARN IT!

Patricia Birch.

ROCKY

Who?

PATRICK

She choreographed the stage version of *Grease* as well as the movie version of *Grease* and *Grease 2*. (Awkward pause)

BOTH

THERE’S GOTTA BE SOMETHING BETTER THAN THIS,

ROCKY

And now the great granddaddy of them all, Jerome Robbins. Another one from the world of ballet, he took what Agnes de Mille started with *Oklahoma!* and made dance as crucial to telling the story as the book and score. He is known for his hit shows: *On the Town*, *West Side Story*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*; ("Cool" begins.) along with his extreme temper, (He begins to channel Jerome Robbins.) which is not his fault because those brain-dead dancers should get the choreography right. He was freakin’ genius.

PATRICK

Woh, woh. Just play it cool, boy.

REAL COOL

(Transitions to the “Cool” dance break. After the dance, PATRICK exits to get the *Fiddler* hats.)

ROCKY

And now for our Jewish friends...our own version of the infamous “Bottle Dance” from *Fiddler on the Roof*

(PATRICK enters with two baseball caps with a Diet Coke can and a milk jug glued to the top of them. They both attempt the bottle dance and fail miserably.)

PATRICK

Screw it.

BOTH

THERE’S GOTTA BE SOMETHING EASY TO LEARN.
AND IF I FIND ME SOMETHING A HALFWIT CAN LEARN,
I’M GONNA GET UP, I’M GONNA GET OUT,
I’M GONNA GET UP, GET OUT, AND LEARN IT!
(ROCKY exits with the hats.)

PATRICK
Michael Bennett, arguably the foremost director/choreographer of the 1970s. He started as a chorus boy and quickly rose to choreographer to such influential shows as Company, Follies, Dreamgirls, and the most famous dance show of all, A Chorus Line.

VOICEOVER
(Recorded) Patrick Moran, please step on the line.

PATRICK
Uhmm, okay.

VOICEOVER
Tell me what you know about A Chorus Line.

PATRICK
Well, conceived, directed, and choreographed by Michael Bennett. In it’s time was the longest running show on Broadway. It’s the story of a bunch of dancers who want to be in the chorus of a new Broadway show who are asked a lot of random questions by a voice in the darkness...kinda like... now.

VOICEOVER
Do you know the opening number?
(ROCKY enters with two gold top hats. PATRICK’S headband is hidden in his hat.)

BOTH
Yeah...

VOICEOVER
A 5, 6, 7, 8...
(Transitions to the opening of A Chorus Line)

ROCKY
Hold it; I need to go change. My dance belt hurts.

BOTH
AND WHEN I FIND ME SOME KIND OF LIFE I CAN LIVE,
I’M GONNA GET UP, (ROCKY does a Fosse pose.)
I’M GONNA GET OUT, (PATRICK does a Robbins pose.)
I’M GONNA GET UP, GET OUT, AND LIVE IT!

(Segue)
Scene Nine: “The Eighties are a Drag”

ROCKY

(Awkward pause) Patrick, it’s your line.

PATRICK

(Talking through his teeth) No, it’s not; it’s yours.

ROCKY

We’re at the eighties.

PATRICK

So?

(PATRICK is standing at the eighties on the chorus line.)

ROCKY

You’re standing on the eighties.

PATRICK

Look Rocky, why don’t we move on to the eighties. (He hands ROCKY his hat.)

ROCKY

Okay?

VOICEOVER

Diana Morales. Please step on the chorus line.

(ROCKY motions to PATRICK to step forward. ROCKY exits with the gold hats.)

DIANA (PATRICK)

(To the voiceover) Hold on a second.

(PATRICK pulls the leg warmers he is already wearing out and pulls them over his pants. He then puts on a headband and hits the DIANA MORALES pose.)

Okay, I’m ready.

VOICEOVER

Tell me about your first audition.

DIANA

Well, in early ’79, this composer from London was opening a new show in New York. Some Webber guy.

VOICE OF WEBBER (ROCKY)

(Off stage) You mean Andrew Lloyd Webber?
Yeah that guy. A little weird if you ask me: stick-like, stuffy, bad teeth. You know—like any old English guy. But this new show takes place in South America, very Latin. And I’m Puerto Rican, so I figure I’m perfect. No one knows the difference anyway. So I get called back. My first Broadway audition, and I get called back. So they have me sing from the show.

STAND BACK BUENOS AIRES
BECAUSE YOU OUGHT TO KNOW WHAT’CHA GONNA GET IN ME
JUST A LITTLE TOUCH OF STAR QUALITY (Starts into a small dance break.)

VOICE OF WEBBER
That’s great. That’s good. Let’s move on to the big ballad.

DIANA
Okay.

DON’T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA

VOICE OF WEBBER
Now raise your arms.

DIANA
THE TRUTH IS I NEVER LEFT YOU

VOICE OF WEBBER
Palms in and cup them.

DIANA
ALL THROUGH MY WILD DAYS

VOICE OF WEBBER
Create a “U” with them.

DIANA
MY MAD EXISTENCE

VOICE OF WEBBER
Now slightly pulse them.

DIANA
I KEPT MY PROMISE

VOICE OF WEBBER
Good.

DIANA
DON’T KEEP YOUR DISTANCE
I’m sorry, what’s going on?
VOICE OF WEBBER

EVITA, EVITA.
JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR.

DIANA
What was that?

VOICE OF WEBBER
Oh, I apologize. My musicals all sound the same. Anyway, thank you but the role has been filled.

DIANA
Filled? I go through all that and (In a British dialect) “the role has been filled?” I later find out that the role went to some bitch with a big nose named Patti Lupone. Anyway, my next audition was with the same composer. And after the last audition, I was a little frightened because this time, he wanted to have a personal meeting with me. I was informed that he was interested in me for his new show that was opening, a children’s show of some sort.

VOICE OF WEBBER
It’s not a children’s show. It’s based on a book by a very well-respected British-American scholar.

DIANA
Well, what is this great work about?

VOICE OF WEBBER
The setting is an abandoned pre-apocalyptic junkyard. The time is the past, present, and future. The characters are playful, agile, sensual, omniscient, talking cats...

DIANA
What?

VOICE OF WEBBER
They run, they jump, they leap, they dance, they sing...

(Enter ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER (ROCKY) in a cat costume.)

MEMORY
ALL ALONE IN THE MOONLIGHT (Meow)

DIANA
Hold on. Are you sure this isn’t a children’s show?

WEBBER
You know, you’re really not right for it. (He exits.)
DIANA

Not right for it? What do you mean not right for? I can sing. I can dance. I can (purr sound).

WEBBER

(Off stage) You’re too, ethnic.

DIANA

Too ethnic? Too ethnic? It’s fuckin’ *Cats*.

CONNIE (ROCKY)

(CONNIE (ROCKY) enters on her knees.)

You lilly wanna talk about ethnic? I show you ethnic. I Connie Wong. I be cast in two shows, both by London team, Schonee and Bebe. (Tries again) Schonshoe and Booby.

DIANA

It’s pronounced Schonberg and Böublil.

CONNIE

Get a green card and then we talk Miss “Too ethnic for *Cats*.” Anyway, as I saying, I cast in two shows, both by those two guys. Dis first one had great title. *Les Misérables!* It ‘bout French War wit some blockbuster music. I play Eponine. The daughter of an inn keeper man and his wife who take on a ward named Cosette who is the daughter of a prostitute that only sings one number in act one and dies after befriending a man pretending to be a mayor who is actually a runaway prisoner who was wrongfully imprisoned for stealing a loaf of bread. But I come on at the end of act one and sing my big eighties power ballad, (sings the title line “On My Own” without accompaniment) but I’m not because I secretly have the hots for a guy name Marius who has the hots for the aforementioned ward Cosette because she’s a soprano and I only an alto with a mezzo belt.

DIANA

Wrap it up, Wonton.

CONNIE

(Suddenly dramatic) So there I am at the barricade (Goes into an obscene death.) Running to meet my beloved and then...BANG, BANG, BANG! I’m shot!

(Shes begins to crawl toward DIANA.)

DON’T YOU FRET
MOUSIER MARIUS
I DON’T FEEL ANY PAIN
A LITTLE FALL OF RAIN
CAN HARDLY HURT ME NOW
YOU’RE HERE, THAT’S ALL I NEED TO KNOW

DIANA

Does fried rice come with that performance?
CONNIE
Dis next show by same composer team, I lilly get to show I a true dramatic actress. It called *Miss Saigon*. Not only I die in dis, but I do it wit grace, beauty, and my own gun!

DIANA
Please do not bore us with another complicated, ever-going plot.

CONNIE

DIANA
That was spectacular and how-you-say, non-equity. Definitely not good enough for this new composer I auditioned for. He’s really hot right now.

Hey, what he need dat I don’t got?

DIANA

CONNIE
I stick wit my suicides. (She exits.)

DIANA
(With reverence) Stephen Sondheim. Behind all that ridiculously difficult music is a true master of genre. There’re just so many ingénue roles that I think I would be perfect for.

JUSTIN
Like what?

DIANA
You talk? I didn’t know you talked.

JUSTIN
What roles are you “perfect for?” (He puts up air quotes.) (DIANA whispers something wonderful in JUSTIN’S ear.)

JUSTIN
(He’s not quite sure.) Really?

DIANA
Just do it. (She exits.)
JUSTIN
A farce. The role of Philia in the Ancient Roman musical *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*.

PHILIA (DIANA)
(She enters; she is lovely.)
LOVELY, WHAT I AM IS LOVELY
LOVELY IS THE ONE THING I CAN DO
WINSOME, ALL I AM IS WINSOME
RADIANT AS IN SOME DREAM COME TRUE

MILES GLORIOSUS (ROCKY)
(He enters to a fanfare)
I am Miles Gloriosus, the over bearing, dominant masculine character that some critics say is Sondheim’s lost father figure, who has come to claim the weak female character for my own.
BRING ME MY BRIDE!

DIANA
(To JUSTIN) Go on to the next show. (She exits.)

MILES GLORIOSUS
BRING ME MY BRIDE! (He chases after her.)

JUSTIN
A Fairytale. The role of Cinderella in five Grimm stories that lead everyone... *Into the Woods*.

CINDERELLA (DIANA)
(She enters sweeping the floor.)
I WISH
MORE LIFE

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE (ROCKY)
(He enters with a cape and a crown and stands beside JUSTIN.)
I WISH

CINDERELLA
MORE THAN ANYTHING
MORE THAN THE MOON
I WISH

RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE
(In rhythm.) I wish the music was easier. Oh, Rapunzel...

CINDERELLA
I’m Cinderella.
RAPUNZEL’S PRINCE
Rapunzel, come here to your over bearing, dominant masculine character that some critics say is Sondheim’s lost father figure, who has claimed the weak female character for my own.

CINDERELLA
I’m Cinderella. (She exits.)

RUPUNZEL’S PRINCE
Oh, you bitches all the same. (He exits.)

DIANA
(To JUSTIN. Off-stage) The next show please.

JUSTIN
A comedy of manners. The title, A Little Night Music. The role of Ann…Ann? The young beautiful one?

DIANA
(Off-stage) I’m an ingénue!

JUSTIN
(Gets an idea.) The aging actress Desire.

DIANA
(Off-stage) WHAT!!

JUSTIN
Tonight, the role of Desiree will be performed by…a Ms. Glynis Johns.

(DIANA enters as GLYNIS JOHNS portraying DESIREE. She uses a stool for a walker.)

DESIREE
ISN’T IT RICH?
ISN’T IT QUEER?
LOSING MY TIMING THIS LATE
IN MY CAREER
WHERE ARE THE CLOWNS?
THERE OUGHT TO BE CLOWNS.
DON’T BOTHER, THEY’RE HERE

CARL MAGNUS (ROCKY)
(He enters wearing a cape.)
Desiree? Desiree.
DESIREE
Oh Carl Magnus, another over bearing, dominant masculine character that some critics say is Sondheim’s lost father figure, who has come to claim the weak female character for his own, you caught me while I was emoting.

CARL MAGNUS
THE WOMAN IS MINE! (He exits.)

JUSTIN
The war epic Passion. The haggard, sickly, pale role of Fosca.

DIANA
(She enters.) Hold on, chico. I want to be a Sondheim beauty like Johanna from Sweeney Todd, or one of the girlfriends in Company, or Dot in Sunday in the Park with George, not this ugly old alto shit.

STEPHEN SONDHEIM (ROCKY)
(Off-stage) BUM BUM BUM BUM BUM BUM BUM BUM

DIANA
What the hell was that? Who’s there?

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
(Enter SOCK PUPPET STEPHEN SONDHEIM on ROCKY’S hand.)
BUM BUM BUM BUM BUM BUM BUM BUM

DIANA
Oh my God, it’s Stephen Sondheim. I’ve been studying and reading all about you.

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
“I do not read to think. I do not read to learn.”

DIANA
Of course you don’t. You’re amazing. You’re use of complex characterization, score sophistication, integration, and understanding of genre blows that British shit out of the water.

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
“What’s hard is simple. What’s natural comes hard.”

DIANA
No really. What’s your secret to becoming such a demi-god of musical theatre?

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
Hit it!
I’M JUST A BROADWAY BABY
WALKING OFF MY TIRED FEET
POUNDING FORTY-SECOND STREET
TO BE IN A SHOW (SOCK PUPPET STEVE dances.)

DIANA
This is amazing. (SONDHEIM starts to leave.) Hey, where are you going?

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
“Barcelona.”

DIANA
Wow, I’m actually talking to the ghost of Stephen Sondheim.

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
Dead? I’m not dead.

DIANA
Have you seen *Bounce*?

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
No one did. But...
I’M STILL HERE!

DIANA
I think you’re the greatest!
(She grabs SOCK PUPPET STEVE.)

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
I’M STILL HERE!

DIANA
I wanna have all your gay babies!
(She hugs SOCK PUPPET STEVE.)

STEPHEN SONDHEIM
I’M STILL HERE!

DIANA
I just wanna be in all your shows...
(Still hugging SOCK PUPPET STEVE, she looks out to the audience.)

I WISH

(ROCKY exits. PATRICK takes off his headband.)

(Segue)
Scene Ten: “Ninety Million Tenors”

PATRICK
Hey Rocky, next is the 90s, right?

VOICEOVER
What else would follow the 80s?

PATRICK
Well, you don’t have to get snippy.
(Blackout)
Hey, you big jerk turn on the lights.

(ROCKY enters during the blackout with PATRICK’S shirt.)

VOICEOVER
Alright, why don’t we move onto someone else on the chorus line? Now, is there someone here who has something they would like to share? Anything at all? Maybe something about the business? Something that doesn’t sit right with them?

AL (ROCKY)
I do.

KRIS (PATRICK)
No, don’t. Don’t bring too much attention to us.

AL
Oh, shut up!
(Lights come up on ROCKY and PATRICK as a gay couple. ROCKY as a leather butch and PATRICK as a queen.)

VOICEOVER
Right... Remind me of your names, please.

AL
I’m Al DeLuca.

KRIS
And I’m Kris Urich. But DeLuca’s my married name.

VOICEOVER
Oh, congrats Al.

AL
Thanks. (They look at each other lovingly.)
Now, back to your...umm

AL

My bone?

KRIS

Oh, Al. (KRIS giggles in embarrassment.)

What was that?

VOICEOVER

AL

My bone to pick with the business.

VOICEOVER

Oh!?! Yeah.

AL

Well, everything today is so, well...

KRIS

Gay nineties, pop sounding, right hun? All these Broadway singers try to imitate what they hear on the radio. The belting divas, the wailing tenors. I mean I’m a tenor myself, but why should I have to compete that?

AL

Why are you complaining? You’re a freak-of-a-tenor. It’s the baritones that are suffering. Everything is being written for this pop belt. There aren’t any of the old shows where the baritones ruled the romantic leads. Now it’s “How high can you sing?” “Can you riff up to a high D?” Forget it. It’s the revivals that save me. And even those are starting to over populate this town. There’s no new baritone material.

“Tenor Envy” (An original song)

A BRAND NEW WAVE OF BROADWAY SHOWS
IS QUICKLY DRAWING NEAR.
I HOPE THIS YEAR WILL BE THE YEAR
WHEN I CALL BROADWAY MY CAREER.

I WANT THE MULTITUDES TO CHEER.
I WANT MY SONGS TO BRING FORTH TEARS.
I WANT NO SINGER AS MY PEER.
I WANT THE CRITICS UP MY REAR.
BUT ALL MY HOPES SOON DISAPPEAR
‘CAUSE ONLY HIGH NOTES ARE REVERED.
TENORS
I HATE THEM.
TELL ME GOD,
WHY DID YOU CREATE THEM?
NOW TO ENTER CATTLE CALLS
WE MEN MUST CUT OFF OUR OWN BALLS.
OH TENORS, OH TENORS,
I HATE THEM!

(Written in the style of *Smokey Joe’s Café*)
WELL I AUDITIONED FOR A SHOW
A NEW REVUE CALLED *SMOKEY JOE’S*
AND I WAS HANDED A NEW DITTY FROM THE SCORE.
BUT THEN THE GUY BEFORE ME SANG
AND HE CREATED SUCH A BANG
I KNEW BETWEEN US THERE WAS GONNA BE A WAR!
(They are at an audition. JUSTIN plunks the first note.)

KRIS
(“Keep On Rollin’” from *Smokey Joe’s Café*)
GONNA BYE ME A TICKET,
AND RIDE ON THAT B AND O.
GONNA BUY ME A TICKET,
AND RIDE ON THAT B AND O.
(KRIS exits with great pride.”)

AL
OH TENORS, OH TEN… (AL is so overcome with anger he stops.)

(Written in the style of a Frank Wildhorn ballad)
I WENT TO BROADWAY
AND SAW A NEW SHOW.
THE LATEST FRANK WILDHORN
I THOUGHT IT WOULD BLOW.
THE MALE LEAD CAME ON THE STAGE
AND STARTED REAL LOW
I THOUGHT A BARITONE AT LAST.
BUT THEN THERE CAME A BLAST.
(KRIS enters, sings, and exits in one swoop.)

KRIS
(“Into the Fire” from *The Scarlet Pimpernel*)
YES, IT’S HIGHER AND HIGHER
AND INTO THE FIRE WE GO
INTO FIRE!
ONWORD, HO!
(KRIS exits and retrieves the upcoming microphones.)

AL
WHY ARE ALL THE NEW SHOWS MADE FOR TENORS?
PLEASE TELL ME WHY AM I RESIGNED TO SIT AND WAIT?
While tenors steal all the freakin’ glory!
WHY CAN’T WE PLEASE RETURN THINGS TO THE WAY THEY WERE:
THE BARITONES WERE KINGS OF THE STAGE
AND SINGING LOW WAS THE LATEST RAGE
WE RULED THE TIME CALLED THE GOLDEN AGE

KRIS
AND NOW YOU’RE ALL DEAD BECAUSE OF OLD AGE.

AL
Shut up!
(KRIS enters. AL and KRIS are wearing Rent microphones; they are in pools of light.)

BOTH
BEEP! Talk!

AL
(Written to sound like the phone recitative from Rent)
WELL IT’S FINALLY HERE
A SHOW IN THE NINETIES
WITH A BARITONE LEAD

KRIS
Remind them how long you had to wait for this role.

AL
IT’S BEEN SINCE LES MIS
SINCE I HAD A GOOD ROLE

KRIS
Well, I have a good role too.

AL
GOD BLESS JONATHAN LARSON
AND HIS NEW SHOW RENT

KRIS
He writes for tenors too.
AL
A BARITONE
NO MORE CHORUS THIS TIME

KRIS
AND WE GET PAID
(A light special appears and AL walks into it. KRIS exits to get a stool.)

AL
(“I’ll Cover You” from Rent)
OPEN YOUR DOOR.
I’LL BE YOUR TENANT.
DON’T GOT MUCH BAGGAGE TO LAY AT YOUR FEET.
BUT SWEET KISSES I’VE GOT TO SPARE.
I’LL BE THERE, AND I’LL COVER YOU.
(As AL sings, he hears a voice harmonizing above him. He is first confused and
then angry.)

BOTH
I THINK THEY MEANT IT
WHEN THEY SAID YOU CAN’T BUY LOVE.
NOW I KNOW YOU CAN RENT IT.
(Lights come up to reveal KRIS. He wears a white cape and stands on a stool like
an angel in all his glory.)
A NEW LEASE, YOU ARE MY LOVE
ON LIFE
BE MY LIFE.
(AL turns upstage to see KRIS riff like no other.)

KRIS
(“Seasons of Love” from Rent)
SEASONS OF LOVE. SEASONS OF LOVE.
(PATRICK loses control and starts riffing like mad. ROCKY screams at him and
turns back to face the audience.)

ROCKY
Patrick!
OH TENORS, OH TENORS

PATRICK
OH TENORS (Harmonizing above him)

ROCKY
I HATE THEM
(Segue)
Scene Eleven: “Revivals 2000”

ROCKY
Well Patrick, we finally did it; we are at the new millennium.

PATRICK
Awesome! What exciting new trends are there at the start of the 21st century?

ROCKY
Well, there really aren’t any?

PATRICK
What? That’s ridiculous. I’ve been waiting almost two hours for this.

ROCKY
There’s the invention of what I call the “radio pop revue.”

PATRICK
A radio pop revue? It sounds like something from Disney?

ROCKY
You’re not too far off. It’s a full length musical based on the music of a particular artist or group. The good ones are Billy Joel’s Movin’ Out and ABBA’s Mamma Mia. The bad ones are all the others.

PATRICK
Well, that’s not really new, if it’s just a jukebox with a contrived plot.

ROCKY
True. There’s been a whole bunch of revivals.

PATRICK
Revivals can be inventive. A revival means that the show can be re-imagined and still speak to today’s society.

ROCKY
Yes, but in the past five years there have been more revivals than in the entire decade of the nineties.

PATRICK
So are you saying that revivals are the big trend now?

ROCKY
All the great shows get revivals. (PATRICK and ROCKY exchange a knowing look.) Ladies and Gentlemen, as the climax of this evening…”

81
Ha ha, you said climax.

ROCKY
We present to you the revival of this very show . . . in less than two minutes.

PATRICK
On your mark, get set, REVIVE!

(PATRICK and ROCKY embark on a feverishly-paced revival of the entire show.)

BOTH
(JUSTIN plays the opening chord.)

In ancient Greece…

PATRICK
Greek Tragedy?

BOTH
COMEDY TONIGHT

ROCKY
Circus!

PATRICK
THERE IS A SUCKER

ROCKY
GOT A LOTTA ROMAN TERRA COTTA

Vaudeville!

ROCKY
You lookin’ for any girl in particular?

PATRICK
No, I’m just lookin’ for a girl who’s not particular.

ROCKY
No Black face!

PATRICK
Black Power!
ROCKY

Operetta!

BOTH
WITH ARIAS AND PATTER SONG AND PLOTS THAT ARE DRAMATICAL
I KNOW THE VERY MODEL OF A MAJOR OPERETTICAL!

PATRICK

Turn of the Century!

ROCKY

Follies

PATRICK

Scandals

ROCKY

Follies

PATRICK

Scandals

(West Side Story “Prologue #1.”)

ROCKY

Golden Age!

BOTH
ANOTHER OP’NIN OF ANOTHER SHOW…
THERE’S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSNINESS…

PATRICK

R & H!

BOTH

ROCKY

You won!

PATRICK

You lost!

ROCKY

Intermission!

83
(In a gigantic pause, PATRICK and ROCKY wander around the stage and meet upstage for a conversation.)

ROCKY
Where did all the refreshments go?

PATRICK
Is that Barbra Cook?

ROCKY
Fifties and Sixties!

PATRICK
COME TO ME, BEND TO ME

ROCKY
Belt It!

PATRICK
AQUARIUS
Seventies!

(They strive a pose with each of the following choreographers.)

ROCKY
Fosse

PATRICK
Champion

ROCKY
Kidd

PATRICK
Robbins

ROCKY
Birch?

PATRICK
Bennett

(JUSTIN plays the beginning of the "Opening" to A Chorus Line. They dance.)

ROCKY
Eighties!

84
PATRICK
(Strikes the DIANA MORALES pose)
Too ethic for *Cats* my ass!

ROCKY
(Gets on his knees)
Connie Wong. Me love you long time.

BOTH
BUM-BUM-BUM-BUM-BUM-BUM-BUM
BUM-BUM-BUM-BUM-BUM-BUM-BUM
Gay babies!

PATRICK
Nineties!

ROCKY
(In a made up melody)
I SING LOW

PATRICK
(In a made up melody)
I SING HIGH

BOTH
(PATRICK and ROCKY look at each other and snap.)
Bitch!

ROCKY
2000!

PATRICK
On you mark, get set, REVIVE!

BOTH
Ta-Da!

PATRICK
Let’s revive again. In ancient Greece…

ROCKY
Patrick, you can’t keep reviving the same show.

PATRICK
Why not? Everyone else does it.
ROCKY
Go get two stools; I have an idea. Justin, some musical underscoring. May I have two pools of light? (PATRICK gets two stools and puts them in the light. They both sit.) I know we’ve mocked musical theatre...

PATRICK
…destroyed it as an art form, really.

ROCKY
But we do love and respect musical theatre. And this evening makes us wonder where musical theatre is going.

PATRICK
With all the revivals and radio pop revues that come along, is there any more true art? Any more original ideas? Is anyone writing anything new?

ROCKY
LET THERE BE ONE MORE BEAUTIFUL SONG IN THE COSMOS
LET THERE BE ONE MORE PERFECTLY RAVISING TUNE
LET THERE BE WORDS THAT SIMPLY SAY,
THE WAY I FEEL TODAY

PATRICK
THREE QUARTERS CHURCH
ONE QUARTER A SALON
LET THERE BE ONE HUGE LAUGH BEFORE IT’S OVER
AND MAYBE ONE HIGH NOTE TO CRACK THE DOME
LET THERE BE ONE MORE BEAUTIFUL SONG THIS LOVELY EVENING…

ROCKY
We ask you, the audience. You, the young composers, lyricists, playwrights, and theatre artists.

PATRICK
And yes, even you boyfriends who were dragged to this show by those young composers, lyricists, playwrights, and theatre artists.

ROCKY
What’s the next chapter of American musical theatre?

PATRICK
Who’s going to write our Tony Award winning roles?

ROCKY
I THINK I’LL PUT MY TONY IN THE FOYER
NAH THAT IS MUCH TOO PUSHY
PATRICK
WE’LL HAVE A DEN
AND THANK YOU MR. GLICKEN HOUSE

ROCKY
FOR THE HELP WITH ADVERBS

BOTH
AND HERE WE GO AGAIN
LET THERE BE ONE HUGE LAUGH BEFORE IT’S OVER
AND MAY THE LONG HIGH NOTE BE HEARD IN ROME
LET THERE BE ONE MORE BEAUTIFUL SONG THIS LOVELY EVENING

ROCKY
AND THEN WE’LL ALL

PATRICK
GO HOME

BOTH
AND THEN WE’LL ALL GO HOME.

ROCKY
Remember boys and girls, you are the future. You hold the key changes. It’s up to you.

PATRICK
IT’S UP TO YOU

BOTH
NEW YORK,
NEW YORK!

(They both stand and do a kick-line. The lights go down on the kick-line. The lights come back up, and they are still doing the kick-line. The lights fade. The lights come up one last time, and they are still doing the kick-line yet again. Blackout)

(Segue)
Curtain Call

(They both bow to amazingly loud applause)

BOTH

SO LONG, FAREWELL
AUF WIEDERSEHN, GOOD NIGHT,
WE HATE TO GO AND LEAVE THIS PRETTY SIGHT.

SO LONG, FAREWELL
AUF WIEDERSEHN, GOOD NIGHT,

PATRICK

I LEAVE AND HEAVE A SIGH AND SAY GOODBYE
GOODBYE (He exits.)

ROCKY

THE SUN HAS GONE TO BED AND SO MUST I

(PATRICK returns, picks ROCKY up, and starts to carry him off stage)

BOTH

SO LONG, FAREWELL, AUF WIEDERSEHN GOODBYE,
GOODBYE,
GOODBYE, 
GOODBYE,
Everybody!

AUDIENCE

GOODBYE.

Das Ende. La Fin. The End.
RESEARCH GLOSSARY

Introduction

As Patrick and I were collecting the research we needed to write *A 16 Bar Cut*, we discovered that the bulk of information we were collecting had already been engrained in us through education and experience. However, even though we personally possessed the bulk of information that was needed to dramatize the journey of musical theatre, we referenced and researched the key players in our story for utmost accuracy and inspiration. And whenever the creative well ran dry, history was our guide.

The Research Glossary is a succinct and crystallized collection of all the research that Patrick and I complied for script development; we have included all the composers, lyricists, and relevant librettists who are mentioned and discussed in the script. For reference use, this chapter is organized in glossary form where each entry contains the artist’s biographical information and their contribution to musical theatre.

*Arlen, Harold*

Harold Arlen (Composer/Lyricist) was born Hyman Arluck in Buffalo, NY on February 15, 1905. Like many musicians, Arlen’s musicianship began early in his life. He sang in the choir at his father’s synagogue at the age of seven and played piano at local clubs in his early teens, where he eventually created his own orchestral band dubbed “The Snappy Trio.” He later joined a group called the “Yankee Six.” Soon after, the group evolved into a full-sized dance orchestra entitled the “Buffalodians.” With them Arlen arranged orchestrations and played piano and violin. Arlen impressed a famous orchestra leader at the time—Arnold Johnson, and he hired Arlen to perform with Johnson’s orchestra. They would eventually perform in the *George White*
Scandals of 1928. During this time, Vincent Youmans, a well-known composer, signed Arlen to sing in his musical Great Day! (1929), but Arlen’s role was quickly eliminated after the out of town try-out. While working as a rehearsal accompanist, Arlen was encouraged to take a simple “pick-up” phrase he had created and bring it to a Remick Publishing executive, Harry Warren. Warren teamed Arlen and Ted Koehler together, and they took Arlen’s “pick-up” and wrote the popular song “Get Happy.”

Arlen and Koehler found initial success with individual song hits for the Cotton Club Revues. Arlen formed a long-standing partnership with “Yip” Harburg when Harburg asked Arlen to compose music to the new musical Hooray for What! (1937). Even though Arlen began composing for the stage, his mainstream success and his legacy were as Hollywood songwriting. His first major movie was Let’s Fall in Love (1933) that contained the hit title song “Here Comes the Waves” (1944). Other popular movie musicals are A Star is Born (1954) with “Accentuate the Positive” and Summer Stock (1950), which starred Gene Kelly and Judy Garland. But Arlen’s most popular and seminal work is the blockbuster The Wizard of Oz (1939). For this film, Arlen won the Academy Award for his song “Over the Rainbow.” Although Arlen was most prolific in film during the 1940s, Arlen and Harburg created the admired stage musical Bloomer Girl (1944) that takes place during the Civil War. This team would write House of Flowers (1954) and Jamaica (1957) for the stage before ending their partnership. Beginning in 1946 Arlen also intermittently teamed Johnny Mercer. Their pairing is not as extensive as Arlen and Harburg, but Arlen’s collaboration with Mercer his perhaps more famous. Together the two wrote Pearl Bailey’s Broadway debut St. Louis Woman (1946) and Saratoga (1959) also for the stage. Harold Arlen’s legacy is his torch songs—“sentimental
ballads of unrequited love”—and his rhythm and blues style. On April 23, 1986, Arlen died of Parkinson’s in New York, NY.

Bennett, Michael

Michael Bennett (Choreographer/Director) was born Michael DiFiglia in Buffalo, NY on April 8, 1943. After taking dance classes from a young age and showing an early interest in choreography, Bennett had success in New York from the start. He danced in the chorus of several Broadway musicals: Subways are for Sleeping (1961), Here’s Love (1963), and Bajour (1964). And in 1966, Bennett had the opportunity to make his choreographic debut on Broadway in A Joyful Noise. Along with Henry Sweet Henry (1967), these early shows had no commercial success, but they started to give Bennett a favorable choreographic reputation. He moved on to choreograph Burt Bacharach’s new musical Promises, Promises (1968) with the famed number “Turkey Lurkey Time” and Coco (1969), which starred Katharine Hepburn.

Bennett’s true legacy began in 1970 when he teamed with director/producer Harold Prince to choreograph Stephen Sondheim’s landmark musical Company (1970). Featuring Donna McKechnie’s dancing performance in the “Tick Tock,” Bennett’s choreography catapulted him into choreographic prominence. He collaborated again with Harold Prince for Sondheim’s next venture Follies (1971). Because the dance was so interrelated in the show, Bennett was billed as a co-director with Prince along with solo choreographer. For this project, he won a Tony Award for Best Choreography and Direction. Bennett’s next venture and next Tony Award was for the musical Seesaw (1973). He entered the project as a “show doctor” during its out-of-town tryouts. And even though the musical had cycled through four choreographers, Bennett alone received the Tony Award for Best Choreography.
A Chorus Line (1975) is Bennett’s most famous and most important work. For several years, Bennett formulated the idea for a musical about Broadway dancers. He pooled several of his friends who were aspiring or well-established Broadway dancers and allowed them to share their journeys in an evening-long workshop. Bennett combined their stories and created the longest running musical of the time. Bennett won the Tony Award for Best Director and for Choreography, along with Bob Avian. The show also won Best Musical and was honored with the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for Drama. A Chorus Line became one of the most successful and longest running shows in Broadway history. Bennett and Avian won the Tony Award for Choreography for their next show—the largely unpopular Ballroom (1979). But Bennett gained commercial success again with Dreamgirls (1981). In 1986 Bennett was signed to direct Chess (1986) on the West End, but he did not complete the project. At forty-four years old, Michael Bennett died of AIDS on July 2, 1987.

Berlin, Irving

Irving Berlin (Composer/Lyricist) was born Israel Baline in Tyumen, Siberia on May 11, 1888, as the youngest of eight children. When he was two years old, Berlin’s family fled to America in order to escape the Cossacks’ anti-Semitic raids, where they eventually found themselves living on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. In 1892 Berlin’s father died, and in 1904, Berlin began earning a living as a singer in the Bowery. At the time, he found an abandoned piano in the backroom of a saloon, and he would sneak in every nightly to play it. Berlin never trained as a pianist and was only able play in the key of F, but regardless he became a “song plugger” for Harry von Tilzer. Still in his teens, Berlin was a singing waiter, and he published his first song. He wrote the lyrics and “Nick” Nicholson composed the music for “Marie from Sunny Italy.” Berlin quickly began composing his own music for songs like
“Dorando” and “Sadie Salome, Go Home,” which lead to a job at Tin Pan Alley. The exclusive Friar’s Club elected Berlin as a member in 1911, and Berlin performed alongside his hero, George M. Cohan. When Berlin wrote the song “Alexander’s Ragtime Band,” he became the most successful songwriter in the United States at twenty-three years old. In the same year, Berlin married Dorothy Goetz, but she died of typhoid fever soon after. This sad incident caused Berlin to compose his first ballad, “When I Lost You.”

Berlin’s first complete full score was Watch Your Step (1914), which sparked numerous more musicals and established Berlin as a prolific and important Broadway composer. Perhaps his two most famous songs from his early career are “Oh How I Hate To Get Up In The Morning” from Yip, Yip, Yaphank (1918) and “A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody.” From the Ziegfeld Follies of 1919, this song became the unofficial anthem of the Follies. In the middle of his career, Berlin created his most famous works for the stage: The Cocoanuts (1925) featuring the Marx Brothers, As Thousands Cheer (1933) starring Ethel Waters and her hit song “Supper Time,” and This is the Army (1942). In 1946, Berlin wrote his single biggest success and most significant work Annie Get Your Gun, which starred Ethel Merman in one of her most famous roles. Towards the end of his career, Berlin had three more commercial successes on Broadway with Miss Liberty (1949), Call Me Madam (1950) another vehicle for Ethel Merman, and Mr. President (1962). Irving Berlin died in New York, NY on September 22, 1989.

**Bernstein, Leonard**

Leonard Bernstein (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts on August 25, 1918. Bernstein credits his fascination with music to his aunt who gave him an upright piano at ten. He studied music with Dimitri Mitropoulos at Harvard University who encouraged him to pursue conducting. And then, Bernstein studied with Fritz Reiner at the Curtis Institute of Music
in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Bernstein’s first significant conducting position was with the Tanglewood Summer Music Festival in 1940, where he worked for three summers. When Bernstein was twenty-five, the New York Philharmonic’s musical director, Arthur Rodzinski, hired Bernstein as his assistant. At this position, Bernstein eventually found instant fame with a now-famous story. When Bruno Walter was guest conducting for the Philharmonic in 1943, he became suddenly very ill. Rodzinski was out of town, so Bernstein took the baton and landed a cover story in the New York Times; he was the toast of the New York classical music world.

Bernstein’s took his fame and success and composed *Fancy Free* (1944), an original ballet choreographed by Jerome Robbins. The ballet was so popular that director George Abbott expanded the work into the musical *On the Town* (1944) with lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Eight years later, Bernstein composed his second musical theatre score *Wonderful Town* (1952). Bernstein was not originally a part of the project. But when Comden and Green were hired as replacement lyricists, they requested that Bernstein be hired as well. The team finished the popular score in fewer than five weeks.

Bernstein’s next project was adapting Voltaire’s *Candide* (1956). Featuring the song “Glitter and Be Gay,” the score is rich with various musical rhythms like tango, mazurka, waltz, gavotte, and schottische. Bernstein’s other major works are *Peter Pan* (1950), *Trouble in Tahiti* (1955), and his most significant work *West Side Story* (1957). Begun in 1949 with the title East Side Story, the musical was originally a modernized Romeo and Juliet story with an Italian-Catholic boy and a Jewish girl on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. After six years and much reworking, the story is about an American boy and a Puerto Rican girl. Bernstein collaborated with Stephen Sondheim as lyricist, Arthur Laurents as librettist, and Jerome Robbins as choreographer/director to form the final version of this show. *West Side Story* has become one of
the most important and canonical works in all musical theatre literature. Leonard Bernstein died in New York, NY on October 14, 1990.

**Bock, Jerry**

Jerrold Lewis Bock (Composer/Lyricist) was born in New Haven, Connecticut on November 23, 1928. As a child, he moved to Flushing, New York and studied piano with local teachers. While he was in high school, Bock wrote the music and lyrics to a “war bond musical” entitled *My Dreams*. And while he studied at the University of Wisconsin, he composed a local touring musical called *Big as Life*. Upon graduation, Bock worked for Max Liebman’s television revues and taught at Tamiment, an adult summer camp in the Poconos during the summers.

For his first major project, Bock teamed with lyricist Larry Holofcener on three songs in the Broadway revue, *Catch a Star* (1955). But Bock met long-time lyricist partner Sheldon Harnick while working on the songs for *Mr. Wonderful* (1956) with Holofcener, and the Bock left Holofcener and teamed with Harnick. Bock and Harnick’s first collaboration was for *The Body Beautiful* (1958). George Abbott was impressed with their work and hired them for a new musical about New York City Mayor, Fiorello H. LaGuardia—*Fiorello!* (1959). The musical was critically acclaimed and won the 1959 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and its popularity sparked a second collaboration with the same team on a work called *Tenderloin* (1960). Bock and Harnick were then quickly contracted to write the score for *She Loves Me* (1963)—a musical version of Ernst Lubitsch’s film *The Shop Around the Corner* (1940).

But even before they had begun writing *She Loves Me*, Bock and Harnick had started creating the most important musical of their partnership, *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964). Based on Sholom Aleichem’s collection of short stories *Tevye’s Daughters*, Bock and Harnick teamed with Joseph
Stein, who wrote the libretto, and Jerome Robbins, who served as choreographer/director, to create what has become one of the most seminal works in American musical theatre. In addition, Bock and Harnick worked with director Mike Nichols on the three-act musical *The Apple Tree* (1966). And they ended their collaboration with their final show *The Rothschilds* (1970). Even though the team worked well together, Harnick wanted to focus on other projects, and Bock wanted to compose as well as write lyrics. Bock’s three produced solo ventures are *Never to Late* (1962), *Baker Street* (1965), and *Generation* (1965). None of his solo work has ever received the same acclaim as his collaborations with Harnick. Bock currently resides in New York City.

**Böubil, Alain**

Alain Böubil (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born in the city of Tunis, which is the capital of the Tunisia region in France. He was born on March 5, 1941. Early in his career Böubil worked as a songwriter and music publisher for Europe One Radio. During that time, Böubil began collaborating with Claude-Michel Schonberg on a new musical about the French Revolution entitled *La Revolution Francaise* (1973), which was later placed on a two disc recording. Following in the footsteps of Andrew Lloyd Webber’s *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971), Böubil and Schonberg decided to call their musical a “Rock Opera” when they premiered it at the Palais des Sports, but it was not nearly as successful. Their second show and recording was based on Victor Hugo’s novel *Les Misérables*. Working with Jean-Marc Natel on story and lyrics, this show had several small workshops and revisions and then was produced by Cameron Mackintosh. The musical was so popular that it debuted on Broadway in 1980 only five years after its inception. Since its debut, *Les Misérables* has never stopped touring the world and continues today.
After the success of *Les Misérables*, Böubil teamed with the musical pop group ABBA and wrote a fairly-tale musical entitled *Abbacadabra* (1983). He then wrote two more similar musicals with composer Jean-Pierre Bourtayre that have been recorded but never produced: *La Fusée de Noe* and *Les Chevaliers des Étoiles*. Böubil reinstated his partnership with Schonberg and created a new musical based on *Madame Butterfly*, but the story is updated and set during the Vietnam War; the project was called *Miss Saigon* (1989). Although Cameron Mackintosh backed the project and although Richard Maltby, Jr. aided with lyrics and libretto, the musical was not as popular as *Les Misérables*. Böubil and Schonberg’s next collaborative effort was on *Martin Guerre* (1996). But after terrible reviews, the show quickly closed in out-of-town tryouts and then reopened in 1998 after rework; however, despite their best efforts, the project still failed. *Martin Guerre* was scheduled to open on Broadway in 2000, but its opening was cancelled during its previews in Los Angeles. Currently, the team is working on a show called *The Pirate Queen*—a new musical about the Irish pirate Grace O’Malley. The show is tentatively schedule to open in the fall of 2006.

**Champion, Gower**

Gower Champion (Choreographer/Director) was born in Geneva, Illinois on June 22, 1920. As a child, Champion showed an early inclination and talent for ballroom dancing. After teaming with his first partner, Jeanne Turner, they began a successful career dancing in nightclubs and Broadway revues. Upon returning from World War II, Champion left Turner and began his partnership with Marjorie Bell, whom he eventually married. As a duo, they were featured in such films as *Mr. Music* (1950), *Show Boat* (1951), *Lovely to Look At* (1952), *Give a Girl a Break* (1953), *Jupiter’s Darling* (1955), and *Three for a Show* (1955).
As a choreographer, Champion’s early directing and choreography projects were the Broadway revues Small Wonder (1948) and Lend an Ear (1948) and the musical Make a Wish (1951). His first critically acclaimed project came for the hit musical Bye, Bye Birdie (1960), which won the Tony Award for Direction and Choreography. Champion’s next musical was a collaboration with Michael Stewart; their adaptation of the film Lili (1953) birthed the hit musical Carnival (1961). Champion and Stewart then mounted Jerry Herman’s Hello, Dolly! (1964)—the musical version of Thornton Wilder’s The Matchmaker (1939). Hello, Dolly! proved to be one of Champions greatest successes, and he was rewarded with another Tony for Best Direction and Choreography. While Champion continued to direct and choreograph, his projects never reached the success of Hello, Dolly! and Bye, Bye Birdie. His credits include I Do! I Do! (1966) with Mary Martin and Robert Preston, The Happy Time (1968) with Robert Goulet, the out-of-town flop Prettybelle (1971), Sugar (1972), Irene (1973), Mack and Mabel (1974), Rockabye Hamlet (1976), The Act (1977), and A Broadway Musical (1978). Champion’s final show was the adaptation of the Busby Berkley movie musical 42nd Street. The Broadway musical 42nd Street (1980) was another hit for Champion, and he won his third Tony for Best Direction and Choreography. But Champion was not able to enjoy any of this success. He died on the opening night of 42nd Street—August 25, 1980.

**Cohan, George M.**

George Michael Cohan (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born in Providence, Rhode Island on July 3, 1878. His parents Jeremiah and Helen Cohan were famous performers; their stage names were Jerry and Nellie. Cohan’s first performance work was when he was a toddler in his father’s skit “The Two Dans” and then as a pit violinist at the age of eight. While still a child, Cohan began writing new skits and songs for his family act with his mother, father, and
sister Josephine; they were The Four Cohans. During this formidable time, Cohan published his first song, “Why Did Nellie Leave Her Home?” The song had mild success even though Cohan could only play the black keys on a piano and most of his songs were composed with only four chords. Cohan said the key to writing songs was “Speed! Speed! And lots of it!” While performing with The Four Cohans and writing and composing their material, Cohan also managed the group. On tour, they received a remarkable $1,000 a week and quickly landed their own originally-written Broadway show—The Governor’s Son (1901), which was based on Cohan’s skit of the same title.

The Governor’s Son was a success, and it began a long-time partnership with producer Sam Harris. During the next fifteen years, they created a string of Broadway hits. Their first collaboration was Little Johnny Jones (1904) and featured the everlasting songs “Yankee Doodle Dandy” and “Give My Regards to Broadway.” Other hit shows were Forty-Five Minutes from Broadway (1906), George Washington, Jr. (1906) that featured the song “You’re a Grand Old Flag,” Fifty Miles From Boston (1908) that featured the song “H-A-R-R-I-G-A-N,” and The Little Millionaire (1911) that was Jerry and Nellie Cohan’s final performance. Riding the cultural wave, Cohan began creating revues. Hello, Broadway! (A Musical Crazy Quilt Patched and Threaded Together with Words and Music by George M. Cohan) (1914), The Cohan Revue (1916), and The Cohan Revue (1918) were all slightly successful. During his career as an author, Cohan would also take on the role as a “show doctor” for other shows, but all of this work was unaccredited. In addition, because of his position as a producer, Cohan never joined the Actor’s Equity Association and had to receive special permission to perform. As a performer, his two most important Broadway appearances were as Nat Miller in Eugene O’Neill’s Ah Wilderness! (1934) and as President Franklin D. Roosevelt in Rodgers and Hart’s
I’d Rather Be Right (1937). I’d Rather Be Right was Cohan’s only performance in a musical that he did not write. George M. Cohan died in New York, NY on November 5, 1942.

**Coleman, Cy**

Cy Coleman (Composer/Lyricist) was born Seymour Kaufman in the Bronx, NY on June 14, 1929. Coleman received a piano scholarship at the age of four and began giving piano recitals at Steinway Hall and Town Hall at the age of six. While still in the High School of Music and Art, he studied under famed pianist Rudolph Gruen and attended the New York College of Music. Coleman first began writing with Joe McCarthy—the son of lyricist Joe McCarthy who wrote Irene, Kid Boots, and Rio Rita, and Coleman first scored success with the song “Tin Pan Alley” (1953). When Coleman teamed with Carolyn Leigh in 1957, they wrote the popular songs “A Moment of Madness” and “Witchcraft,” and they soon had Broadway success with Wildcat (1960), which starred Lucille Ball. Coleman’s second show with Leigh, Little Me (1962), had a libretto by Neil Simon and starred Sid Caesar performing seven different roles. Coleman and Leigh ended their collaboration after Little Me.

Coleman’s next project was Sweet Charity (1966). This show teamed him with lyricist Dorothy Fields, famed playwright Neil Simon as librettist, and choreographer/director Bob Fosse. The show starred Gwen Verdon and featured the songs “There’s Gotta Be Something Better than This” and “Big Spender.” Seven years later, Coleman and Coleman wrote the Tommy Tune vehicle Seesaw (1973), which was directed by Michael Stewart. And then they joined again to write the show about wife swapping, I Love My Wife (1974), and the musical about P.T. Barnum, Barnum (1980). Coleman’s other successful lyricist collaborators were Betty Comden and Adolph Green; their union created On the Twentieth Century (1978) with John Cullman and Madeline Kahn, and The Will Rogers Follies (1991), which was directed and
choreographed by Tommy Tune. Coleman’s final two shows were City of Angels (1989)—a 1940s Hollywood story with lyrics by David Zippel—and The Life (1997), which was about the seedy life in 1980s Times Square. Cy Coleman died on November 18, 2004.

Coward, Noel

Sir Noel Peirce Coward (Composer/Director/Lyricist/Librettist) was an Englishman who was born in Teddinton, Middlesex on December 16, 1899. Known for his sophisticated quick wit, Coward’s first major performance was in 1911 when he appeared with his mentor and fellow comedian and playwright Sir Charles Hawtrey in a series of productions on London’s West End. Coward credits finding his voice to when he was drafted in World War I, and it was there that he began working on his first comic shorts. When Coward’s first full-length play I’ll Leave it to Me (1920) was produced, he found initial but small success, and Coward took this opportunity to write three more plays each with increasing success: The Vortex (1924), Hay Fever (1925), and Easy Virtue (1926). His next work Bittersweet (1929) was Coward’s biggest critical and commercial achievement, and it brought Coward to the forefront of theatrical notoriety. As Coward’s first operetta, Bittersweet also featured Coward’s songwriting ability. Coward’s following works—Private Lives (1930), Tonight at 8:30 (1936) with long-time acting partner Gertrude Lawrence, and Design for Living (1932)—cemented Coward as a theatrical powerhouse in England, and his works began to make the crossover to the states. During WWII, Coward left playwriting and took several years to perform for British troops with his own comic sketches and songs. However, critics scorned Coward’s efforts, saying that he was “living the high life” while the country was at war.

Even so, the 1940s had Coward’s most fiscally and critically rewarding works. The social commentary The Happy Breed (1939), the semi-autobiographical Present Laughter (1939),
and the dark comedy *Blithe Spirit* (1941) were all very well received. *Blithe Spirit* broke West End box office records that were not broken until 1970. Coward’s following works had a reversed trend and showed a sharp drop in popularity. However, Coward never left the social spotlight, and he found new success as a solo artist. His act in Las Vegas and other film and television specials featured Coward as a songwriter and kept him working through the end of the 1950s. Coward’s final play *Waiting in the Wings* (1960) was a surprise hit in the West End, and it sparked a revival of Coward’s works in London as well as New York. But with mounting memory loss and arthritis, Coward retired from the theatre in the late 1960s; one of his last public appearances was in 1970 when he was knighted. Throughout his life and in theatre history, much is made about whether Coward was a homosexual. He would never reply to questioning on the subject. He would only say, “There is a woman in Paddington Square who wants to marry me, and I don’t want to disappoint her.” While living in Jamaica for tax reasons, Noel Coward died of natural causes in 1973.

*dante, nicholas*

Nicholas Dante (Librettist) was born Conrado Morlaes in New York, NY in 1942. Working his way up as a dancer in New York City, Dante was in the Broadway choruses of *I’m Solomon* (1968), *Applause* (1970), *Ambassador* (1972), and *Smith* (1973), and he danced in multiple television specials and New York nightclubs. In the early 1970s, choreographer Michael Bennett asked Dante if he would help him form a new musical that Bennett had been creating about dancers auditioning for a Broadway chorus. Bennett, Dante, and James Kirkwood gathered a small group of dancers and arranged, cut, and combined stories to make what would eventually become the Pulitzer Prize winning *A Chorus Line*. Dante’s personal story was one of the few stories that made its way into the final libretto. His story is the character Paul who grows
up in New York City and is “scorned and lonely” because he is a homosexual. Paul’s famous monologue is the climax of the musical, and as Dante recounts, “It’s the first thing I ever wrote.” Dante continued to rework his life story, and he wrote an un-produced screenplay entitled Fake Lady, which is based on Paul’s monologue. Dante’s other projects include the libretto for Jolson Tonight—an unsuccessful touring musical in the early 1980s—and his unfinished play entitled A Suite Letting Go. Nicholas Dante died of AIDS in New York, NY on May 21, 1991.

DeSylva, B.G.

Buddy Gard DeSylva (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born George Gard DeSylva in New York, NY on January 27, 1895. Soon after his birth, DeSylva’s parents moved to California, which is where he was raised. As a young child, DeSylva loved creating silly verses, but he did not truly find his proclivity for writing song lyrics until he entered college at The University of Southern California. After hearing a few of DeSylva’s first songs, Al Jolson encouraged him and asked DeSylva to write for Jolson’s new show. Teaming with composer Gus Kahn, DeSylva wrote several new songs, and he had his first hit “I’ll Say She Does,” which Jolson added to his new Broadway show Sinbad (1918). Trying to capitalize on his stroke of early success, DeSylva began adapting Avery Hopwood’s Our Little Wife under the title I’ll Say She Does (1919). After opening to poor reviews, the show was revamped and re-titled Dodo (1920). But DeSylva’s early success did not carry through because the show closed before it ever reached Broadway.

After this first failure, DeSylva became a music publisher with Remick Publishing, but soon afterwards George Gershwin asked him to assist with lyrics for Gershwin’s musical debut La La Lucille (1919). Jerome Kern then asked DeSylva to supply lyrics for Zip Goes A Million (1919). And even though Zip closed very quickly, the song “Look for the Silver Lining” was
very popular, and Kern placed it in his next musical Sally (1920). DeSylva reunited with Al Jolson and then wrote “April Showers” with Louis Silvers and “California, Here I Come” with Joseph Meyer for the Jolson vehicle—Bombo (1921), which catapulted DeSylva’s career. He wrote the lyrics for Victor Herbert’s Orange Blossoms (1922), adapted Kalman’s popular show Die Bajadere, and renamed it The Yankee Princess (1922), and he added several songs to various versions of the George White Scandals (1922 – 1926 and 1928). His two most famous songs in the Scandals during these times were “Stairway to Paradise” and “Somebody Loves Me.” DeSylva also collaborated with composer Lewis Gansler on two unsuccessful and forgettable book shows: Captain Jinks (1925) and Queen High (1926). However, when DeSylva joined with lyricist Lew Brown and composer Ray Henderson, they formed the team with which DeSylva’s name is most often associated. They composed two editions of the George White Scandals (1925 and 1926), which featured the songs “The Birth of the Blues,” “Lucky Day,” “The Girl Is You and the Boy Is Me” and “Black Bottom.” And the team continued to collaborate for their first major success—the book musical Good News (1927). The three continued with the Ed Wynn vehicle, Manhattan Mary (1927); the boxing musical that launched Bert Lahr, Hold Everything! (1928); the golfing musical with the song “Button Up Your Over Coat,” Follow Thru (1929); and the aeronautical musical, Flying High (1930). DeSylva, Henderson, and Brown’s film projects were The Singing Fool (1928)—starring Al Jolson and featuring the song “Sonny Boy”—and Sunny Side of the Street (1929)—featuring the hit and title song “Sunny Side of the Street.” After Sunny Side of the Street, DeSylva left his writing collaborators, and he began producing films and musicals with Laurence Schwab. They co-produced Take a Chance (1932), DuBarry Was a Lady (1939), Cole Porter’s Panama Hattie (1940), and Irving Berlin’s Louisiana Purchase (1940). In 1941, DeSylva became the Executive Producer of Paramount Pictures until 1944, and

**Donaldson, Walter**

Walter Donaldson (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Brooklyn, NY on February 15, 1893. Even as a young child, Donaldson wrote songs for his school’s original productions, but after graduation, he began a career as a broker. Nevertheless, Donaldson quickly returned to his musical passion, and he became a pianist in a musical publishing house. By the age of eighteen, he published his first songs: “Back Home in Tennessee” and “I’ve Got the Sweetest Girl in Maryland.” After finishing a brief stint the Army during World War I, he became a songwriter for the Irving Berlin Music Company. In 1928 Donaldson started his own publishing company, and for the nine years, Donaldson wrote countless successful songs. Some of his most popular were “Carolina in the Morning,” “My Ohio Home,” “My Baby,” and “I Wonder Where My Baby Is Tonight” with Gus Kahn; “My Mammy” and “How Ya Keep ‘Em Down on the Farm?” with Sam Lewis and Joe Young; “Roamin’ to Wyomin” and “Let It Rain Let It Pour” with Cliff Friend; and “Sam, the Old Accordion Man” and “My Blue Heaven with George Whiting.

Donaldson often wrote his own lyrics, but when he collaborated, Donaldson teamed with some of the most important lyricists of the day; his most famous collaborators were Gus Kahn, Johnny Mercer, and Buddy DeSylva.

In the theatrical world, Donaldson had success on Broadway with his hit song “My Mammy” that he composed for Al Jolson’s *Sinbad* (1918). His early Broadway success did not sustain for his second show *Sweetheart Time* (1926). Written with Joseph Mayer, the musical quickly closed. But in 1928, Donaldson worked with lyricist Gus Kahn, and they wrote the score to *Whoopee* (1928), which starred Eddie Cantor and Ruth Etting and was made into a movie.
The movie musical of the same title was very popular in 1930, and it was Busby Berkley’s choreographic film debut. With this film success, Donaldson moved to Hollywood and wrote *Kid Millions* (1934), *The Great Ziegfeld* (1936), *Panama Hattie* (1942), and *Follow the Boys* (1944). Walter Donaldson died in Santa Monica, CA in 1947.

**Dublin, Al**

Albert Dublin (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Zurich, Switzerland on June 10, 1891. Originally from Russia, he moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania when he was only two years old. His father was a doctor, and his mother was a science teacher, and they aggressively tried to stifle Dublin’s early musical interests. However, Dublin enjoyed music and entertainment, and as a teenager, he would skip school, go into New York, and watch Broadway shows. He would also attempt to sell music to the Vaudeville starts at Tin Pan Alley. Even though Dublin was Jewish, he attended Perkiomen Seminary during his high school years, where he was captain of the football team and a star of the track and basketball teams. Dublin was expelled from high school just a few days before graduation, but he still enrolled in medical school yet was expelled there in 1911. Later, Dublin worked for the Witmark Music Publishing Company as a staff writer and wrote his first hit “Twas Only an Irishman’s Dream” with Rennie Carmack, and we worked as a singing waiter until he enlisted in World War I.

After his return, Dublin wrote the popular songs “Halfway to Heaven” with J. Russell Robinson and “A Cup of Coffee, a Sandwich and You” with Joseph Mayer. In 1926 he began writing scores for silent films, and he quickly began the transition to talking pictures. He joined with composer Joseph Burke, and they wrote the mildly successful songs “Tiptoe Through the Tulips,” “Painting the Clouds with Sunshine,” and “The Kiss Waltz.” When Dublin teamed with Harry Warren, the two wrote the score to their most famous work—the movie musical 42nd
Street (1935). Featuring the songs “42nd Street,” “We’re in the Money,” “Shuffle Off to Buffalo,” and the 1935 Academy Award winner “Lullaby of Broadway,” the film was the most successful project of Dublin’s career. His most well known songs at the end of his career were “South American Way” with Jimmy McHugh, “I Never Felt This Way Before” with Duke Ellington, and “Along the Santa Fe Trail” with Will Grosz. Dublin loved eating, drinking and abusing drugs, and at the time of his death, he was five foot nine and weighed over three hundred pounds. Al Dublin died of barbiturate poisoning and pneumonia on February 11, 1945.

**Ebb, Fred**

Fred Ebb (Composer/Director/Lyricist/Librettist) was born in New York, NY on April 8, 1932. He attended New York University and Columbia University and after graduation worked with Paul Klein writing nightclub acts. Together they wrote the trendy novelty song “Close the Door (they’re coming in the window),” and they contributed songs to the revues *Putting It In Writing, From A to Z* (1960) and *Vintage 60* (1960), which featured the song “Dublin Town.” Klein and Ebb also added music to the play *Morning Sun* (1963), and Ebb also adapted the libretto and the lyrics. Publisher Tommy Valando introduced Ebb to John Kander in 1962, and the two men formed one of the greatest musical theatre writing teams in the last half of the twentieth century. Their first songs were “My Coloring Book” and “I Don’t Care Much,” and their first score was *Flora, the Red Menace* (1965)—the musical that featured Liza Minnelli in her first starring role. Harold Prince, the director of *Flora*, commissioned the team to compose songs for his new concept musical *Cabaret* (1966). Based on John von Druten’s play *I Am a Camera* (1951) and Christopher Isherwood’s book *The Berlin Stories*, *Cabaret* established Kander and Ebb as a composing force in musical theatre.
Within ten years, they wrote the scores to *The Happy Time* (1968), featuring the song “I Don’t Remember You”; *Zorba* (1968); *Seventy, Girls, Seventy* (1971); *Chicago* (1975) with choreographer/director Bob Fosse and stars Gwen Verdon, Chita Rivera, and Jerry Orbach; and *The Act* (1977), starring Liza Minnelli. The team continued with *Woman of the Year* (1981), starring Lauren Bacall. And they wrote *The Rink* (1984), which featured Terrance McNally’s book, Liza Minnelli and Chita Rivera’s starring roles, and the song “Colored Lights.” In 1993 Kander and Ebb worked with librettist Terrance McNally again on the critically acclaimed *Kiss of the Spider Woman – the Musical* (1993); this musical also joined Kander and Ebb with their long-time friends Harold Prince serving as director and Chita Rivera starring in the title role. The duo’s final Broadway project was *Steel Pier* (1997)—the show about a dance contest that opened to lukewarm reception and closed relatively quickly. Kander and Ebb’s last collaboration was their new musical that was tentatively titled *Curtains*. The score underwent several readings in New York, but Fred Ebb died during the process. He died of natural causes in New York City on September 11, 2004.

**Fields, Dorothy**

Dorothy Fields (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born in Allenhurst, New Jersey on July 15, 1905. Daughter to Lew M. Fields—a member of famous comedy duo Weber and Fields, Dorothy Fields grew up in show business. But when she graduated from the Benjamin Franklin School for Girls in New York City in 1923, she became a teacher and lab assistant, yet all the while, Fields contributed verses to various artist magazines. Fields met composer J. Fred Coots in 1926, and he introduced her to Jimmy McHugh who was a song-plugger. Fields was consequently hired as a lyricist at Mills Music, Inc. through McHugh. At Mills Music, she received fifty dollars for each lyric she finished. She became the sole lyricist for the Harlem
Cotton Club (1927), and she wrote the International Revue (1930) with McHugh. In 1930 Fields moved to Hollywood and worked on several movie musicals. Her most famous movies were Love in the Rough (1930) with McHugh and Roberta (1935) and Swing Time (1936) with Jerome Kern. For Swing Time, she won the Academy Award for Best Song with “The Way You Look Tonight.” Fields married David Eli Lahan on July 15, 1939, and shortly thereafter, she returned to New York City with her husband.

Back in New York, she wrote the books for three Cole Porter shows – Let’s Face It (1941), Something For the Boys (1943), and Mexican Hayride (1944). In addition, Fields also had the idea to write a musical about the famous cowgirl Annie Oakley. The show would eventually become the wildly successfully Ethel Merman vehicle, Annie Get Your Gun (1946). At the start of the project, Fields first asked Oscar Hammerstein II to compose; he, however, hired Jerome Kern to compose the music and collaborate with Fields as the lyricist. But after Kern died, Irving Berlin stepped into the project and wrote the music and lyrics, and Fields and her brother Herbert wrote the book. Fields also wrote the lyrics for A Tree Grows in Brooklyn (1950) and By the Beautiful Sea (1954) with Arthur Schwartz; two small films, Mr. Imperial (1951) and That Farmer Takes A Wife (1953), with Harold Arlen; and Redhead (1959) with Albert Hague and Sweet Charity (1965) with Cy Coleman—both vehicles for Gwen Verdon. In 1971, Fields became the first woman inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. Dorothy Fields died in her home in New York City on March 28, 1974.

**Fosse, Bob**

Robert Louis Fosse (Choreographer/Director/Librettist) was born in Chicago, Illinois on June 23, 1927. As a teenager, Fosse was a member of the tap dancing team, the Riff Brothers, where the team would dance in burlesque houses after the adult shows ended. Still in his teens,
Fosse began dancing in small circuit vaudeville houses, and he was hired to dance in the touring production of the revues Call Me Mister (1946) and Dance Me A Song (1950). His big break came when he understudied in the role of Joey for Gene Kelly in the musical Pal Joey (1952). He then made his movie musical debut in Kiss Me, Kate (1953); Fosse received his first notable choreography credit when he choreographed is own duet with Carol Haney. Fosse also danced in the movie musical My Sister Eileen (1955). When Fosse choreographed his first Broadway musical, The Pajama Game (1954), he began to gain notoriety. Featuring the dance for “Steam Heat,” Fosse’s choreography earned him his first Tony Award. He then followed that project with choreography for Damn Yankees (1955). This show featured Gwen Verdon dancing to “Who’s Got the Pain?” and “Whatever Lola Wants,” and Fosse received his second consecutive Tony Award for Best Choreography. After the unpleasant experience of co-choreographing Bells are Ringing (1956) with Jerome Robbins and after Fosse directed and choreographed New Girl in Town (1957), he vowed that he would only work as a director/choreographer again.

In 1958, Fosse won his third Tony for his new murder-mystery musical Redhead (1958) that starred his current wife, Gwen Verdon, and Fosse made his final appearance on stage in two productions of Pal Joey at the City Center. Fosse choreographed two Frank Loesser musicals. How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying (1961) was a critical and commercial success, but Pleasures and Palaces (1965) was so poorly received, it is seldom mentioned in the Loesser or Fosse cannons. Between these two shows, Fosse won his fourth Tony for the Sid Caesar vehicle Little Me (1962), and he directed, choreographed, and conceived the popular Sweet Charity (1966)—another show that was specifically created for Gwen Verdon. Pippin (1972) garnished Fosse with his fifth Tony Award for Direction and his sixth for Choreography, and Chicago (1975) credited Fosse as director, choreographer, and co-librettist; Chicago was
another musical for Gwen Verdon—this time playing opposite Chita Rivera. Fosse’s final works for Broadway were his dance revue *Dancin’* (1978) and his pasticcio show *Big Deal* (1986). In film, he had directed the film adaptations of *Sweet Charity* (1968), starring Shirley MacLaine, and *Cabaret* (1972), starring Liza Minnelli and Joel Grey. Fosse also developed and directed the autobiographical film *All that Jazz* (1979), and he choreographed the made-for-TV special *Liza with a Z*. He is the only artist to ever win a Tony, an Oscar, and an Emmy in one year when he won for *Pippin*, *Cabaret*, and *Liza with a Z* respectively. Bob Fosse died in Washington, D.C on September 23, 1987, while mounting another production of *Sweet Charity*. The musical ode to Fosse—*Fosse: A Celebration in Song and Dance* (1999)—won the Tony Award for Best Musical.

**Friml, Rudolf**

Rudolf Friml (Composer/Librettist) was born in Prague (formally a member of the Austro-Hungarian Empire) on December 7, 1879. Marked early as a musical prodigy, Friml studied music composition with Antonin Dvorak at the Prague Conservatory. After graduation he toured the world twice with violinist Jan Kubelik serving as accompanist, and at the end of their second American tour, Friml chose to remain in the states. When Victor Herbert refused to compose for the opera diva Emma Trentini, Arthur Hammerstein commissioned Friml to write a score that would feature Trentini. A month later, Friml completed his first operetta *The Firefly* (1912), and it opened to great success. He followed it with three more well-received operettas: *High Jinks* (1913), *Katinka* (1915), and *You’re in Love* (1917).

*Rose-Marie* (1924) was Friml’s first comic piece and was Friml’s biggest commercial success. With Oscar Hammerstein II lyrics and the featured song “Indian Love Call,” the operetta has proved to be Friml’s most lasting. After *Rose-Marie*, Friml composed *The
Gershwin, George

George Gershwin (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born Jacob Gershowitz in Brooklyn, NY on September 26, 1898. Originally, George’s mother wanted George’s older brother, Ira, to take piano lessons, but when George exhibited a higher level of musical talent, he began taking piano lessons with Charles Hambitzer and music theory with Edward Kilenyi instead of Ira. George withdrew from high school, and at the age of fifteen, he became the youngest pianist working for Remick’s Publishing Company at Tin Pan Alley. In an attempt to emulate his idols, Jerome Kern and Irving Berlin, George Gershwin left Remicks and worked as a rehearsal pianist. He quickly earned a job as the rehearsal pianist for a new Jerome Kern and Victor Herbert show, but the show closed shortly after Gershwin’s arrival. After this disappointment, George and his brother Ira began writing songs together, and they started one of the most successful partnerships in musical theatre history. In no time, they published their first professional song, “The Real American Folk Song.” At the same time, George also teamed with other lyricists; his second successful song was “Sewanee,” which he wrote with Irving Caesar. After the success of “Sewanee,” George White asked George Gershwin to write for White’s Scandals. Gershwin composed numerous editions of the George White Scandals (1920-1922 and
1924), where he premiered such famous songs as “I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise” (1922) and his twenty-minute “jazz opera”—Blue Monday—about the “infidelity among Negros.”

With the publicity of the Scandals, George Gershwin’s career reached new heights. He composed “Rhapsody in Blue” and performed the piece with Paul Whiteman’s Palais Royal Orchestra. And the new producing firm headed by Alex Aarons and Vinton Freedley commissioned George and Ira to compose seven Broadway musicals. Those seven shows were Lady Be Good (1924), which featured the song “Fascinating Rhythm”; Tip-Toes (1925); Oh, Kay! (1926), which starred Gertrude Lawrence in her American premiere; Funny Face (1927); Treasure Girl (1928); Girl Crazy (1930), which debuted Ethel Zimmerman (soon to be Ethel Merman) singing “I Got Rhythm”; and Pardon My English (1933). George and Ira’s next project was Strike Up The Band (1930), and then they wrote the Pulitzer Prize winning Of Thee I Sing (1932). However, the Pulitzer judges refused to include George Gershwin because he did not create the storyline. Following this success, the Gershwins wrote a sequel to Of Thee I Sing called Let ‘Em Eat Cake (1933), which failed at the box office, even though Gershwin marked this piece as his best work to date.

Gershwin had wanted to adapt DuBose Heyward’s short novel Porgy for many years, and he finally collaborated with Heyward in 1933. Heyward said that he wrote better in the south, so he remained in Charleston, South Carolina while George was forced to remain New York because of a radio contract. Gershwin and Heyward mailed each other their work, but George asked Ira to become a “general liaison man” to speed along the process. George composed the music in eleven months and orchestrated the show in an additional nine months. The collaborative teamed called the musical Porgy and Bess (1935), so it was not confused with the play and the novel, which were both named Porgy. The show opened to astounding reviews, and
critics praised the work as one of greatest achievements in theatre. With compositions ranging from concert music to jazz to musical comedies to operas, Gershwin was one of the most successful and popular composers in New York. But George Gershwin died of a brain tumor in Hollywood, California on July 11, 1937 at the age of thirty-eight. He was the first songwriter from Tin Pan Alley to have “equal honors” as a composer in concert music and opera.

**Gershwin, Ira**

Ira Gershwin (Lyricist/Composer/Librettist) was born Israel Gershowitz in Brooklyn, NY on December 6, 1896. As a young man, Ira was unfocused in his career calling even though he wrote for newspapers and magazines from grammar school through college, so Ira spent several years working as a cashier for his father. Ira found his calling, however, when Alex Aarons commissioned Ira to write music and lyrics with Vincent Youmans for *Two Little Girls in Blue* (1921), and Ira took this opportunity to fully entrench himself into the world of theatre. Soon after, Ira collaborated with his younger brother George on the Alex Aarons and Vinton Freedley produced musical *Lady, Be Good!* (1924), which was an instant success. With the momentum of *Lady, Be Good*, Aarons and Freedly approved six more musicals from Ira and George: *Tip-Toes* (1925); *Oh, Kay!* (1926), which starred Gertrude Lawrence in her American premiere; *Funny Face* (1927); *Treasure Girl* (1928); *Girl Crazy* (1930), which debuted Ethel Zimmerman (soon to be Ethel Merman) singing “I Got Rhythm”; and *Pardon My English* (1933). George and Ira’s next project was *Strike Up The Band* (1930), and then they wrote the Pulitzer Prize winning *Of Thee I Sing* (1932). However, the media made much of the fact that the Pulitzer judges refused to include George Gershwin, but they did include Ira. This rumored tension did not stop the brothers from writting a sequel to *Of Thee I Sing* called *Let ‘Em Eat Cake* (1933), which failed at the box office.
When George Gershwin and DuBose Heyward started adapting Heyward’s short novel *Porgy* into a musical, the two men were at a disadvantage. George Gershwin was in New York while Heyward was in South Carolina, so George asked Ira to become a “general liaison man” to speed along the process. When the collaborative team eventually finished the musical *Porgy and Bess* (1935), critics praised the work as one of greatest achievements in theatre. When George Gershwin suddenly died in 1937, Ira was without a partner and a brother. In his grief, Ira waited three years before he wrote anything else. During the next fourteen years, Ira wrote lyrics with Kurt Weill, Jerome Kern, and Harold Arlen, and like most songwriters of the time, Ira made an attempt in Hollywood. But none of his songs reached the acclaim as the songs he wrote with his brother George. Ira Gershwin died in New York, NY on August 15, 1983.

**Gilbert, William S.**

Sir William Schwenk Gilbert (Lyricist/Librettist) was born in London, England on November 18, 1836. Even before entering the theatrical world, Gilbert lived an outlandish and interesting life. Growing up in a wealthy family, Italian brigands kidnapped Gilbert at the age of two and ransomed his release. As a child, Gilbert began training as an artillery officer, and he was tutored in military science. He completed his military studies before he reached puberty, and he joined the English militia for twenty years. After his aunt died, Gilbert received a large inheritance, and he trained for a career in law. All the while, Gilbert contributed comic verses to magazines under the pseudonym “Bab”; these verses were later combined into the book *The Bab Ballad* (1869). In his late twenties, Gilbert decided against a legal career, and he began writing for the theatre. His first show was a non-musical play called *Hush a Bye* (1866) that bordered on being a burlesque. Gilbert took this interest and wrote several successful burlesque shows: *Dulcamara* (1866), which was based on Donizetti’s *L’Elisir d’amore; La Vivandiere* (1867),
which was based on Donizetti’s *La Fille du regiment; The Pretty Druidess* (1869); and *The Princess* (1870), which was based on the Alfred Lord Tennyson’s poem. After becoming bored with the world of Burlesque, Gilbert began writing plays of “whimsy and the supernatural.” The plays Gilbert wrote during this brief period are *The Palace of Truth* (1870), *Pygmalion and Galatea* (1871), and *The Wicked World* (1873).

Gilbert was also urged to write musical comedies. Different from operettas or what would become American musical comedies, these musical comedies were comic plays that featured small and interspersed songs. Gilbert wrote several one-acts musical plays: *No Cards* (1869) with Thomas German Reed, *Ages Ago* (1869) with Frederic Clay, *Our Island Home* (1870) with German Reed, *A Sensational Novel* (1871) with German Reed, and *Happy Arcadia* (1872) with Clay. In addition, Gilbert and Frederick Clay wrote their first full-length musical play *The Gentleman in Black* (1870) to favorable reviews. The Gaiety Theatre then commissioned a Christmas show, and they partnered Gilbert with composer Arthur S. Sullivan for “a grotesque opera” that eventually became *Thespis* (1871). Gilbert and Sullivan joined again to write a short one-act entitled *Trial by Jury* (1875), but Gilbert left Sullivan when Gilbert received another commission to write a full-length comic opera. Collaborating with his old friend Frederick Clay, *Princess Toto* (1876) was extremely unsuccessful.

Richard D’Oyly reunited Gilbert and Sullivan for a newly commissioned work, and the team somewhat begrudgingly agreed. *The Sorcerer* (1877) was immensely popular, and it was the first of the many “Savoy Operas” that Gilbert and Sullivan would create. Under D’Oyly’s charge, the team wrote *HMS Pinafore* (1878), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1879), *Patience* (1881), *Iolanthe* (1882) and *Princess Ida* (1884), which was based on Gilbert’s burlesque *The Princess* (1870). Beginning with *The Sorcerer*, the men behind the Savoy Operas reached more success.
and fame with each show in England and also in America, but there was much tension between the group. One main point of contention was that Queen Victoria knighted Sullivan in 1883, but she did not knight Gilbert.

However, the team continued, and they wrote The Mikado (1885), Ruddigore (1887), and The Yeomen of the Guard (1888). The Gondoliers (1889) was Gilbert and Sullivan’s last collaboration, but Gilbert continued writing. He joined with George Grossmith for Haste to the Wedding (1892) and with Alfred Cellier for The Mountainbanks (1892). Several years later, Gilbert and Sullivan united again for Utopia (Limited) (1893) and The Grand Duke (1896), but without financial or critical success in either of those show, the two men finally went their separate ways. Gilbert carried on and wrote the libretto and lyrics for Osmond Carr’s opera His Excellency (1894), and Gilbert wrote another non-musical play called The Fairies Dilemma (1904). Gilbert’s last effort was a musicalization of his play The Wicked World into the opera Fallen Fairies (1909) with composer Edward German, but this show could never find a producer. Edward VII eventually knighted Gilbert in 1907 before Gilbert’s death at the age of seventy-four in 1911.

**Hamlisch, Marvin**

Marvin Hamlisch (Composer) was born in New York City on June 2, 1944. With an accordionist and bandleader father, Hamlisch was predisposed to music, which was apparent when at five years old he began mimicking songs on the piano that he heard on the piano. When he was seven, Hamlisch was the youngest person to enroll at the Juilliard School, and after graduation, earned a degree in composition from Queens College. His first hit song was “Sunshine, Lollipops, and Rainbows,” which Lesley Gore performed. And at the age of twenty-
one, Hamlisch wrote the score to the film *The Swimmer* (1965) and to Woody Allen’s film *Take the Money and Run* (1969).

Hamlisch’s first critical and commercial success was for score to the tremendously popular movie *The Sting* (1973); Hamlisch adapted Scott Joplin’s ragtime music, which included the movie’s theme song “The Entertainer.” The score to *The Way We Were* (1974) was an even greater sensation, and it garnished Hamlisch with two Academy Awards and two Grammy’s for the title song “The Way We Were.” Riding this wave of success, Hamlisch composed the score to his first Broadway musical *A Chorus Line* (1975). This show became the longest running Broadway musical for its time, and it won the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Hamlisch then co-wrote with his then wife Carol Bayer-Sager the 1977 Oscar nominated song “Nobody Does It Better.” But Hamlisch followed his early success in the 1970s with a difficult start in the 1980s. After divorcing Bayer-Sager, the London production of his latest musical *Jean* (1983) failed and never transferred to the states, and his second Broadway musical *Smile* (1986)—featuring the song “Disneyland”—closed after a short run. Hamlisch returned to film, and he has written over forty movie scores. His most popular were *Ordinary People* (1980) and *Sophie’s Choice* (1982). He has an Academy Award nomination for the film version of *A Chorus Line* (1985), an Emmy nomination for the television show *Brooklyn Bridge*, a Tony nomination for *The Goodbye Girl* (1993) and *Sweet Smell of Success* (2002), and he won two Emmys for a Barbara Streisand television special. Hamlisch is currently Principal Pops Conductor with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. He and his current wife Terre Blair live in New York City.
Oscar Greeley Clendenning Hammerstein (Lyricist/Librettist/Composer/Director) was born in New York City on July 12, 1895. Upon entering the theatre, he decided to call himself “Hammerstein II,” so the middle names he hated would not distinguish him. Hammerstein II came from a theatre family; his father managed the Victoria Theatre—an old vaudeville house that Hammerstein I, Oscar’s grandfather, owned. Hammerstein II had no plans to follow in the theatrical family business, and his parents did not wish him to do so. But while attending law school at Columbia University, Hammerstein wrote additional material for the Columbia Variety Show of 1916, The Peace Pirates. While working on the project, he met Lorenz Hart and Richard Rodgers who were already working as a composing team. Nevertheless, Hammerstein II teamed with Rodgers, and they wrote the now ironically titled song “There’s Always Room for One More.” Enjoying this experience so much, Hammerstein withdrew from Columbia, and his uncle, Arthur Hammerstein, made him a stage manager for three Rudolf Friml shows.

Hammerstein soon began writing, and he had his first play The Light (1919) produced at a small New Haven theatre for four performances. Showing an early interest and talent for musical theatre, Hammerstein wrote the book and lyrics for his first musical, Always You (1920) with composer Herbert Stothart. After hearing this work, Hammerstein’s uncle introduced him to Otto Harbach, and Hammerstein began working under his tutelage. The team worked well together, and they wrote lyrics and librettos for some of the most popular musicals in the 1920s: Wildflower (1923), Sunny (1925), The Desert Song (1925), and Rose-Marie (1926). Working as sole lyricist and librettist, Hammerstein collaborated with Jerome Kern, and the two wrote Show Boat (1927)—often considered the “grandfather” of modern musical theatre; it is one of the most important works in the cannon since it is the first time that music advances the plot.
The team followed this success with three more mildly popular shows: *Sweet Adeline* (1929), *Music in the Air* (1932), and *Very Warm for May* (1939).

Richard Rodgers privately approached Hammerstein in late 1941 and asked Hammerstein if he could consider working with Rodgers if Rodgers’s partnership with lyricist Lornez Hart disintegrated. When Rodgers asked Hart to adapt Lynn Rigg’s book *Green Grow the Lilacs*, Hart declined, and Rodgers joined Hammerstein. The two began one of the most famous and successful partnerships in musical theatre history. The *Green Grow the Lilacs* project eventually became the team’s first musical *Oklahoma!*, and when it opened on March 31, 1943, it became the longest running show on Broadway until 1956 with *My Fair Lady*. In addition to being popular, *Oklahoma!* is also important to musical theatre history since it breaks free of many musical theatre traditions and since it is credited as the first time that dance advances the plot.

Directly following *Oklahoma!* Rodgers and Hammerstein took a hiatus from their partnership. Rodgers returned to working with Hart, and Hammerstein began adapting a modern version George Bizet’s opera *Carmen* called *Carmen Jones* (1943). After Hart died in 1943, Rodgers and Hammerstein reunited and wrote *Carousel* (1945) based on Ferenc Molnar’s play *Liliom* (1921). The song “If I Loved You” from *Carousel* is another milestone in history since many critics credit this song as the first example of perfect scene and song integration. But in addition to being important, *Carousel* was also extremely popular. After it opened, *Carousel* and *Oklahoma!* ran directly across the street from each other, and *Carousel* cemented Rodgers and Hammerstein as a theatrical dynasty. Over the following fourteen years, Rodgers and Hammerstein created and produced a new musical almost every other year: *Allegro* (1947), which was Agnes de Mille’s directorial debut; *South Pacific* (1949), which featured the
controversial song “You Have to Be Carefully Taught” and became the second musical to win the Pulitzer Prize; *The King and I* (1951), which starred Gertrude Lawrence who asked the team to write the show for her; *Me and Juliet* (1953), which featured Hammerstein’s original libretto; *Pipe Dream* (1955), which was a musical version of John Steinbeck’s book *Sweet Thursday*; *Flower Drum Song* (1958), which featured a story about Asian-Americans; and *The Sound of Music* (1959), which was based on the German film *The Trapp Family Singers*. Rodger’s and Hammerstein also encouraged and helped create the film versions of their work, and their films were often on the cutting edge of film technology. The movie version of *The Sound of Music* was voted one of the top twenty-five movies of twentieth century. But while working on that project, Oscar Hammerstein II died of cancer on August 23, 1960.

**Harbach, Otto**

Otto Abels Harbach (Composer /Lyricist/Librettist) was born Otto Abels Hauerbach in Salt Lake City, Utah on August 18, 1873. As a child and as a young man, Harbach had fortitude for literature, but he had no interest in theatre or for writing lyrics. He first attended the Salt Lake Collegiate Institute, but he graduated from Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois in 1895. He then went on to earn a masters degree in English literature from Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, and he ultimately studied at Columbia University, which is where he eventually worked as an English professor from 1895 through 1901. Harbach was a newspaper reporter in 1902 for a year, and he was an advertising executive until 1910. While serving as an advertising executive, he teamed with composer Karl Hoschner, and they wrote vaudeville and minstrel songs.

Harbach enjoyed writing songs so much that he decided to write full-length productions and venture into the world of operetta. With Rudolf Friml, he wrote the lyrics for *The Firefly*
(1912), High Jinks (1913), and Rose-Marie (1926)—with Oscar Hammerstein II. Harbach also collaborated with Jerome Kern on Sunny (1925)—again with Hammerstein II, The Cat and the Fiddle (1931) and Roberta (1933). And he worked with Sigmund Romberg, Frank Mandel and Hammerstein II on The Desert Song (1926) and with Vincent Youmans, Irving Caesar and Hammerstein II on No, No, Nanette (1925). No, No, Nanette was one of Harbach’s most popular pieces, and the show is arguably Harbach’s most produced work today. Harbach was a founding member of the American Society for Authors, Composers, and Publishers (ASCAP) in 1914, and he eventually became one of the organizations chief supports. He served as a prominent theatrical director from 1920-1963; all the while, he acted as vice president (1936-1940) and eventually president (1950-1953) of ASCAP. Harbach was unique in that he did not follow the trend of most songwriters of the day, and he did not move to Hollywood even though several of his shows were adapted into film. Harbach died in New York City on January 24, 1963.

**Harburg, E.Y.**

E. Y. “Yip” Harburg (Lyricist/Composer/Librettist/Director) was born Isidore Hochberg on the Lower East Side of New York City on April 8, 1896. His parents changed his name to Edgar Yipsel Harburg, and he took on the nickname Yip. While attending Townsend Harris High School, Harburg met Ira Gershwin, and they became friends when they discovered their mutual affection for Gilbert and Sullivan. He and Ira Gershwin were so close that they both worked for their high school paper, and they both attended City College (now called City University of New York). In order to avoid military service in World War I, Harburg was a journalist in Uruguay for three years. After the war, he returned to New York and wrote verses for the local newspaper, and he became the co-owner of Consolidated Electrical Appliance Company that later folded in the stock market crash of 1929. Ira Gershwin introduced Harburg
to composer Jay Gorney and encouraged the two to write songs for the stage. Together, they wrote songs for *Earl Carroll’s Sketchbook* (1929), *The Garrick Gaieties* (1930), and *The Ziegfeld Follies* (1931 and 1934). The team also wrote songs for the revue *Americana* (1932), which featured the song “Brother, Can You Spare A Dime” that became the anthem of the Great Depression.

Paramount Studios offered Harburg and Gorney individual contracts, so the teamed moved to Hollywood. While working in film, Harburg collaborated with some of the most famous composers of the day: Harold Arlen, Vernon Duke, Jerome Kern, Burton Lane, and Jule Styne. Harburg’s most famous Hollywood project was writing lyrics to the movie musical sensation *The Wizard of Oz* (1939); with composer Harold Arlen, the score featured the now musical standard “Over the Rainbow.” While filming *The Wizard of Oz*, Harburg assisted the book writers with the song set ups, and he also contributed to various aspects of the plot. Harburg’s biographer, Ernie Harburg, wrote, “Harburg also wrote the part where they give out the heart, the brains, and the nerve, because he was the final script editor…and gave the thing a coherence and unity which made it a work of art. But he doesn’t get credit for that.”

Harburg continued to write for Broadway, and he had the mild successes *Bloomer Girl* (1944) with Harold Arlen and *Finian’s Rainbow* (1947) with Burton Lane. Even though the communist scare blacklisted Harburg from 1951 to 1962, Harburg and Arlen wrote Harburg’s final show for Broadway *Jamaica* (1957). Harburg died in New York City on March 5, 1981.

**Harnick, Sheldon**

Sheldon Harnick (Lyricist/Composer/Librettist) was born in Chicago, Illinois on April 30, 1924. As a child, Harnick studied piano and violin, and his family enjoyed verses that he wrote about their celebrations. After his time in the U.S. Army during World War II, he
graduated from Northwestern University where he composed music and lyrics for the university’s show *Waa-Mu*. For a very short time after graduation, Harnick made his living as a violinist for dance orchestras in and around Chicago, but he soon left Chicago and moved to the New York in 1950. While trying to build a career as a songwriter in New York, he met E. Y. “Yip” Harburg who encouraged Harnick to find a composer. Harnick meet Jerry Bock, and they collaborated on their first show *The Beautiful Body* (1958), which George Abbott directed.

After the success of their first project, Abbott—serving as director—asked the team to compose a musical based on the New York City Mayor, Fiorello H. LaGuardia. Titled *Fiorello!* (1959), this musical was a critical and commercial success that won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Bock and Harnick continued their collaboration with commissions for *Tenderloin* (1960) and *She Loves Me* (1963), which was the musical version of Ernst Lubitsch’s film *The Shop Around the Corner* (1940). However, before Bock and Harnick started writing *She Loves Me*, they began working on what would become one of the most popular, long lasting, and important shows in musical theatre literature—*Fiddler on the Roof* (1964). Based on Sholom Aleichem’s collection of short stories *Tevye’s Daughter’s*, Bock and Harnick teamed with Joseph Stein on libretto, and Jerome Robbins served as choreographer and director and was the driving force behind the project.

Bock and Harnick joined with director Mike Nichols in 1963, and this new team developed *The Apple Tree* (1966)—a musical that tells three different yet interrelated stories. *The Rothchilds* (1970) was Bock and Harnick’s final collaboration, and the show had very little success, especially compared to the team’s earlier projects. Bock and Harnick ended their collaboration when Bock wanted to write lyrics as well as music, and Harnick wanted to focus on different projects than Bock. After their separation, Harnick wrote the lyrics for Jack
Beeson’s Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines—a new version of Franz Lehar’s The Merry Widow and the lyrics to Richard Rodger’s extremely unsuccessful Broadway musical Rex (1976). Harnick’s most recent project was creating additional lyrics to Cyrano – the Musical (1993). Harnick currently lives in New York City and considers himself retired.

**Hart, Lorenz**

Lorenz Hart (Lyricist/Librettist/Composer) was born in New York City on May 2, 1895. As a child, Hart ferociously read classical literature and enjoyed classical theatre. While studying literature at Columbia University, Hart was involved with the Columbian Variety Shows, and he worked with Philip Leavitt as a play translator for the Shubert Brothers. Hart expressed an interest in writing songs, so Leavitt introduced Hart to a composer who was also attending Columbia, Richard Rodgers. Rodgers and Hart began collaborating, and they wrote “Any Old Place with You” that would eventually become their first song in a Broadway musical; the show was A Lovely Romeo (1919). But while Rodgers and Hart were both still attending Columbia, they composed their first complete score called Fly With Me, and it was sung in a Columbian Variety Show. Producer, Lew Fields, saw this show and bought twelve songs for his new revue Poor Little Ritz Girl (1920). This early success allowed Rodgers and Hart to write for Broadway variety shows even while Rodgers finished his education.

After their formal schooling, Rodgers and Hart joined with Herbert Fields to compose The Melody Man (1924) for Lew Fields, and under the pen name Herbert Richard Lorenz, the team added numbers to the Garrick Gaieties (1925), which featured their song “Manhattan.” The team collaborated on three Broadway shows that each had increasing success: the operetta Dearest Enemy (1925), The Girl Friend (1926), and Peggy Ann (1926), which was based on Marie Dressler’s musical Tillie’s Nightmare (1910). Herbert Fields, Rodgers, and Hart had the
idea to adapt a Mark Twain story, but they could not find a producer. Six years later when the show was finally mounted, the team had its first big hit with A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court (1927), which starred Vivienne Segal and featured the song “Thou Swell.” However, after their first great Broadway achievement, the team had several trouble shows. She’s My Baby (1928), Present Arms (1928), and Chee-Chee (1928) were all extreme box office failures, and Chee-Chee only ran 31 performances. But Rodgers and Hart continued to compose, and the songwriters had better success with Spring is Here (1929), which featured “With a Song in My Heart”; Heads Up (1929), which featured newcomer Ray Bolger; Simple Simon (1930), which featured Ruth Etting signing “Ten Cents a Dance”; and America’s Sweethearts (1931).

Rodgers and Hart followed the trend of Broadway songwriters and moved to Hollywood. But after very little success during their three years in California, they moved back to New York and wrote Jumbo (1935), On Your Toes (1936), which featured George Balanchine’s choreography in “Slaughter on Tenth Avenue”; Babes in Arms (1937), which featured “My Funny Valentine” and “Johnny One Note”; I’d Rather Be Right (1937), which featured George M. Cohan as President Franklin D. Roosevelt; I Married an Angel (1938); The Boys from Syracuse (1938), which was based on Shakespeare’s Comedy of Errors; Too Many Girls (1939); Pal Joey (1940), which starred Gene Kelly; Higher and Higher (1940); and By Jupiter (1942).

Towards the end of Rodgers and Hart’s collaboration, Hart began disappearing for weeks at a time, and he was rumored to have an alcohol addiction—much to Rodger’s personal and professional frustration. When Rodgers asked Hart to collaborate on a musical based on Lynn Rigg’s book Green Grow the Lilacs, Hart declined, and Rodgers worked with Oscar Hammerstein II. But Rodgers and Hart teamed again for the final time on A Connecticut Yankee
During opening night of *A Connecticut Yankee*, Hart paced in the lobby of the theatre and left before the close of the show. Several days later, Hart was found unconscious in a hotel room; he had acute pneumonia and never regained consciousness. While still attached to the life-support machines in the hospital, Lorenz Hart died during an air-raid-drill blackout in New York City on November 22, 1943.

**Herbert, Victor**

Victor August Herbert (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born in Dublin, Ireland on February 1, 1859. Herbert began studying the cello at a very early age and eventually attended the elite Stuttgart Conservatory in Europe. Upon graduation, he immediately earned a position in Johann Strauss’s orchestra in Vienna, and in 1886 Herbert and his wife immigrated to America. They both began performing with the Metropolitan Opera; Victory Herbert was the principal cellist, and his wife was a soprano who sang the title role in the American premier of Verdi’s *Aida* (1869). After his years at the Met, Herbert became the musical director for Koster & Bills (1887) and for Locke’s American Opera Company (1887), and he eventually succeeded Patrick Gilmore as the conductor of the 22nd Regimental Band of the New York National Guard in 1892.

Herbert’s first formal experiments in composition were writing incidental music for Charles Hoyt’s play *The Midnight Bell* and creating extended lyrics for *The Captive*. His first full score was the comic opera *La Vivandiere*, but he could not find a producer. After completing his second score, *Prince Ananias* (1894), the Boston Ideal Opera Company produced the opera, and they became one of the principle producers of Herbert’s work. The comic opera *The Wizard of the Nile* (1895) was his first real success, and it was his first work to transfer to Broadway. After establishing himself in New York, Herbert went on to compose the comic operas *The Gold Bug* (1896), *Peg Woffington* (1897), *The Serenade* (1897) and the romantic
comic opera *The Fortune Teller* (1898). All of these works were presented in New York and had increasing success.

Herbert took a short hiatus from composition, and between 1898 and 1902, he conducted the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and for Grand Opera House in Chicago. Herbert began composing again, and he created his fairy-tale spectacle *Babes in Toyland* (1903), *Babette* (1903), *It Happened In Nordland* (1904), *Miss Dolly Dollars* (1905), *Wonderland* (1905), *Mlle Modiste* (1905), and *The Red Mill* (1906). The Red Mill was Herbert’s most critically acclaimed and financially successful work to date, and the production featured Broadway’s first electric marquee. But after all of this acclaim, Herbert’s popularity tapered off. Within his operatic sensibility, Herbert composed with varying style, and he wrote about different subject matter. He composed the classy burlesque *Lohengrin*, the low comedy *The Tattooed Man* (1907), the farce *Too Near Home* (1907), and a children’s show *Little Nero* (1908), which was based on the comic strip of the same name. However, none of these shows had the success of his previous work until *Naughty Marietta* (1910), which would prove to be the most successful and well received show of Herbert’s career. The operetta earned Herbert international acclaim, and it is Herbert’s only work that is still produced with any regularity. After the career peak of *Naughty Marietta*, Herbert composed with dwindling success even though Herbert had increased his palette of musical style. His later scores were for the musical comedies *When Sweet Sixteen* (1910), *The Only Girl* (1914), and *Angel Face* (1919); the operas *The Duchess* (1911), *The Enchantress* (1911), and *The Lady of the Slipper* (1912); the Irish opera *Eileen* (1917); and the operettas *Sweethearts* (1913) and *The Velvet Lady* (1919). Herbert also composed music for Ziegfeld’s revues *The Century Girl* (1916) and *Miss 1917* (1917). His final original production
was the operetta *Orange Blossoms* (1922). Victor Herbert died in New York, New York on May 2, 1924.

**Heyward, DuBose**

Edwin DuBose Heyward (Lyricist/Librettist) was born in Charleston, South Carolina on August 31, 1885. Heyward’s mother was a performer and an interpreter of Gullah stories and songs, and she loved to discuss African and Gullah folklore. So as a child, Heyward was engrossed in African and Gullah culture. After graduating from school, Heyward became an insurance and real-estate investor, but he had an intense passion for literature. While working as an investor, Heyward efforts became so lucrative that he decided to leave his work and pursue his fervor for writing. Following in his mother’s footsteps, Heyward’s research and literary interests were in Charleston heritage and southern culture, which became the focus of his work. His first ventures as an author were as a poet; he wrote “Skylines and Horizons” (1924), “Carolina Chansons” (1922), and a collection called *Jasbo Brown and Selected Poems* (1931). In Heyward’s first novel *Porgy* (1925), he tried to accurately portray black southern life in his fictional locale Catfish Row. The novel became a national best seller in 1926, and critics called Heyward the “authority on Southern literature” and praised *Porgy* as the “first major southern novel to portray blacks without condescension.”

Heyward’s wife Dorothy wanted to adapt *Porgy* into a play. She and Heyward collaborated on the adaptation, and after the play’s success George Gershwin ask Heyward if they could transform *Porgy* into a musical opera. Heyward agreed to collaborate with Gershwin on the project. But Heyward refused to leave South Carolina, and due to a contract, Gershwin could not leave New York. Therefore, the men collaborated through the mail, and George Gershwin hired his brother Ira Gershwin to be George and Heyward’s “general liaison.” Titled
Porgy and Bess (1935), George Gershwin and Heyward’s opera became one of the greatest works of musical theatre history, which is still produced by theatres and opera houses all over the world.

Following Porgy, Heyward’s other novels include Mamba’s Daughters (1929), which was also set on Catfish Row, Angel (1926), Peter Ashley (1932) and Star-Spangled Virgin (1939). He adapted the screenplay for Eugene O’Neill’s The Emperor Jones (1933), and he wrote the play Brass Ankle (1931) and the children’s book The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes (1939). In addition, Heyward was the co-founder of the Poetry Society of South Carolina, which was the first regional poetry circle in America. Heyward died in Tryon, North Carolina on June 16, 1940.

Hillard, Bob

Robert Hilliard (Lyricist/Composer) was born in New York, NY on January 28, 1918. After attending public school, Hilliard worked as a lyricist in Tin Pan Alley. He remained at Tin Pan Alley for over twenty years and became one of its most prolific lyricists. Even though Hilliard’s name has not been raised to the pantheon of great songwriters, his work was immensely popular in its day. Some of his most popular songs were “Civilization,” “Bong, Bongo, Bongo,” “In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning,” “My Little Corner of the World,” “Everyday’s a Holiday,” “Au Revior,” “Stay with Happy People,” “How Do You Speak to an Angel?” “Imagination is a Magic Dream,” “Sailor Boys Have Talked to Me in English,” “Shanghai,” “Red Silk Stockings and Green Perfume,” “Chocolate Whiskey and Vanilla Gin,” “Dearie,” “Every Street’s a Boulevard in Old New York,” “Seven Little Girls,” and “Don’t You Believe It.”
Hilliard also wrote the lyrics for two Broadway musicals: *Angels in the Wings* (1947) with composer Carl Sigman and *Hazel Flagg* (1953) with composer Jule Styne and lyricist Ben Hecht, yet neither of these projects had any modicum of success. Hilliard’s most famous work was as the lyricist for Disney’s animated movie musical *Alice in Wonderland* (1951). As a testament to Hillard’s songs, some of the greatest recording artists of the twentieth have recorded his work. They include Eddie Calvert, Patsy Cline, Doris Day, Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, Elvis Presley, Barry Manilow, Kelly Smith, Chris Botti, Louis Armstrong, The Drifters, Mel Torme, Shirley Horn, Dinah Washington, Carly Simon, Percy Faith, Rudy and the Romantics, Luther Vandross, Frank Sinatra and Chuck Jackson. As a popular music songwriter, Hillard also collaborated with Mort Garson, Sammy Mysels, Sammy Fain, Burt Bacharach, Milton Delugg, Lee Pockriss, and Dick Sanford. Bob Hilliard died in Hollywood, California on February 1, 1971.

**Kahn, Gus**

Gus Kahn (Lyricist/Composer) was born Gustav Gerson Kahn in Koblenz, Germany on November 6, 1886. When he was four years old, Kahn’s family immigrated to the United States and moved to Chicago, Illinois. After high school, Kahn became a clerk in a mail order business. Kahn began composing special material for vaudeville at age twenty, and in 1906 he published his first song, “My Dreamy China Lady.” Kahn’s first Broadway show was an adaptation of the German light opera *Fruhling im Herbst* (1920). He then began to team with other composers while he served as lyricist. His next Broadway projects were *Kitty Kisses* (1926) with composer Con Conrad, *Whoopee* (1928) with composer Walter Donaldson, and Ziegfeld’s *Show Girl* (1929) with George and Ira Gershwin. Kahn’s songs were also used in several popular but unimportant Broadway revues: *The Passing Show of 1916* and *1922, Bombo, Sinbad* (1918), *A*
World of Pleasures, and the London revue Houp-La.  In addition, Kahn’s songs “Ain’t We Got Fun” written with Raymond Egan and “It Had to be You” written with Isham Jones turned up in the pasticcio musical A Day In Hollywood, A Night in the Ukraine (1980).

Kahn joined the multitude of Broadway composers that moved to Hollywood to write songs for movie musicals.  In Hollywood, his began writing songs to already existing scores.  He composed “My Baby Just Cares for Me” for Whoopee (1930), “Tonight Will Teach Me to Forget” for the film The Merry Widow (1934), “Just for You” and “Pardon Me, Madame” for the film Rose-Marie (1936), and “While My Lady Sleeps” for The Chocolate Soldier (1941).  However, Kahn eventually found a successful film niche collaborating with other composers.  His most popular songs were “Yes Sir, That’s My Baby” and “My Blackbirds Are Blue Now” with Walter Donaldson, “Some Sunday Morning” with Egan Whiting, “The Shores of Minnetonka” with Percy Wenrich, “I’ll See You In My Dreams” with Isham Jones, “Chloe” with Neil Moret, “Flying Down To Rio” and “Carioca” with Vincent Youmens, “One Night of Love” with Victor Schertzinger, and “San Francisco” with Walter Jurmann.  Gus Kahn died in Beverly Hills, California on October 8, 1941.

Kander, John

John Kander (Composer) was born in Kansas City, Missouri on March 18, 1927.  He did his undergraduate work in music at Oberlin College, and he earned a Master of Music from Columbia University in 1953.  For the next nine years, Kander served as a conductor and a rehearsal pianist for numerous summer theatres.  His first project and first achievement on Broadway was creating dance arrangements.  His two most famous are Gypsy (1959) and Irma La Douce (1960).  In 1962 Kander composed the music for A Family Affair with James and William Goldman, which was largely unsuccessful.  Publisher Tommy Valando introduced Ebb
to John Kander in that same year, and the two men formed one of the greatest musical theatre writing teams in the last half of the twentieth century. Their first songs were “My Coloring Book” and “I Don’t Care Much,” and their first score was Flora, the Red Menace (1965)—the musical that featured Liza Minnelli in her first starring role. Harold Prince, the director of Flora, commissioned the team to compose songs for his new concept musical Cabaret (1966). Based on John von Druten’s play I Am a Camera (1951) and Christopher Isherwood’s book The Berlin Stories, Cabaret established Kander and Ebb as a composing force in musical theatre.

Within ten years, they wrote the scores to The Happy Time (1968), featuring the song “I Don’t Remember You”; Zorba (1968); Seventy, Girls, Seventy (1971); Chicago (1975) with choreographer/director Bob Fosse and stars Gwen Verdon, Chita Rivera, and Jerry Orbach; and The Act (1977), starring Liza Minnelli. The team continued with Woman of the Year (1981), starring Lauren Bacall. And they wrote The Rink (1984), which featured Terrance McNally’s book, Liza Minnelli and Chita Rivera’s starring roles, and the song “Colored Lights.” In 1993 Kander and Ebb worked with librettist Terrance McNally again on the critically acclaimed Kiss of the Spider Woman – the Musical (1993); this musical also joined Kander and Ebb with their long-time friends Harold Prince serving as director and Chita Rivera starring in the title role. The duo’s final Broadway project was Steel Pier (1997)—the show about a dance contest that opened to lukewarm reception and closed relatively quickly. Kander and Ebb’s last collaboration was their new musical that was tentatively titled Curtains. The score underwent several readings in New York, but Fred Ebb died during the process. John Kander currently lives in New York, NY. Under Kander’s supervision, Curtains will premiere in the fall 2006 at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles, California.
Kern, Jerome

Jerome David Kern (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist/Director) was born in New York, NY on January 27, 1885. At an early age, Kern took piano lessons from his mother Fanny who was a professional pianist. And by the time Kern was in high school, he was proficient in piano and organ, and he composed the songs for his high school shows. Kern’s father, Henry urged Kern to join their family business instead of studying music in college. However, as the famous story goes, Kern accidentally or perhaps not so accidentally ordered two hundred pianos instead of only two for a single order. After this business debacle, Henry Kern allowed Jerome to study at the New York College of Music. Kern was only at the College of Music for a year, and then he moved to London in order to study theory and composition. While in London, he also sold several songs to various producers. Kern returned to New York City in 1904, and he began working for the Lyceum Publishing Company as a song plugger. His first Broadway success was serving as a show doctor for the English show Mr. Wix of Wickham (1904), which featured the world’s most famous female impersonator, Julian Eltinge. After Kern wrote his first hit song, “How’d You Like To Spoon With Me?”, he was commissioned to write his first full score The Red Petticoat (1910), which was based on Rita Johnson’s play Next! Following that, Kern was the co-composer for The King of Cadonia (1910), and he composed La Belle Paree (1911), which featured Broadway legend Al Jolson. These projects had moderate success, and they helped to establish Kern as an up-and-coming Broadway composer.

In 1915, Kern received an opportunity that made him a veritable force on Broadway. When F. Ray Comstock could not find suitable material for his new 299-seat Princess Theatre, Comstock’s friend—Elizabeth Marbury—suggested Kern and Bolton. For the next several years, Kern and Bolton composed multiple hit shows. They wrote these hits even though they
had to adhere to Comstock’s rules. To Comstock, the shows had to have “modern stories with
comic but believable plots”; the cast could only have thirty people; the orchestra could only have
eleven pieces; and each show could only have two sets. Following these guidelines, Kern and
Bolton created their first two “Princess Shows”: Nobody Home (1915), which had “interpolated
songs,” and Very Good Eddie (1915). Bolton became the librettist and P.G. Wodehouse joined
the team as lyricist for Have a Heart (1917), Oh, Boy! (1917), Leave it to Jane (1917), and Oh,
Lady! Lady! (1918). All of these shows had huge degrees of success, but after Oh, Lady! Lady!,
the following four “Princess Shows” were flops and ended the successful run. Kern rebounded
with Sally (1920) with Clifford Grey as lyricist, Marilyn Miller as the star and Florence Zeigfeld
as producer. After that, Kern joined Otto Harbach and Oscar Hammerstein II for Sunny (1925),
and then Kern teamed with Hammerstein II again for Show Boat (1927). Based on the Edna
Ferber novel, Show Boat is one of the most important musicals in the cannon. Its musical
integration into the plot laid the foundation for modern musical theatre. Ferber did not initially
want her work adapted, but after Florence Ziegfeld decided to produce the show and build a new
theatre for its premiere, Ferber allowed the rights for her work. Opening on December 27, 1927,
Show Boat had unparallel critical and commercial success. Kern then composed Sweet Adeline
(1929), The Cat and the Fiddle (1931) with Otto Harbach, Music in the Air (1932) with Oscar
Hammerstein II, and Roberta (1933), which featured “Smoke Gets In Your Eyes” and starred
Bob Hope. Kern moved to Hollywood in 1934 and found little fame but considerable monetary
success. He only returned to New York for his new work Very Warm for May (1939) with
Oscar Hammerstein II and the revival of Show Boat in 1945. While in New York for the revival,
Kern was working on a score about Annie Oakley; the project would eventually become Berlin’s
Annie Get Your Gun. However, while working on the project, Jerome Kern died of heart attack on November 11, 1945.

**Kidd, Michael**

Michael Kidd (Choreographer/Director) was born Milton Greenwald in New York, NY on August 12, 1919. Like most dancers, Kidd took dance lessons at an early age, and he focused particularly on ballet. In his teens, Kidd received recognition as a ballet soloist for such companies as Ballet Caravan and the Eugene Loring Dancers, and from 1942-1947, he was a principal dancer with Ballet Theatre, eventually performing as a principal on Broadway in Jerome Robbin’s *Fancy Free* (1944). Kidd transitioned to a Broadway choreographer with *Finian’s Rainbow* (1947), for which he won his first Tony Award, and he then continued to choreograph on Broadway with *Hold It!* (1948), *Love Life* (1948), and *Arms and the Girl* (1950). Know for his physical and athletic movement, Kidd’s most important work came in the 1950s. He won his second Tony Award for *Guys and Dolls* (1950), which featured the now famous “Crapshooters Dance,” and he choreographed *Can-Can* (1953), which featured the Montmartre dances and the Garden of Eden Ballet. *Can-Can* earned Kidd his third Tony Award, catapulting him into an elite group of Broadway choreographers and making him one of the most sought-after choreographers in New York.

Kidd’s next project was musical *L’il Abner* (1956), which was his first venture as producer, director, and choreographer. Other notable but less important projects were *Destroy Rides Again* (1959); *Wildcat* (1960), which starred Lucille Ball; *Subways are for Sleeping* (1961); *Here’s Love* (1963); *Ben Franklin in Paris* (1964); *Skyscraper* (1965); *The Rothschilds* (1970); *Cyrano* (1973); the revival of *Good News* (1974); and the revival of *The Music Man* (1980). Kidd used his Broadway acclaim to become a success choreographer in Hollywood.
movie musicals. Kidd choreographed *Where’s Charley?* (1952), *The Band Wagon* (1953), and the acclaimed film version of *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1954). Other film choreography projects include *Guys and Dolls* (1955); *Star!* (1968); *Hello, Dolly!* (1969), which was directed by Gene Kelly and starred Barbara Streisand. In later years, Kidd came out of retirement to choreograph *The Goodbye Girl* (1993) and to work with his good friend Julie Andrews on the television production of *On Golden Pond* (2001). Kidd currently resides in New York City.

*Kirkwood, James*

James Kirkwood (Librettist) was born in Hollywood, California on August 22, 1924. To Kirkwood, acting was the family business; his father James was a famous actor in silent movies and his mother was the stage actress, Lila Lee. With such a legacy, Kirkwood tried his hand at acting as well. He moved to New York City where he appeared on stage in *Junior Miss* (1941), *Small Wonder* (1948) and *Welcome Darlings* (1948). He then moved back to Hollywood and acted in the films *Oh God, Book II* (1980) and *Mommie Dearest* (1981). Even though Kirkwood had mild success as an actor, he was highly creative and tried other avenues of film and theatre in order to reach the acclaim that he so desperately desired.

When Michael Bennett was developing the musical that would eventually become *A Chorus Line* (1975), he hired Kirkwood and Nicholas Dante to write the book, Marvin Hamlish to compose the music, and Edward Kleban to write the lyrics. This project would become Kirkwood’s most successful venture, garnishing him with a Tony Award and a Pulitzer Prize for Drama. After *A Chorus Line*, Kirkwood’s career primarily focused on authorship. He wrote the stage plays *Unhealthy to be Unpleasant* (1965) and *Legends* (1986) and the books *There Must be a Pony* (1960), *Good Times/Bad Times* (1968), *P.S. Your Cat is Dead* (1972) and *Hit Me with a Rainbow* (1980). James Kirkwood died of AIDS in New York, NY on April 22, 1989.
Kleban, Edward

Edward Kleban (Composer/Lyricist) was born in New York, NY in 1939. His education includes the High School of Music and Art in New York City and a degree from Columbia University. While studying at Columbia, Kleban composed the musical for the *Variety Show of 1960* with Terrance McNally as lyricist. After graduation, Kleban worked as a record producer for Columbia Records during the company’s peak years in the 1960s, and he continued to compose on the side. Kleban’s first solo musical theatre project was *Gallery*; Kleban wrote the music and lyrics, and the project had a workshop at the Public Theatre.

However, Kleban’s greatest Broadway contribution is his work on Michael Bennett’s *A Chorus Line* (1975). A new concept musical about the lives of Broadway “gypsy” dancers, famed choreographer/director Michael Bennett asked James Kirkwood and Nicholas Dante to write the book, Marvin Hamlisch to write the music, and Kleban to write the lyrics. Working intimately with Bennett, Kleban, Hamlisch, and the creative team won a Tony Award, a Pulitzer Prize for Drama, a Drama Desk, and an Obie Award for their work. Kleban teamed again with Bennett for Kleban’s original work *Scandals*, but the musical was never finished. Kleban was also a member of Lehman Engel’s BMI Musical Theatre Workshops where he taught workshops on songwriting. While living in New York City, Edward Kleban died of mouth cancer in 1987. The Broadway musical *A Class Act* (2001) is based on Kleban’s life. The music from *A Class Act* is original Kleban material from past shows and trunk songs, where Kleban is sole composer and lyricist.
Knighton, Nan

Nan Knighton (Librettist/Lyricist) studied at Harvard University and then eventually Sarah Lawrence University where she received a B.A. degree. She continued her graduate education at Boston University where she studied with novelist John Barth and poet Anne Sexton. Know primarily as a lyricist, Knighton formed a partnership with composer Frank Wildhorn. Their first collaboration was with the musical adaptation of *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (1997), which opened to vastly mixed reviews. The project was also the first Broadway musical in recent years to close and reopen three separate times—each version having significant rewrites and revisions. However, the greatest critical praise and commercial success for the work came in *Pimpernel’s* two national tours. Knighton’s following work was creating the libretto for the stage adaptation of *Saturday Night Fever* (1999). Her current project is writing the libretto and the lyrics for Wildhorn’s *Camille Claudel*, which is scheduled to open in 2006.

Knighton has also collaborated with composers Jonathan Larson, Lindsey Nassif, and Howard Marren on several smaller projects, and she has written an original musical with Howard Marren called *Snapshots*, which had a stage reading at the Manhattan Theatre Club. In addition, leading Broadway stars have performed Knighton’s two successful cabarets: *Nan Knighton at Eighty Eights* and *Storybook: The Songs of Nan Knighton*. Nan Knighton serves as an adjudicator for The Kleban Foundation Award and The Young Playwrights Festival, and she currently resides in New York City.

Koehler, Ted

Ted Koehler (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Washington, D.C on July 14, 1894. Even as a young man making a living as a photographer, Koehler had an interest in the theatrical and
musical world. After quitting his photography career, Koehler played the piano for silent film houses, but he quickly moved to New York and began writing for vaudeville and eventually Broadway. At the beginning of his career, Koehler composed songs for some of the biggest revues in New York City: Earl Carroll Vanities (1930 and 1932), 9:15 Revue (1931), Cotton Club Parade (1931), Americana (1932), and Say When (1934).

Following the trend of many New York songwriters, Koehler moved to Hollywood, and worked with some of the greatest composers of the day. He teamed with composers Harold Arlen, Duke Ellington, Sammy Fain, Jay Gorney, Ray Henderson, Burton Lane, Jimmy McHugh, and Harry Warren on such popular songs as “I’ve Got the Whole World on a String,” “Let’s Fall in Love,” “Animal Crackers in My Soup,” “Stormy Weather,” “Get Happy,” “Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea,” “Tess’s Torch Song,” “I Can’t Face the Music,” and “Lovely Lady.” During his prolific time in Hollywood, Koehler’s songs were featured in the popular films: Manhattan Parade (1932), Let’s Fall in Love (1933), Happy Go Lucky (1936), The King and the Chorus Girl (1937), Springtime in the Rockies (1937), Up in Arms (1944), The Earl Carroll Sketchbook (1946), and Summer Stock (1950). Ted Koehler died in Santa Monica, California on January 17, 1973.

**Kretzmer, Herbert**

Herbert Kretzmer (Lyricist) was born in Kroonstad, Orange Free State, South Africa on October 5, 1925. Kretzmer graduated from Kroonstad High School and then finally at the Rhodes University in Grahamstown. Unable to decide between a life as a journalist or a songwriter, Kretzmer chose to pursue both. As a young man, he had a very successful career writing for cinema reels and documentary films, but his family moved to Europe after World War II and then to London in 1954. Kretzmer’s first journalism job was writing for the popular
Daily Sketch in London. He then moved on to the Sunday Dispatch, which is also in London, and he ultimately became the drama critic for London’s esteemed Daily Express for over eighteen years. At the same time, Kretzmer wrote television criticism for the Daily Mail in London for which he won a Philips Industrial Award for Critic of the Year.

Even while Kretzmer was working as a prolific journalist with multiple papers, he frequently wrote songs for the satirical British television series That Was The Week That Was (1962). During this time, his most popular songs were “Goodness Gracious Me,” which Peter Sellers and Sophia Loren performed; “Yesterday When I Was Young,” for which Kretzmer won an ASCAP Award; and “She,” for which he received a gold record. Over time, Kretzmer also wrote for the stage with book and lyrics for Our Man Crichton (1964) at the Shaftsbury Theatre and lyrics for The Four Musketeers at the Drury Lane Theatre. He also collaborated on lyrics for Anthony Newley’s film Can Heironymous Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness? (1969). Producer Cameron Mackintosh asked Kretzmer to translate the original French lyrics into English for Mackintosh’s hit musical Les Misérables (1987). Kretzmer translation premiered on the West End and then eventually on Broadway. The show and Kretzmer’s translation had tremendous success, for which Kretzmer won a Tony and Grammy Award. He currently resides in London, England.

**Lane, Burton**

Burton Lane (Composer/Lyricist) was born in New York, NY on February 2, 1912. Dropping out of high school to pursue his music career, Lane signed a contract with the Remick Music Company. When Lane was seventeen, he met George and Ira Gershwin who encouraged Lane in his career after hearing his popular song “Heigh-Ho, The Gang’s All Here.” At the same
time, Ira Gershwin then introduced Lane to E. Y. (Yip) Harburg—the man with whom he would later form a famous collaboration.

Lane’s early career was in musical revues. He wrote two songs for Three’s a Crowd (1930) with Howard Dietz, one song for The Third Little Show (1931) with Harold Adamson, and the score for the ninth edition of the Earl Carroll Vanities (1931). Collaborating again with Adamson, the team wrote “Everything I Have is Yours” for the movie musical Dancing Lady (1933), which introduced Frances Gumm—an eleven-year-old girl who would later become Judy Garland. Lane then joined with Yip Harburg, and they wrote the score to the Broadway show Hold Onto Your Hats (1940), which starred Al Jolson. Returning to musical revues, Lane wrote the score to Laughing Room Only (1944), which was supposed to be a partnership with Al Dublin, but Dublin died before the project was completed. And even though Lane developed most of the score, he still credited Dublin for his original ideas. Lane joined with Yip Harburg for the popular Broadway show Finian’s Rainbow (1946) and then with Alan Jay Lerner for the film Royal Wedding (1951), which featured the Oscar nominated song “Too Late Now.” Lane continued his collaboration with Lerner for the Broadway hit On A Clear Day You Can See Forever (1963), which won a Grammy for Best Original Cast Album, and also for the Broadway flop Carmelina (1980). In his later years, Lane served on the Board of Directors for the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) for three terms. Burton Lane died in New York on January 5, 1997.

Larson, Jonathan

Jonathan Larson (Composer/Librettist/Lyricist) was born in White Plains, NY on February 4, 1960. As a child, Larson’s neighborhood friend Matt O’Grady had a profound impact on Larson’s life. The two boys grew up sharing an interest in theatre and music, and the
two boys even entered singing competitions together and participated in high school theatre. Larson credits O’Grady with inspiring Larson’s characters Angel in Rent (1996) and Michael in tick...tick...BOOM! (2001). While studying at Adelphi University in Long Island, NY, Larson composed his first musical entitled sacrimalimmorality with David Armstrong. This first show was eventually retooled and rechristened Saved and had a brief New York run.

During his college years, Larson also composed Suburbia (1982), which was based on Orwell’s novel 1984, and the monologue 30/90, which earned its title because Larson would eventually turn thirty in 1990. An autobiographical piece about Larson and his real-life friends, 30/90 intrigued Larson, and he changed his uniquely titled show to Boho Days and then finally to tick...tick...BOOM!. However, still early in his career, Larson composed for other projects that were more fiscally rewarding. He wrote songs for J. P. Morgan Saves the Nation and some of the most popular children’s shows in America: Sesame Street, Lamb Chops Play A-Long, the children’s book cassettes for An American Tail and The Land Before Time, and the children’s video Away We Go!

In the early nineties, Larson received the opportunity to workshop his long-conceived project that would eventually become Rent (1996). A modern interpretation of Puccini’s opera La Boheme (1895), Rent re-imagines the famous La Boheme characters and places them in New York City battling life in a contemporary urban setting and the rising AIDS epidemic. At the New York Theatre Workshop, the show had a workshop in 1993 and then a three-month studio production in 1994. Rent finally opened off-Broadway on January 26, 1996, and it quickly transferred to Broadway on April 29, 1996. On top of numerous praise and accolades, Rent won the Tony Awards for Best Score, Best Book, and Best Musical and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Unfortunately, Jonathan Larson died of an aortic aneurysm on January 25, 1996—the day before
the show’s first Broadway preview. Several years later, Larson’s father found the score to tick…tick…BOOM!, and the show had a substantial off-Broadway life. In addition, Larson’s Suburbia has had a resurgence and was produced at Playwright’s Horizons.

**Lehar, Franz**

Franz Lehar (Composer) was born in Komaron, Hungary on April 30, 1870. The eldest son of the Austro-Hungarian army bandmaster, Lehar attended the Prague Conservatoire of Music and studied violin and composition, where his teachers ultimately encouraged him to focus on composition. After graduation, Lehar joined his father’s orchestra as a violinist, and he eventually became the youngest bandmaster for the Austro-Hungarian orchestra at twenty years old. While serving as conductor, Lehar teamed with naval officer Felix Falzari, and they collaborated on Lehar’s first opera *Kukuschka* (1898), which meet harsh criticism. After a short stint in the army, Lehar’s career rebounded in January 1902 when he compose the “Name Waltz” for Princess Metternich’s “Gold and Silver” Ball. His piece was incredibly successful, so Lehar left the army and received the distinguished musical position of Kapellmeister at the Theater an der Wien, where he composed *Wiener Frauen* (1902) and an operetta for the new Christmas season. During this period, Lehar also wrote *Der Rastelbinder* (1902)—an operetta for the chief rival of Wien, the Carltheater. With the success of this operetta, Lehar was able to resign from Theater an der Wien, and he became an independent composer.

Lehar’s next project was the most successful of his career. Translated into English as *The Merry Widow*, the operetta *Die lustige Witwe* (1905) had major mountings in Europe, Great Britain, and America throughout Lehar’s lifetime, and the show continues to be one of the most produced operettas in the world. Lehar took the fortune and fame from this show and composed three more successful operettas: *Eva* (1911), *Gypsy Love* (1910), and *The Count of Luxembourg*.
Several years later, Lehar met Richard Tauber—a young tenor whose voice inspired Lehar to compose *Frasquita* (1922), which premiere in Vienna. With praise for both Lehar and Tauber, Lehar went on to compose six more operettas that featured Tauber in leading roles: *Paganini* (1925), *The Czarevitch* (1926), *Frederica* (1928), *The Land of Smiles* (1929), *Schon ist die Welt* (1931), and *Giuditta* (1934). At his retirement, Lehar created his own publishing house—Glocken Verlag—that licensed and controlled all of his works. In 1935, he incorporated Glocken Verlag and because of this venture, Lehar became of the richest musicians in Europe. Franz Lehar died in Bad Ischl on October 24, 1948.

**Leiber, Jerry**

Jerry Leiber (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Baltimore, Maryland on April 25, 1933. Even though Leiber had very little musical influence in his childhood, he always had a fascination with music. At age seventeen, Leiber met Mike Stoller while studying at Los Angeles City College. The two men became friends and discovered a mutual interest in “boogie-woogie” and rhythm and blues, and they formed a collaborative team that would last nearly fifty-years and produces numerous “Top Forty” popular music hits. After several failed attempts, the two men wrote “Real Ugly Woman” in 1950. Jimmy Witherspoon recorded the song and started the team on their road to success. In 1952 they had additional luck when they composed “Hard Times” for Charles Brown and “Kansas City” for Little Willie Littlefield. (“Kansas City” later became a number one single for Wilbert Harrison in 1959.) But in 1953 Leiber and Stoller wrote “Hound Dog” for Big Mama Thornton, which Elvis Presley later recorded in 1956. This song crowded Elvis as the “King of Rock and Roll” and made Leiber and Stoller the “men behind [Elvis’s] magic.” Elvis continued his collaboration with Leiber and Stoller and recorded more than twenty of their songs, making them two of the most influential men in popular music.
Even though Elvis was perhaps the single most famous artist to sing Leiber and Stoller’s music, he was not the only singer that brought their songs fame. Leiber and Stoller wrote some of the most popular songs in 1950s and 1960s, which have become a part of the American lexicon. Examples of their most successful collaborations are The Coasters – “Yakety Yak,” “Charlie Brown,” and “Poison Ivy”; The Drifters – “On Broadway,” “Fools Fall in Love,” “There Goes My Baby,” “Dance With Me” and “Drip Drop”; The Clovers – “Love Potion #9”; Chuck Jackson – “I Keep Forgettin”; Ben E. King – “Stand by Me,” “Spanish Harlem,” and “I (Who Have Nothing)” ; and Dion DiMucci – “Ruby Baby.” Leiber and Stoller also created Spark Records in 1953 to produce and protect their music. And after their work gained momentum, Atlantic Records gave the team a special independent production deal in 1955. The men left Atlantic Records in 1960 and formed their own record label called Red Bird Records, and they produced the Shangri-Las who sang “Leader of the Pack,” the Dixie Cups who sang “Chapel of Love,” and Peggy Lee who sang Red Bird’s biggest hit “Is That All There Is.”

Both Leiber and Stoller were inducted into the Songwriter’s Hall of Fame in 1985, the Record Producer’s Hall of Fame in 1986, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987. And “Hound Dog” was admitted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1988. The team also received a Grammy Award for Peggy Lee’s “Is That All There Is” and for the Original Cast Album of Smokey Joe’s Café (1995)—an original Broadway revue based on their work. And they were awarded with the prestigious ASCAP Founder’s Award in 1991. Leiber and Stoller continue to have the most popular and influential artists perform their work. In more recent years, The Beatles, B.B. King, The Rolling Stones, The Beach Boys, The Everly Brothers, Johnny Mathis, Muddy Waters, Jimi Hendrix, Little Richard, Buddy Holly, Fats Domino, Edith Piaf, Bobby
Darin, Otis Redding, Aretha Franklin, Barbara Streisand, Tom Jones, and Luther Vandross have all recorded Leiber and Stoller’s songs.

**Lerner, Alan Jay**

Alan Jay Lerner (Lyricist/Librettist/Director) was born in New York City on August 31, 1918. His parents were the founders of the famous New York women’s specialty shop—The Lerner Shops, and at the age of eight, Lerner claimed that he would grow up to be a theatrical writer. To achieve this goal, he took piano lessons from an early age and studied at the Juilliard School of Music in his teens. He then studied at Harvard and wrote “Chance to Dream” for the famous Hasty Pudding shows, “From Me to You” for *Fair Enough* (1939) and material for *So Proudly We Hail* (1938). After graduation, Lerner worked as a radio-script writer where he produced over five hundred scripts in two years.

Lerner met Frederick Loewe when Loewe asked Lerner to collaborate on some of Lerner’s sketches and verses that he had contributed to “The Lambs Gambol” at the Lambs Theatrical Club. They took Lerner’s ideas and created the *Life of the Party* (1942) in under two weeks. Their partnership continued with *What’s Up* (1943), *The Day Before Spring* (1945), and *Brigadoon* (1947). Based on the Sir James M. Barrie’s work, *Brigadoon* was the team’s first success. Loewe then took a hiatus from his partnership with Lerner and wrote *Love Life* (1948), but the team then united again for *Paint Your Wagon* (1951). While the duo had received critical success for their work, they had yet to find true commercial success, so for their next project, Lerner wanted to adapt a work of literature that was already popular. The film producer Gabriel Pascal wanted to transform George Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion* (1914) into a musical, so the three men collaborated on the wildly popular *My Fair Lady* (1956), which starred Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews in the leading roles. Lerner and Loewe continued their wave of success with
Camelot (1960), which starred Richard Burton, Robert Goulet, and the now famous Julie Andrews. Unfortunately, because of “temperamental differences,” Lerner and Loewe ended their working relationship in 1962, but they reunited to composed four new songs for the stage version of their movie musical Gigi (1973); the show only ran three months. Even after his separation with Loewe, Lerner continued to write. He wrote On A Clear Day You Can See Forever (1965) and Carmelina (1979) with Burton Lane and Coco (1969) with Andre Previn, which was based Coco Chanel’s life and starred Katherine Hepburn in the title role. One of Lerner’s final and also unsuccessful projects was 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue (1976) with Leonard Bernstein.

Loesser, Frank

Frank Henry Loesser (Composer/Librettist/Lyricist) was born in New York City on June 29, 1910. Surrounded by music at an early age, Loesser’s father was a piano teacher, and his older brother eventually became a concert pianist. Loesser began studying piano as a toddler and wrote his first song called “The May Party” at age six. Lacking focus as a young man, Loesser left the City College of New York and held several odd jobs before finding his way into the music industry. With a William Schuman’s melody, Loesser published his first song “In Love with a Memory of You” in 1931. And Loesser found a permanent position as a singer and piano player at the Back Drop nightclub. Eventually, Loesser teamed with Irving Actmun, and they signed composition contracts with Universal Pictures. Loesser later moved to Paramount Pictures and collaborated with some of New York and Hollywood’s greatest contemporary composers and lyricists: Jimmy McHugh, Jule Styne, Burton Lane, and Arthur Schwartz. But even when Loesser joined the Army during World War II, he still continued to compose, and he
wrote “Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition,” which was his first song as composer and lyricist.

After the Army, Loesser returned to the states and teamed with Cy Feuer on a theatrical adaptation of Brandon Thomas’s farce Charley’s Aunt (1893). A Ray Bolger vehicle featuring the hit song “Once In Love With Amy,” Loesser’s project was eventually retitled Where’s Charley? (1948) and was remarkable successful. Loesser’s second theatrical venture was Guys and Dolls (1950) with Abe Burrows serving as librettist and Michael Kidd serving as choreographer. Based on Damon Runyon’s short stories, the musical focuses on the short story “The Idyll Of Miss Sarah Brown,” and the project made Loesser one of the most successful and prominent composers on Broadway. Several years later, a friend suggested that Loesser compose a musical based on Sidney Howard’s They Know What They Wanted. Writing the music, lyrics, and book, Loesser produced his “Broadway Opera” The Most Happy Fella (1956), and the show was one of the most successful Broadway operas since Porgy and Bess (1935). Starring Anthony Perkins in his first musical, Loesser’s next project, Greenwillow (1960), was not as well received. However, How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying (1961) not only brought Loesser commercial success, but it also garnished him with the 1961 Pulitzer Prize for Drama—the fourth musical to ever win this award. In addition, Broadway giants Jerry Ross and Richard Adler [The Pajama Game (1954)] and Meredith Willson [The Music Man (1957)] credit Loesser with launching and furthering their careers. Frank Loesser died on July 28, 1969.

Loewe, Fredrick

Frederick Loewe (Composer) was born in Berlin, Germany on June 10, 1904. Son of a famous Viennese tenor, Loewe began studying piano at the age of seven. During his childhood in Berlin, Loewe studied piano and composition with Eugene d’Albert, Emil Nikolaus von
Reznicek, and Ferruccio Busoni—who was also Kurt Weill’s teacher. At thirteen, Loewe became the youngest piano soloist in the Berlin Symphony, and at fifteen he wrote “Katrina,” which became one of the most popular songs in Europe at the time. Loewe immigrated to New York in 1924, but he had a difficult transition into American life and a difficult time learning English. Even though he began his American career playing the piano in Greenwich Village clubs, Loewe still had to take odd jobs like prospecting for gold. Eventually, Loewe found a job playing for the famous Lambs Club, which is where he met Dennis King. King liked Loewe’s work and had his song “Love Tiptoed Through My Heart” added to the revue Petticoat Fever (1935). With this success, Loewe teamed with Earle Crooker, and they composed the original musicals Salute to Spring (1935) and Great Lady (1937), which featured the very young dancer Jerome Robbins. However, Loewe could not find long-term success with his early musicals, and he continued to play for New York clubs and restaurants for many years.

Lerner met Frederick Loewe when Loewe asked Lerner to collaborate on some of Lerner’s sketches and verses that he had contributed to “The Lambs Gambol” at the Lambs Theatrical Club. They took Lerner’s ideas and created the Life of the Party (1942) in under two weeks. Their partnership continued with What’s Up (1943), The Day Before Spring (1945), and Brigadoon (1947). Based on the Sir James M. Barrie’s work, Brigadoon was the team’s first success. Loewe then took a hiatus from his partnership with Lerner and wrote Love Life (1948), but the team then united again for Paint Your Wagon (1951). While the duo had received critical success for their work, they had yet to find true commercial success, so for their next project, Lerner wanted to adapt a work of literature that was already popular. The film producer Gabriel Pascal wanted to transform George Bernard Shaw’s Pygmalion (1914) into a musical, so the three men collaborated on the wildly popular My Fair Lady (1956), which starred Rex Harrison.
and Julie Andrews in the leading roles. Lerner and Loewe continued their wave of success with *Camelot* (1960), which starred Richard Burton, Robert Goulet, and the now famous Julie Andrews. Unfortunately, because of “temperamental differences,” Lerner and Loewe ended their working relationship in 1962, but they reunited to composed four new songs for the stage version of their movie musical *Gigi* (1973); the show only ran three months.

**MacDermot, Galt**

Arthur Terence Galt MacDermot (Composer) was born in Montreal, Canada on December 18, 1928. The son of a school principal, MacDermot grew up in and around Toronto, Canada, where he eventually studied at Toronto’s Upper Canada College, but he soon left Toronto and earned his BA in English from Bishop’s University in 1950. When MacDermot’s father became the Canadian High Commissioner to South Africa. MacDermot then continued his studies at the University of Cape Town in South Africa with a BM in Music—focusing on organ, composition, and African drums. Returning to Montreal in 1954, MacDermot found jobs as a piano player for a local jazz club and as the organist-choirmaster for Westmount Baptist Church. During his time at the church, MacDermot teamed with James de B. Domville and Harry Garber on the score for McGill University’s *Red and White Revue: My Fur Lady* (1957). And MacDermot also released his original work called “African Waltz” that he composed during his time in Cape Town. This piece became immensely popular in the jazz world and earned MacDermot a Grammy Award for Best Jazz Instrumental Composition in 1961.

After a short stint in London, MacDermot moved to New York City and played piano with several R&B and studio groups. Galt also collaborated with James Rado and Gerome Ragni on *Hair* (1967). Featuring the famous 1960’s anthem “Aquarius,” the rock musical *Hair* became an international phenomenon but—surprisingly—never won any major awards. With John Guare
and Mel Shapiro, MacDermot’s second theatrical venture was a rock adaptation of William Shakespeare’s *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, which won critical praise but failed at the box office. MacDermot continued to write for the stage with Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and a country music version of Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*, but neither of these projects had any kind of commercial or critical success. Eventually, MacDermot found a flourishing career composing in other various musical genres. He wrote the scores to the films *Cotton Comes to Harlem* (1970), *Woman is Sweeter* (1975), *Rhinoceros* (1974), and *The Hopeless Romantic* (1970) and the ballets *La Novela*, *A Private Circus*, *Salome*, and *The Referee* (or *A Pre-Rock Dance Suite*). In addition, MacDermot composed the symphony *Incident at Turtle Rock*; the Anglican Liturgies *The Mass in F* and *Take This Bread*; and the chamber pieces *Wind Quartet* and *Ghetto Suite*. Later in his career, MacDermot wrote several other musicals: *Sun*, *Blondie*, *Corporation*, and *The Legend of Joan of Arc*, but he did not find success again until *The Human Comedy* (1983) and *The Special* (1985), which he composed with fellow Montreal writer Mike Gutwilling. MacDermot has also had his *The Thomas Hardy Songs* performed at Carnegie Hall, and he most recently contributed music to the revue *Time and the Wind* (1995).

**McHugh, Jimmy**

James Frances McHugh (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Boston, Massachusetts on July 10, 1894. After studying piano with his mother from an early age, McHugh attended St. John’s Preparatory School and then Holy Cross College where he majored in music. After graduating from college, McHugh worked for his father’s plumbing business until McHugh landed a job with the Boston Opera House as a rehearsal accompanist. He then made the transition to a song-plugger for the Boston office of Irving Berlin’s publishing company. McHugh moved to New York City in 1921 and began working as a songwriter for the *Cotton Club Revues*. With lyrics
by Gene Austin, McHugh eventually published his first hit song “When My Sugar Walks Down the Street” in 1924 and then “I Can’t Believe That You’re In Love With Me” with lyrics by Clarence Gaskell. Forming a long-term partnership, McHugh met Dorothy Fields and collaborated with her on “I Can’t Give You Anything But Love, Baby” for the revue Blackbirds of 1928, and they continued their successful collaboration for The Vanderbilt Revue (1930); Lew Leslie’s International Revue (1930), which featured “On The Sunny Side of the Street”; and the Chicago-based revue Clowns in Clover (1932).

The McHugh-Fields team then moved to Hollywood and wrote songs for such popular films as Singin’ the Blues (1931), Dinner at Eight (1933), Clowns in Clover (1933) and Every Night at Eight (1935) which featured “I Feel a Song Comin’ On” and “I’m in the Mood for Love.” After their initial film success, McHugh and Fields mutually decided to work his other collaborators. With Harold Adamson, McHugh wrote songs for the films Top of the Town (1937) and You’re a Sweetheart (1937), and then with Frank Loesser, McHugh wrote Buck Benny Rides Again (1940), which featured “Say It (Over and Over Again).” During World War II, McHugh and Adamson joined again for “Coming In On a Wing and a Prayer” which won a Presidential Certificate of Merit, and they wrote songs for the movie musical A Date with Judy (1948), which featured “It’s A Most Unusual Day.” In his later career, McHugh founded the Jimmy McHugh Polio Foundation, which is now known as the Jimmy McHugh Charities. And he was the President of the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors from 1950-1952, and he was the Director of ASCAP from 1961-1969. Jimmy McHugh died in Beverly Hills, California on May 22, 1969.
Nunn, Trevor

Trevor Robert Nunn (Director/Lyricist) was born in Ipswich on January 14, 1940. One of England’s most prominent directors, Nunn’s first major directing project was the new musical version of Around the World in 80 Days at the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry. Nunn eventually joined the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1964 as a resident director, and he became RSC’s Artistic Director in 1968, holding the position until 1986. While at the RSC, Nunn directed numerous award-winning plays and musicals. One of the most important works he directed early in his career was the musical adaptation of The Comedy of Errors (1976), which featured Gillian Lynne’s choreography and was one of the company’s biggest musical successes.

In 1980 Nunn directed Andrew Lloyd Webber’s new musical based on T.S. Eliot’s children’s book Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats (1939). Entitled Cats (1980), this project was Nunn’s first production in London’s famed West End and Nunn’s first venture as lyricist; he wrote additional lyrics to the show’s hit song “Memory.” With the success of Cats, Nunn soon became one of London’s most prominent musical theatre directors. He premiered three of Webber’s biggest and most popular musicals: Starlight Express (1984), Aspects of Love (1989), and Sunset Boulevard (1993)—successfully transferring every production to Broadway.

Cameron Mackintosh, the producer of Cats, also asked Nunn to produce and direct an English adaptation of the French musical Les Misérables (1985), which throughout the world has become one of the single most successful musicals of all time. Nunn then directed Tim Rice and ABBA’s musical Chess (1986) when the original director Michael Bennett died. This production had immense critical and commercial success in London, but it failed to reach Broadway critics and audiences. In addition, Nunn’s directorial film credits include the English hits Hedda (1975) and Lady Jane (1986). Since leaving the Royal Shakespeare Company, Nunn has worked all over
Europe and in America as a free-lance director. In recent years, his most notable productions have been the West End Revivals of Candide and Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Oklahoma!, which also transferred to Broadway.

**Porter, Cole**

Cole Porter (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Peru, Indiana on June 9, 1891. A natural born musician, Porter composed in his very early childhood and published “The Bobolink Waltz” at the age of ten. However, Porter’s prominent grandfather, C.O. Cole, wanted Porter to be a lawyer and offered him a large inheritance if he followed this career path. Focusing on legal studies, Porter attended the Worcester Academy in Massachusetts and Yale University. But while at Yale, Porter still continued to compose; Remick Music published Porter’s “Bridget” and Porter wrote the famous Yale fight songs: “Bingo Eli Yale” and “Yale Bulldog Song.” Upon entering the Harvard School of Law, the college dean convinced Porter’s grandfather that Porter should really be in the Harvard School of Music, so Porter finally began his formal music training there.

At the age of twenty-three, Porter helped to mount his first Broadway show, See America First (1916). After this success, Porter took a short vacation in France where he met Linda Lee Thomas. Porter asked his grandfather for the money to marry Thomas, but his grandfather denied him. Soon after, Porter met popular comedian and producer Raymond Hitchcock, and he asked Porter to write music for the third edition of Hitchy-Koo Revue (1919). For this revue, Porter wrote “An Old-Fashioned Garden,” which was his first hit. Porter took the royalty money from his song, returned to Paris, and married Linda Lee Thomas. While living in Paris, Porter studied harmony and counterpoint at the Schola Cantorum under the famed Vincent d’Indy. And Porter’s grandfather eventually died in 1923 and left Porter with a one million dollar inheritance.
Porter’s songs returned to New York when Porter wrote the score to John Murry Anderson’s Greenwich Village Follies of 1924, which featured the hit song “I’m in Love Again.” After hearing Porter’s work, producer E. Ray Goetz wanted Porter to write songs for his new show and even traveled to Paris to persuade him. Intrigued by the offer, Porter took on the project and wrote the musical Paris (1928), which featured the song “Let’s Misbehave.” From this point on, Porter became one of the most popular and prolific composers on Broadway. He wrote Fifty Million Frenchmen (1929) with Goetz; portions of Wake Up and Dream! (1929); The New Yorkers (1930), which featured “Love For Sale”; and The Gay Divorce (1932), which starred Fred Astaire singing “Night and Day.” Porter then created one his most popular and important works, Anything Goes (1934), when he was brought in as a last-minute replacement. P.G. Wodehouse and Guy Bolton were set to premiere their new musical about a shipwreck, but with those men out of the country and with a real shipwreck off the New Jersey coast, producers begged Porter to completely rework the musical; Anything Goes was the outcome. Porter followed with Jubilee (1935), which featured the song “Begin the Beguine,” and Red, Hot and Blue! (1936), which featured the song “It’s De-Lovely.”

When a horse bucked off Porter and landed on his legs, the theatre community feared that the accident would end Porter’s career. But despite his thirty-one operations during the next twenty years, Porter continued to compose musicals. After the accident, Porter wrote You Never Know (1938); Leave it to Me! (1938), which starred Mary Martin; DuBarry was a Lady (1939), which featured the song “Friendship”; Panama Hattie (1940); Let’s Face It! (1941); Something for the Boys (1943); and Mexican Hayride (1944). Arguably one of Porter’s greatest works, Kiss Me, Kate is the musical adaptation of Shakespeare’s Taming of the Shrew. Praised by both critics and New York audiences, the show featured numerous songs that are now musical theatre...
classics: “Another Op’nin, Another Show,” “Always True To You in My Fashion,”
“Wunderbar,” “Why Can’t You Behave,” and “I Hate Men.” Porter’s final shows were Out of
this World (1950); Can-Can (1953), which starred Gwen Verdon; and Silk Stockings (1955).
Cole Porter died during surgery for a kidney stone in Santa Monica, California on October 15,
1964.

Rado, James

James Rado (Lyricist/Librettist) was born James Radomski—adapting Rado as his stage
name. He was born in Washington, D.C. in 1932 and began his theatrical life as a childhood
actor. Moving to New York City, he appeared in minor roles in several Broadway shows, but he
eventually originated the role of Richard the Lionhearted in William Goldman’s The Lion in
Winter (1966). During rehearsals for the off-Broadway, anti-capital punishment show Hang
Your Head and Die (1964), Rado became friends with Gerome Ragni. After the government
closed Hang Your Head and Die with only one performance, Rado and Ragni both traveled to
Chicago and were cast in The Knack (1964). During this time, they joined with the Siegel-
Schwall Blues band in order to recreate Hang Your Head and Die, but Rado and Ragni had to
leave Chicago before they finished the project.

Back in New York, Rado and Ragni began working on a new musical about the “hippie
generation”; the project was called Hair (1967). Their first draft included lyrics for thirteen
songs and a full libretto, which they showed to producer Nat Shapiro who united the men with
composer Galt MacDermot. Joseph Papp premiered the show at his Public Theatre with Ragni
playing Berger, Rado playing Claude, and MacDermot playing a phony cop. During the run,
Rado was offered the starring role in the Broadway musical Hallelujah Baby (1967), but he
turned down the project to continue Hair. Michael Butler bought the rights to produce Hair and
brought on Broadway director Tom O’Horgan to the creative team. With Ragni and Rado in their original roles and MacDermot serving as musical director, Hair opened off-Broadway and then quickly moved to Broadway in April 1968 to a great deal of success. Rado and Ragni toured the country and continued to play their leading roles, including a Los Angeles production where they included the famous nude scene. Rado was also a leading force behind the movie version of Hair, and he now holds the principal licensing rights.

**Ragni, Gerome**

Gerome Bernard Ragni (Lyricist/Librettist) was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on September 11, 1942. Showing an early interest in visual art, Ragni’s family thought he would be a painter. But while attending Georgetown University and the Catholic School of America, Ragni studied acting and drama with Philip Burton. After moving to New York, Ragni was cast in War, the Broadway production of Hamlet (1964) with Richard Burton, and the film version of Hamlet. During rehearsals for the off-Broadway, anti-capital punishment show Hang Your Head and Die (1964), Rado became friends with Gerome Ragni. After the government closed Hang Your Head and Die with only one performance, Rado and Ragni both traveled to Chicago and were cast in The Knack (1964). During this time, they joined with the Siegel-Schwall Blues band in order to recreate Hang Your Head and Die, but Rado and Ragni had to leave Chicago before they finished the project.

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Rado was offered the starring role in the Broadway musical *Hallelujah Baby* (1967), but he turned down the project to continue *Hair*. Michael Butler bought the rights to produce *Hair* and brought on Broadway director Tom O’Horgan to the creative team. With Ragni and Rado in their original roles and MacDermot serving as musical director, *Hair* opened off-Broadway and then quickly moved to Broadway in April 1968 to a great deal of success. Rado and Ragni toured the country and continued to play their leading roles, including a Los Angeles production where they included the famous nude scene.

Ragni’s next musical was *Dude, The Highway Life* (1972) with music by MacDermot, but the show closed after only sixteen performances. Ragni and Rado collaborated again on an unsuccessful off-Broadway show called *Jack Sound and His Dog Star Blowing His Final Trumpet on the Day of Doom* (1977), which starred Ragni and Rado as cops. The men united again with MacDermot on the new musical *Sun* (1990), but the project dissolved into a three-disc recording. At the end of his life, Ragni was working on the new musical *Rainbow Rainbeam Radio Roadshow: the Ghost of Vietnam*, which was sequel to *Hair*. However, Ragni died of cancer before the project was completed on July 10, 1991.

**Rice, Tim**

Timothy Miles Bindon Rice (Lyricist/ Librettist) was born in Amersham, United Kingdom on November 10, 1944. Early in his theatrical career, Rice formed a connection with composer Andrew Lloyd Webber, and they first began collaborating on what would eventually become *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat* (1968). Written as a cantata—a sung-through text without dialogue, the Biblically based show was originally only fifty minutes long, but the creative team expanded the musical once the show gained popularity. Using the Bible to spark ideas, Rice and Webber teamed again on *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1972)—a “Rock Opera”
based on the life of Jesus Christ. Starting out as merely a cast recording, this musical was an unbelievable success and is often credited as starting the rock opera genre.

Rice and Webber’s third musical was the West End and Broadway sensation Evita (1978), which was based on the life of Argentina’s famous political figure Eva Peron. After a long hiatus, Rice’s next musical venture was Chess (1986) with music composed by Bjorn Ulvaeus and Benny Anderson of the popular musical group ABBA. Chess had a significant London following, but the show failed to attract attention in New York. After Chess, Rice wrote his first truly unsuccessful musical—an English adaptation of the French/Canadian musical Starmania, which was also titled Tycoon for recording purposes.

Later in his career, Rice’s success came when he formed a long-lasting relationship with the Walt Disney Corporation. His first project with the company was writing lyrics for their new cartoon movie musical Aladdin (1992), and with composer Alan Menken, he and Rice won an Academy Award for their song “A Whole New World.” When the Disney Corporation opened their first Broadway show—a stage version of their cartoon movie Beauty and the Beast (1991), they asked Rice to take over for the late Howard Ashman and compose six new songs with Menken for the show’s transfer to Broadway. Disney also hired Rice to collaborate with Elton John on another cartoon musical The Lion King (1994). When this project transferred to Broadway, Disney invited Rice to write additional material. Following The Lion King’s immense Broadway success, Rice and Elton John developed the music to Disney’s Aida (2000), which is a modern retelling of Verdi’s opera. In addition to his work with Disney, Rice also won an Academy Award for he and Webber’s song “You Must Love Me,” which they wrote for the movie version of Evita in 1996. With several reported projects in development, Rice continues to be a major creative force in both London and New York.
Robbins, Jerome

Jerome Robbins (Choreographer/Director/Librettist) born Jerome Rabinowitz in Weehauken, New Jersey on October 11, 1918. Robbins started dancing at an incredibly young age and in his early teens earned a place at the New York Ballet Theatre. On the New York stage, he was a dancer in the chorus of Greek Lady (1938), Stars in Your Eyes (1939), and The Straw Hat Revue (1939), but Robbins’s passion was choreography. So after many seasons at the New York Ballet Theatre, Robbins had the opportunity to premiere his original ballet Fancy Free (1944), with Leonard Bernstein’s original music. The ballet was so popular that Robbins was able to adapt the piece into his first Broadway musical On the Town (1944) with book and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, which started Robbins on the path to becoming one of the greatest Broadway choreographers of the twentieth century.

Robbins found various levels of success with his following choreographic projects: Billion Dollar Baby (1945), Look, Ma, I’m Dancin’ (1948), Miss Liberty (1949), and Call Me Madam (1950), but the first high point in Robbins’s career was the silent film parody High Button Shoes (1947), for which he won his first Tony Award for Choreography. Robbins also choreographed the famous ballet “The Small House of Uncle Thomas” in Rodgers and Hammerstein’s The King and I (1951), and Robbins’s first directing credit was George Abbott The Pajama Game (1954) with choreography by a young Bob Fosse. As both director and choreographer, Robbins developed such musical theatre classics as Peter Pan (1954) and Bells are Ringing (1956), which paved the way for Robbins’s next project, West Side Story (1957). A new musical version of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, creating West Side Story (1957) was a six-year process with librettist Arthur Laurents, lyricist Stephen Sondheim, and composer Leonard Bernstein. As director and choreographer, Jerome Robbins interpolated ballet and a
musical story in an aggressive style unlike Broadway had ever seen. Robbins continued with the Ethel Merman vehicle Gypsy (1959) and then the project that was “nearest to Robbins’s heart,” Fiddler on the Roof (1964), which was based on Sholom Aleichem’s collection of short stories Tevye’s Daughters. With music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, a libretto by Joseph Stein, and direction and choreography by Jerome Robbins, Fiddler on the Roof was one of the most acclaimed musicals of the decade and won the Tony Awards for Best Direction and Choreography. Robbins also co-directed Funny Girl (1964), co-directed and choreographed the film version of West Side Story (1961), and created the choreography for the movie version of The King and I (1956). Having conquered Broadway, Robbins then returned to the ballet world and spent the next twenty-five years choreographing ballets around the world until he created Jerome Robbins’ Broadway (1989)—a musical revue featuring his greatest Broadway choreography. Robbins died in New York City on July 29, 1998.

Robin, Leo

Leo Robin (Lyricist) was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on April 6, 1900. He studied law at the University of Pittsburgh and drama at Carnegie Technical University. After his formal education, Robin was a publicity agent, a newspaper reporter, and a social worker until he moved to New York City to peruse his playwriting dreams. Robin’s first collaboration was with composer Richard Myers on the hit song “Looking Around,” which sparked Robin in his songwriting career and placed his work in the Broadway revues By The Way (1926), Bubbling Over (1926), and Allez-oop (1927.) With Clifford Grey, Robins was the co-lyricist for Hit the Deck (1927) and then the sole lyricist for Just Fancy (1927), Judy (1927), and Hello Yourself (1928). He then joined with Ralph Rainger on their popular song “I’ll Take an Option on You,”
which was put into the Broadway revue *Tattle Tales* (1933); with this success Robin and Rainger formed a long lasting collaborative team.

Robin and Rainger moved to Hollywood, and Paramount Studios hired them to compose the scores for the popular films *She Done Him Wrong* (1933), *She Loves Me Not* (1934), *Shoot the Works* (1934), *The Big Broadcast of 1937* (1936), *The Big Broadcast of 1939* (1938), *Waikiki Wedding* (1937), and *Paris Honeymoon* (1939). During this time, they even won an Academy Award in 1938 for their song “Thanks for the Memory,” which became Bob Hope’s signature song. But after money disputes, the team left Paramount in 1939 and joined Twentieth Century Fox where they wrote “Beyond the Blue Horizon,” “I Don’t Want to Make History, I Just Want to Make Love,” “A Rhyme for Love,” “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Love,” “With Every Breath I Take,” and “Blue Hawaii.” When Ralph Rainger died in 1942, Robin continued to write songs; he collaborated with composers Harold Arlen for “Hooray for Love” and “For Every Man There’s A Woman,” Jerome Kern for “In Love In Vain,” Arthur Schwartz for “A Gal in Calico” and “A Rainy Night in Rio,” and Harry Warren for “The Lady in the Tutti Frutti Hat” and “Zing a Little Zong.” Later in his career, Robin returned to Broadway and teamed with composer Jule Styne on *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1949), which featured the songs “A Little Girl from Little Rock” and “Diamonds are a Girl’s Best Friend.” Following that, Robin immediately began collaborating with Sigmund Romberg on *The Girl in the Pink Tights* (1954), but the project was not completed until several years later because Romberg died during production. Robin then joined with Styne again on the movie musical *My Sister Eileen* (1955), and Robin’s last and also unsuccessful project was the sequel to *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* called *Lorelei (Gentlemen Still Prefer Blondes)* (1974). Robin died of heart failure in Woodland, California on December 29, 1984.
Richard Rodgers (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born in Hammels Station, Long Island on June 28, 1902. Rodgers had a very musical childhood; his mother was a classical pianist, and his father was a trained baritone. Rodgers even told stories of his family holding concerts in their New York apartment. Rodgers began playing his own piano melodies at the age of four, and at age of six, he was playing with both hands. As a child and young man, Rodgers would regularly attend Broadway musicals, and Jerome Kern was his childhood hero. During his summers, Rodgers attended Camp Wigwam in Maine, which is where he wrote his first song at the age of fourteen, “Campfire Days.” Rodger’s oldest brother, Mortimer, was a member of a social group called the Akron Club, and when the group created its own original musical comedy—One Minute Please (1917), they hired Rodgers to write it. With this show’s success, another social club commissioned Rodgers to write their original musical comedy, Up Stage and Down (1918), which was another local favorite.

Rodgers met Lorenz Hart in 1918 while they were both studying at Columbia University where they wrote “Any Old Place with You” that would eventually become their first song in a Broadway musical; the show was A Lovely Romeo (1919). But while Rodgers and Hart were both still attending Columbia, they composed their first complete score called Fly With Me, and it was sung in a Columbian Variety Show. Producer, Lew Fields, saw this show and bought twelve songs for his new revue Poor Little Ritz Girl (1920). This early success allowed Rodgers and Hart to write for Broadway variety shows even while Rodgers finished his education.

After their formal schooling, Rodgers and Hart joined with Herbert Fields to compose The Melody Man (1924) for Lew Fields, and under the pen name Herbert Richard Lorenz, the team added numbers to the Garrick Gaieties (1925), which featured their song “Manhattan.” The
team collaborated on three Broadway shows that each had increasing success: the operetta
Dearest Enemy (1925), The Girl Friend (1926), and Peggy Ann (1926), which was based on
Marie Dressler’s musical Tillie’s Nightmare (1910). Herbert Fields, Rodgers, and Hart had the
idea to adapt a Mark Twain story, but they could not find a producer. Six years later when the
show was finally mounted, the team had its first big hit with A Connecticut Yankee in King
Arthur’s Court (1927), which starred Vivienne Segal and featured the song “Thou Swell.”

However, after their first great Broadway achievement, the team had several trouble shows.
She’s My Baby (1928), Present Arms (1928), and Chee-Chee (1928) were all extreme box office
failures, and Chee-Chee only ran 31 performances. But Rodgers and Hart continued to
compose, and the songwriters had better success with Spring is Here (1929), which featured
“With a Song in My Heart”; Heads Up (1929), which featured newcomer Ray Bolger; Simple
Simon (1930), which featured Ruth Etting signing “Ten Cents a Dance”; and America’s
Sweethearts (1931).

Rodgers and Hart followed the trend of Broadway songwriters and moved to Hollywood.
But after very little success during their three years in California, they moved back to New York
and wrote Jumbo (1935), On Your Toes (1936), which featured George Balanchine’s
choreography in “Slaughter on Tenth Avenue”; Babes in Arms (1937), which featured “My
Funny Valentine” and “Johnny One Note”; I’d Rather Be Right (1937), which featured George
M. Cohan as President Franklin D. Roosevelt; I Married an Angel (1938); The Boys from
Syracuse (1938), which was based on Shakespeare’s Comedy of Errors; Too Many Girls (1939);
Pal Joey (1940), which starred Gene Kelly; Higher and Higher (1940); and By Jupiter (1942).
Towards the end of Rodgers and Hart’s collaboration, Hart began disappearing for weeks at a time, and he was rumored to have an alcohol addiction—much to Rodgers’s personal and professional frustration.

Richard Rodgers privately approached Hammerstein in late 1941 and asked Hammerstein if he could consider working with Rodgers if Rodgers’s partnership with lyricist Lorenz Hart disintegrated. When Rodgers asked Hart to adapt Lynn Rigg’s book Green Grow the Lilacs, Hart declined, and Rodgers joined Hammerstein. The two began one of the most famous and successful partnerships in musical theatre history. The Green Grow the Lilacs project eventually became the team’s first musical Oklahoma!, and when it opened on March 31, 1943, it became the longest running show on Broadway until 1956 with My Fair Lady. In addition to being popular, Oklahoma! is also important to musical theatre history since it breaks free of many musical theatre traditions and since it is credited as the first time that dance advances the plot.

Directly following Oklahoma!, Rodgers and Hammerstein took a hiatus from their partnership. For the final time, Rodgers returned to work with Hart on their project A Connecticut Yankee (1943). But after Hart died in 1943, Rodgers and Hammerstein reunited and wrote Carousel (1945) based on Ferenc Molnar’s play Liliom (1921). The song “If I Loved You” from Carousel is another milestone in history since many critics credit this song as the first example of perfect scene and song integration. But in addition to being important, Carousel was also extremely popular. After it opened, Carousel and Oklahoma! ran directly across the street from each other, and Carousel cemented Rodgers and Hammerstein as a theatrical dynasty. Over the following fourteen years, Rodgers and Hammerstein created and produced a new musical almost every other year: Allegro (1947), which was Agnes de Mille’s directorial debut; South
Pacific (1949), which featured the controversial song “You Have to Be Carefully Taught” and became the second musical to win the Pulitzer Prize; The King and I (1951), which starred Gertrude Lawrence who asked the team to write the show for her; Me and Juliet (1953), which featured Hammerstein’s original libretto; Pipe Dream (1955), which was a musical version of John Steinbeck’s book Sweet Thursday; Flower Drum Song (1958), which featured a story about Asian-Americans; and The Sound of Music (1959), which was based on the German film The Trapp Family Singers. Rodger’s and Hammerstein also encouraged and helped create the film versions of their work, and their films were often on the cutting edge of film technology. The movie version of The Sound of Music was voted one of the top twenty-five movies of twentieth century.

After Hammerstein’s death during the movie production of The Sound Of Music (1965), Rodgers continued to write with other collaborators, and he also wrote independently. He composed his first solo score called No Strings (1962), and he collaborated with Martin Charnin on the scores for Two by Two (1970) and I Remember Mama (1979). Rodgers also collaborated with Stephen Sondheim on Do I Hear A Waltz? (1965) and with Sheldon Harnick on their short-lived musical Rex (1976). Richard Rodgers died in New York on December 30, 1979.

**Rome, Harold**

Harold Jacob Rome (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born in Hartford, Connecticut on May 27, 1908. As a young man, Rome worked as a summer-camp officer and as an architectural draftsman and did not discover his passion for music until he contributed to the song “Sing Me A Song with Social Significance” for an amateur musical revue Pins and Needles (1937). Soon after, Rome added songs to the professionally produced revue Sing Out the News (1938), which featured his hit song “Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones,” and he added material to the army revues.
Stars and Stripes (1943) and Call Me Mister (1946), which featured “South America, Take it Away.” With the success of Call Me Mister, Rome wrote the book to the musical That’s The Ticket (1948), which featured “The Money Song” and was scheduled to open on Broadway, but the production closed during out-of-town tryouts.

Despite this setback, Rome’s next musical Wish You Were Here (1952), which was about summer camp love and had a swimming pool on stage, was a Broadway success. Rome followed with Fanny (1954) and Destry Rides Again (1959), which were both well received on Broadway. But Rome’s I Can Get It For You Wholesale (1962) was one of the biggest flops of the 1962 season. Trying to regain his career’s momentum, Rome composed his own English version of the French revue La Grosse Valise (1965), but it too was significantly unsuccessful. Rome failed to find an audience again with his musical about South African-Jews called The Zulu and the Zayda (1965). But finally Rome wrote Scarlet (1970)—based on the famous novel Gone with the Wind—for a Japanese audience, and this musical was wildly successful in Japan. However, the musical closed before it ever reached New York. Rome died in New York, NY on October 23, 1994.

**Ross, Adrian**

Adrian Ross (Lyricist) was born Arthur Reed Ropes in Lewisham, London on December 23, 1859. Showing an early interest in poetry and history, Ross studied at King’s College in Cambridge University where he received the Chancellor’s Medal for Verse and a degree in history. Upon graduation, Ross became a history lecturer at Cambridge, edited French books for Cambridge University Press, and published his own book on European history. When Ross took his interest in poetry and wrote the lyrics and libretto for the burlesque Faddimir (1889), his work was popular among the entire Cambridge community including Cambridge composer
Frank Osmand Carr. Together, Ross and Carr received a commission from George Edwards to write another burlesque show called Joan of Arc (1891), which featured the songs “Round the Town” and “Jack the Dandy-O.” Edwards hired them to compose another burlesque called In Town (1892), but soon after Ross and Carr wanted to write in another style. So they convinced Edwards to produce their new operetta Morocco Bound (1893). Their production was so popular that it sparked a long-term collaboration between the three men that would eventually be called the “Gaiety Musicals.”

For the next twenty years, Ross created Edward’s “Gaiety Musicals” that included the popular musicals The Shop Girl (1894), My Girl (1896) and The Circus Girl (1896), An Artist’s Model, A Greek Slave (1898), and The Geisha. In addition, Ross wrote the lyrics for the English adaptations of The Girl on the Train (1910), The Marriage Market (1913), The Dollar Princess (1909), The Count of Luxembourg (1911), and one of the most popular shows of all time Franz Lehar’s The Merry Widow (1907). Ross also collaborated with Herman Darewski on Three Cheers (1917) and Lionel Monckton on Aires and Graces (1917), and Ross wrote the lyrics to the revue Sky High at London’s Palladium. Some of his later projects were Theodore & Co (1916), The Boy (1917), Monsieur Beaucarie (1919) Lilac Time (1922), The Beloved Vagabond (1927) with Australian composer Dudley Glass, The Toymaker of Nuremberg (1930), and the English adaptation of Lehar’s Fredrica (1930). A firm believer in hard work, Ross’s workload was immense, and he continued to create well into his seventies. Ross died in London, England on September 10, 1933.

Schonberg, Claude-Michel

Claude-Michel Schonberg (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born in Vannes, France on July 6, 1944. At the beginning of his career, Schonberg was a music producer for the French
record label Pathe-Marconi. But Schonberg’s first venture into musical theatre was with Alain Bœublil on a new musical about the French Revolution entitled La Revolution Francaise (1973), which was later placed on a two-disc recording. Following in the footsteps of Andrew Lloyd Webber’s Jesus Christ Superstar (1971), Bœublil and Schonberg decided to call their musical a “Rock Opera” when they premiered it at the Palais des Sports, but it was not nearly as successful. Their second show and recording was based on Victor Hugo’s novel Les Misérables. Working with Jean-Marc Natel on story and lyrics, this show had several small workshops and revisions and then was produced by Cameron Mackintosh. The musical was so popular that it debuted on Broadway in 1980 only five years after its inception. Since its debut, Les Misérables has never stopped touring the world and continues today.

After the success of Les Misérables, Bœublil teamed with the musical pop group ABBA and wrote a fairly-tale musical entitled Abbacadabra (1983). He then wrote two more similar musicals with composer Jean-Pierre Bourtayre that have been recorded but never produced: La Fusée de Noe and Les Chevaliers des Étoiles. Bœublil reinstated his partnership with Schonberg and created a new musical based on Madame Butterfly, but the story is updated and set during the Vietnam War; the project was called Miss Saigon (1989). Although Cameron Mackintosh backed the project and although Richard Maltby, Jr. aided with lyrics and libretto, the musical was not as popular as Les Misérables. Bœublil and Schonberg’s next collaborative effort was on Martin Guerre (1996). But after terrible reviews, the show quickly closed in out-of-town tryouts and then reopened in 1998 after rework; however, despite their best efforts, the project still failed. Martin Guerre was scheduled to open on Broadway in 2000, but its opening was cancelled during its previews in Los Angeles. Currently, the team is working on a show called
The Pirate Queen—a new musical about the Irish pirate Grace O’Malley. The show is tentatively scheduled to open in the fall of 2006.

### Sigman, Carl

Carl Sigman (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Brooklyn, NY on September 24, 1909. After graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School, Sigman’s mother ordered him to become a doctor or a lawyer. Sigman chose law and entered New York University’s School of Law where he ultimately passed the New York State Bar but never practiced law. Sigman composed his first song, “Just Remember,” with his childhood friend Johnny Mercer; the song became a popular hit in England in 1936. However, Mercer urged Sigman to focus on his lyric writing because “song men were a dime a dozen,” so Sigman collaborated with Glen Miller on “Pennsylvania 6-5000” to a moderate response. After several years of unsuccessful songwriting, Sigman served as drafter into the 82nd Airborne, where in 1942 he received a twenty-five dollar war bond for writing the 82nd’s official anthem “The All American Soldier.”

After leaving the service in 1945, Sigman teamed with some of the top composers of the day: Peter De Rose, Bob Hilliard, Bob Russell, Duke Ellington and Tadd Dameron. Together those teams wrote such huge hits as “Me Heart Cries For You,” “It’s All In the Game,” “Answer Me,” “Careless Hands,” “Ebb Tide,” “Shangri La,” “What Now My Love,” “That Day the Rain Comes,” “Arrivederci Roma,” “You’re My World,” “A Day in the Life of a Fool,” “Till,” and “Buona Sera.” During Sigman’s career, Billie Holiday, Bing Crosby, Andy Williams, Louis Armstrong, Mel Torme, Ella Fitzgerald, Elvis Presley, Tony Bennett, Johnny Mathis, Shirley Bassett, and Frank Sinatra all recorded Sigman’s songs. Sinatra alone recorded over fifteen of Sigman songs including “The Saddest Thing of All.” Sigman’s only attempt on Broadway was the show Angel in the Wings (1947), which featured a young Elaine Stritch singing
“Civilization.” The song was her big break, and it launched her into one of the most impressive performing careers in Broadway history. But all of Sigman’s hit songs, his most popular was “Where Do I Begin (Love Story),” which was used as the theme for the overwhelmingly popular movie *Love Story* (1970). Carl Sigman died at the age of ninety-one on September 26, 2000.

**Sondheim, Stephen**

Stephen Joshua Sondheim (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born in New York, NY on March 22, 1930. Sondheim attended the George School in Newton, Pennsylvania and became friends with James Hammerstein—son of Oscar Hammerstein II. Oscar Hammerstein became Sondheim’s mentor and encouraged him to study music and write for the musical stage. To pursue this goal, Sondheim studied music at Williams College and at his graduation received the prestigious Hutchinson Prize, which allowed him to study for two years under composer Milton Babbitt. During his time with Babbitt, Sondheim also wrote scripts for the television series *Topper*. Sondheim’s first musical theatre venture was a collaboration with Julius Epstein for *Saturday Night* (1954), but due to the producer’s death, the show was never mounted. After librettist Arthur Laurents met Sondheim, Laurents introduced him to Leonard Bernstein and convinced Bernstein to team with Sondheim as the lyricist for *West Side Story* (1957). Even with such an important and early opportunity, Sondheim wished to compose as well as write his own lyrics. But since producers thought that he lacked “popular experience,” Sondheim only wrote the lyrics to Jule Styne’s score of *Gypsy* (1959).

Sondheim’s first solo musical as composer and lyricist was *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962). With a book by Burt Shevelove and Larry Gelbart, the creative team based the story on the ancient Roman playwright Plautus’s characters. Featuring “Pretty Little Picture,” “Lovely,” “Everybody Ought to Have a Maid,” and “Comedy Tonight,” the show
was a huge success. Sondheim’s next solo project was with librettist Arthur Laurents on *Anyone Can Whistle* (1964), which featured Angela Lansbury in her first Broadway musical. Feeling he owed a debt to Hammerstein, Sondheim agreed to write the lyrics to Richard Rodger’s *Do I Hear a Waltz?* (1965). But after completing this project, Sondheim returned to solo composition and wrote the critically acclaimed *Company* (1970), which was Sondheim’s first collaboration with director Harold Prince. Reuniting with Prince, Sondheim composed *Follies* (1971), which featured such hit songs as “I’m Still Here,” “Broadway Baby,” and “Losing My Mind.” And together with Prince, Sondheim wrote *A Little Night Music* (1973), which was based on Ingmar Bergman’s film *Smiles of a Summer Night* (1955) and featured the overwhelmingly popular song “Send in the Clowns.” Proving that he was versatile in multiple musical genres, Sondheim then wrote the Japanese-inspired *Pacific Overtures* (1976) and the musical melodrama *Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (1979), which starred Len Cariou and Angela Lansbury and featured the songs “Johanna,” “A Little Priest,” “Not While I’m Around,” and “The Worst Pies in London.” Sondheim’s next project was the Broadway flop *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981), which was been remounted and retooled in many different incarnations throughout the years—each one with varying degrees of success. But Sondheim reemerged on Broadway with the highly acclaimed *Sunday in the Park with George* (1985). Based on the Seurat’s painting “Sunday on the Island of La Grande Jatte,” the show won numerous awards including the Pulitzer Prize for Drama; and the hit songs were “Sunday,” “Putting It Together,” and “Move On”

In more recent years, Sondheim composed *Into the Woods* (1987)—a creative look at fairytale characters that critics often say is Sondheim’s most accessible work. He also wrote *Assassins* (1990), which was an off-Broadway hit about American Presidential assassins with the
featured songs “Unworthy of Your Love” and “Another National Anthem.” Sondheim’s final fully mounted Broadway musical was Passion (1994). Based on Igino Tarchetti’s novel Fosca, the opera-like score featured “Loving You” and “No One Had Ever Loved Me.” Sondheim also teamed up with George Furth on Getting Away with Murder (1996)—a non-musical play that only ran for seventeen performances. In addition, Sondheim has contributed songs to several movies including the major motion picture Dick Tracy (1990) starring Warren Beatty and Madonna. And in 2003, Sondheim and John Weideman produced their new musical Bounce at the Chicago Goodman Theatre. Abysmally received, the show is currently under revisions. Still creatively productive in his seventies, Sondheim is one of the most influential, respected, and produced composers in musical theatre history. Like in the majority of the recent Broadway seasons, there is currently a critically acclaimed Sondheim revival on Broadway. This season has Sweeney Todd.

Stoller, Mike

Mike Stoller (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Long Island, New York on March 13, 1933. Obsessed with playing the drums, Stoller would sneak out of his home during his high school years to play in bands at night. At age seventeen, Stoller met Jerry Leiber while studying at Los Angeles City College. The two men became friends and discovered a mutual interest in “boogie-woogie” and rhythm and blues, and they formed a collaborative team that would last nearly fifty-years and produce numerous “Top Forty” popular music hits. After several failed attempts, the two men wrote “Real Ugly Woman” in 1950. Jimmy Witherspoon recorded the song and started the team on their road to success. In 1952 they had additional luck when they composed “Hard Times” for Charles Brown and “Kansas City” for Little Willie Littlefield. (“Kansas City” later became a number one single for Wilbert Harrison in 1959.) But in 1953
Leiber and Stoller wrote “Hound Dog” for Big Mama Thornton, which Elvis Presley later recorded in 1956. This song crowded Elvis as the “King of Rock and Roll” and made Leiber and Stoller the “men behind [Elvis’s] magic.” Elvis continued his collaboration with Leiber and Stoller and recorded more than twenty of their songs, making them two of the most influential men in popular music.

Even though Elvis was perhaps the single most famous artist to sing Leiber and Stoller’s music, he was not the only singer that brought their songs fame. Leiber and Stoller wrote some of the most popular songs in 1950s and 1960s, which have become a part of the American lexicon. Examples of their most successful collaborations are The Coasters – “Yakety Yak,” “Charlie Brown,” and “Poison Ivy”; The Drifters – “On Broadway,” “Fools Fall in Love,” “There Goes My Baby,” “Dance With Me” and “Drip Drop”; The Clovers – “Love Potion #9”; Chuck Jackson – “I Keep Forgettin”; Ben E. King – “Stand by Me,” “Spanish Harlem,” and “I (Who Have Nothing)”; and Dion DiMucci – “Ruby Baby.” Leiber and Stoller also created Spark Records in 1953 to produce and protect their music. And after their work gain momentum, Atlantic Records gave the team a special independent production deal in 1955. The men left Atlantic Records in 1960 and formed their own record label called Red Bird Records, and they produced the Shangri-Las who sang “Leader of the Pack,” the Dixie Cups who sang “Chapel of Love,” and Peggy Lee who sang Red Bird’s biggest hit “Is That All There Is.”

Both Leiber and Stoller were inducted into the Songwriter’s Hall of Fame in 1985, the Record Producer’s Hall of Fame in 1986, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987. And “Hound Dog” was admitted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1988. The team also received a Grammy Award for Peggy Lee’s “Is That All There Is” and for the Original Cast Album of Smokey Joe’s Café (1995)—an original Broadway revue based on their work. And they were
awarded with the prestigious ASCAP Founder’s Award in 1991. Leiber and Stoller continue to have the most popular and influential artists perform their work. In more recent years, The Beatles, B.B. King, The Rolling Stones, The Beach Boys, The Everly Brothers, Johnny Mathis, Muddy Waters, Jimi Hendrix, Little Richard, Buddy Holly, Fats Domino, Edith Piaf, Bobby Darin, Otis Redding, Aretha Franklin, Barbara Streisand, Tom Jones, and Luther Vandross have all recorded Leiber and Stoller’s songs.

Styne, Jule

Jule Kerwin Styne (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist/Director) was born Juluis Kerwin Stein in London, England on December 31, 1905. Beginning an early life as a musician, Styne sang a duet with the famous Scottish entertainer Sir Harry Lauder at the age of three. Styne’s family moved to Chicago, Illinois when Styne was eight, and by the age of nine, he was a guest piano soloist with the Chicago and Detroit symphonies. He won a scholarship to the Chicago College of Music at thirteen where he eventually studied piano, harmony, composition, and theory. However, after graduating from school, Styne abandoned his aspirations as a concert pianist and played in dance bands until he started his own orchestra in 1931. Just a few years later, Styne resigned from his orchestra and began working as a composer and vocal coach for Twentieth Century Fox. During his tenure there, Styne wrote “I Don’t Want To Walk Without You, Baby” with Frank Loesser and “I’ve Heard That Song Before” and “Time After Time” with Sammy Cahn. Enjoying their partnership, Styne and Cahn continued their collaboration with Glad to See You (1944), which never transferred to Broadway. But their next attempt, High Button Shoes (1947), was a huge success and featured Jerome Robbins’s “Keystone Kop Ballet.” Styne then teamed with Leo Robin on for the hit Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (1949), which starred Carol Channing singing her famous interpretation of “Diamonds Are A Girl’s Best Friend.”
Having a deep mutual respect for one another, Styne partnered with Betty Comden and Adolph Green for the musical revue *Two On The Aisle* (1951), and the team started a successful, long-term working relationship. Styne quickly worked with lyricist Bob Hilliard for the disastrous *Hazel Flagg* (1953). But Styne then reunited to Comden and Green for *Peter Pan* (1954), with Jerome Robbins’s choreography, and for *Bells Are Ringing* (1956), which starred Judy Holiday. One of Styne’s most significant musicals was *Gypsy* (1958). Written with a young Stephen Sondheim and starring Ethel Merman, *Gypsy*’s score featured many songs that are now musical theatre classics: “Ev’rything’s Coming Up Roses,” “Rose’s Turn,” and “You Gotta Have A Gimmick”. After *Gypsy*, Styne teamed again with Comden and Green for *Do Re Mi* (1960), which featured the song “Make Someone Happy”; *Subways Are for Sleeping* (1961); and *Funny Girl* (1964), which starred a young Barbara Streisand singing “People” and “Don’t Rain on My Parade.” Styne went on to compose *Fade Out – Fade In* (1964) with Carol Burnett, *Hallelujah, Baby!* (1967) with Leslie Uggams in her Broadway debut, and *Look to the Lilacs* (1970), which was another collaboration with Sammy Cahn. With lyricist Bob Merrill, Styne’s final work was the comical *Sugar* (1972), which was based on the famous film *Some Like It Hot* (1959). Styne died in New York City on September 20, 1994.

**Sullivan, Arthur**

Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan (Composer) was born in London, England on May 13, 1842. Sullivan’s father was the bandmaster for the Royal Military College; and by the age of ten, Sullivan was proficient in all the instruments in his father’s ensemble, and he had composed his own anthem for the band. When Sullivan was fourteen years old, he won the Mendelssohn Scholarship, which allowed him to study composition at the Chapel Royal, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Leipzig Conservatory. After his education, Sullivan composed the choral
works The Golden Legend and The Martyr of Antioch, the ballet Victoria and Merrie England, and incidental music for regional productions of Macbeth, King Arthur, The Foresters, and The Tempest. Showing an early talent for operetta, Sullivan wrote his first light opera The Sapphire Necklace (1867) in his twenties. Sullivan then teamed with lyricist F.C. Burnand for an adaptation of Madison Morton’s farce Box and Cox (1867). The show was so popular that Thomas German Reed produced an additional run at his Gallery Illustration. Sullivan and Burnand teamed again for the full-scale opera The Contrabandista, or The Law of the Ladrones (1867), which featured the hit song “From Rock to Rock.”

The Gaiety Theatre then commissioned a Christmas show, and they partnered Sullivan with lyricist William S. Gilbert for “a grotesque opera” that eventually became Thespis (1871), which was extremely popular. But Sullivan decided to join with B.C. Stephenson on a work called The Zoo (1875), which blended Sullivan’s compositional idea with Mozart, Auber, and Donizetti, but the opera was not well received. Gilbert and Sullivan joined again to write a short one-act entitled Trial by Jury (1875), but this time Gilbert left Sullivan when Gilbert received another commission to write a full-length comic opera.

Richard D’Oyly reunited Gilbert and Sullivan for a newly commissioned work, and the team somewhat begrudgingly agreed. The Sorcerer (1877) was immensely popular, and it was the first of the many “Savoy Operas” that Gilbert and Sullivan would create. Under D’Oyly’s charge, the team wrote HMS Pinafore (1878), The Pirates of Penzance (1879), Patience (1881), Iolanthe (1882) and Princess Ida (1884), which was based on Gilbert’s burlesque The Princess (1870). Beginning with The Sorcerer, the men behind the Savoy Operas reached more success and fame with each show in England and also in America, but there was much tension between the group. One main point of contention was that Queen Victoria knighted Sullivan in 1883, but
she did not knight Gilbert. However, the team continued, and they wrote *The Mikado* (1885), *Ruddigore* (1887), and *The Yeomen of the Guard* (1888). *The Gondoliers* (1889) was one of Gilbert and Sullivan’s final collaborations. Several years later, Gilbert and Sullivan united again for *Utopia (Limited)* (1893) and *The Grand Duke* (1896), but without financial or critical success in either of those show, the two men finally went their separate ways.

Following the team’s separation, Sullivan continued to work with D’Oyly Carte and teamed with Pinero and J. Comyns Carr on *The Beauty Stone* (1898), which was an incredible failure. Sullivan then joined with Owen Hall on *San Toy* (1898) and with Basil Hood on *The Rose of Persia* (1899) for two more unsuccessful shows. Sullivan’s final show was *The Emerald Isle* (1901) with Hood, but Sullivan never lived to complete the project. Sullivan died of kidney stones on November 22, 1900.

**Warren, Diane**

Diane Warren (Composer/Lyricist) was born in Van Nuys, California on September 7, 1956. Even though Warren had an early passion for music, her parents both encouraged and discouraged her in this pursuit. Her mother feared that a musical career would be too difficult for a woman. But her father bought her a guitar at the age of ten, and in her early teens, he traveled with her to Los Angeles for meetings with various music publishers. Eventually, Warren began working for music producer Jack White in 1983, and Warren’s first project was serving as a French lyric translator for the Laura Branigan song “Solitaire,” which was Warren’s first Top 40 hit. Warren then developed the song “Rhythm of the Night” in 1986 for the group DeBarge, and her song held the third spot on the Top 40.

Over her career, Warren wrote songs for nearly every major recording artist in the 1980s and 1990s, and her songs have been on pop, rock, R&B, and country circuits throughout the
world. Some of her most successful collaborations have been with Cher on “If I Could Turn Back Time,” Exposé on “I’ll Never Get Over You (Getting Over Me),” Ace of Base on “Don’t Turn Around,” Trisha Yearwood on “How Do I Live,” Faith Hill on “There You’ll Be,” Milli Vanilli on “Blame It On The Rain,” Toni Braxton on “Un-Break My Heart,” Celine Dion on “If You Asked Me To” and “Because You Loved Me,” Aerosmith on “I Don’t Want to Miss a Thing,” LeAnn Rimes on “Can’t Fight the Moonlight” and “How Do I Live,” and *NSYNC with Gloria Estefan on “Music of the Heart.” Warren has contributed songs to various movies including Mannequin (1987), which featured the song “Nothing’s Gonna Stop Us Now”; Up Close and Personal (1996), which featured “Because You Loved Me”; Gone in Sixty Seconds (2000), which featured “Painted on My Heart”; and Moulin Rouge (2001), which featured “Rhythm of the Night.” For all of her musical success, Warren has been nominated for four Golden Globes, six Academy Awards, and nine Grammy Awards. She has also been named ASCAP’s Songwriter of the Year six times and Billboard’s Songwriter of the Year four times, and she helped launch the VH1 “Save the Music” campaign. In addition, Warren started her own publishing company called Realsongs, which was named one of the top five publishing companies in America, and Realsongs was titled the most successful female-owned company in the music business.

Warren, Harry

Harry Warren (Composer) was born Salvatore Anthony Guaragna in Brooklyn, New York on December 24, 1893; he reportedly changed his name when he entered school, so his classmates could pronounce it. Warren had an early interest in music, and without any formal training other than church choir, he had mastered the drums, the accordion, the piano by his mid-teens. When he was sixteen, Warren left high school and began working for Vitagraph movie
studio in New York, where he played mood music for actress Corinne Griffith. On the set, he also worked as a properties assistant, an assistant director, and as a messenger boy for several silent films. Warren then joined the Navy for one year, which is where he wrote his first song, “How Would You Like to Be a Sailor.” After the Navy, Warren continued to write songs; but his lyrics received constant criticism, so he was unable to publish them. While playing piano at a Brooklyn saloon in 1920, Warren impressed two publishers from the firm of Stark and Cowan, and they gave him his “big break.” They asked Warren to play his song “I Learned to Love You When I Learned My A-B-C’s” for their boss, Ruby Cowan. Unfortunately for Warren, Cowan hired Warren as a song plugger and not as a writer. But in 1922, Warren teamed with Edgar Leslie, and they wrote and published their first hit “Rose of the Rio Grande.”

After this initial success, Warren’s music became incredibly popular. Warren was the director of ASCAP from 1929 to 1932, and while serving his term with ASCAP, Warren wrote the movie score to Spring is Here (1929) and to the Broadway musical Sweet and Low (1929). Warren collaborated with Al Dublin on the movie musical 42nd Street (1932), which starred Dick Powell and Ruby Keeler and featured the songs “We’re in the Money,” “The Shadow Waltz,” and “Lullaby of Broadway.” For his efforts, Warren won the Academy Award for Best Song for his hit “Lullaby of Broadway.” Warner Brothers Studios continued to hire Warren from 1932 to 1939, and the popular performers Ginger Rogers, Eddie Cantor, Ruth Etting, Helen Morgan, and Rudy Vallee all sang Warren’s songs. From 1940 to 1943 Twentieth Century Fox hired Warren, and he composed for Shirley Temple, Glenn Miller, Betty Grable, Alice Faye, and Sammy Kaye. During this time, Warren also joined with Leo Robin and Mack Gordon, and they wrote the popular song “Chattanooga Choo Choo,” which earned them a gold record for selling 1.2 million copies.
Warren then composed scores for MGM studios from 1943 to 1952 where Warren wrote for Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Mickey Rooney, Gene Kelly, Cyd Charisse, Ann Miller, Red Skelton, Howard Keel and Vivian Blaine. Teaming with Johnny Mercer, Warren also wrote the song “On the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe,” which earned them an Academy Award. Later, Warren wrote several movie scores for the Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis; Warren’s most famous song for the duo was “That’s Amoré” from the movie The Caddy (1953). Warren then composed another score for Broadway called Shangri-La (1954), but the show only ran twenty-three performances. Warren continued writing songs even into his sixties. His final project was the movie Manhattan Melody (1980), which he wrote when he was eighty-six years old. Harry Warren died in Los Angeles, California on September 22, 1981.

Webber, Andrew Lloyd

Andrew Lloyd Webber (Composer/Librettist) was born in London, England on March 22, 1948. Born into a musical family, Webber’s father William was the principal of the London College of Music and, he was a composer and pianist who encouraged Webber to compose even in his early teens. Webber had his first success when he collaborated with his friend Tim Rice on a fifteen-minute cantata called Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat (1972). Featuring the song “Close Every Door,” the show premiered at a boy’s school, and it was eventually expanded into a full-length musical. Prior to opening Joseph, Webber and Rice wrote the “Rock Opera” Jesus Christ Superstar (1971). Originating as a two-disc cast recording, Jesus Christ Superstar featured the love ballad “I Don’t Know How to Love Him” and “Jesus Christ Superstar,” and it became the longest running show in the West End with a Broadway transfer and multiple international tours.
After *Superstar*’s critical and financial success, Webber wrote the “quirky period-piece” *Jeeves* (1975), but the project was an abysmal failure. Webber and Rice collaborated again on another sung-through musical called *Evita* (1978), which featured the songs “Don’t Cry For Me Argentina,” “Oh What a Circus,” and “Another Suitcase in Another Hall.” Based on Argentina’s famous political figure Eva Peron, the show was an immense success, and it had a popular run on Broadway. Webber’s next project was an adaptation of T.S. Eliot’s children’s book *Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats* (1939), which became the overwhelming sensation *Cats* (1982). Featuring the song “Memory,” the show was the longest running musical on both the West End and on Broadway before *Les Misérables* surpassed it decades later. *Starlight Express* (1984) was Webber’s next project, and this roller-skating musical had a successful run on the West End, but it failure to sustain New York audiences. Webber then wrote this first solo song-cycle called *Tell Me on a Sunday*. Paired with his cello “Variations” based on a Paganini theme, the song-cycle became *Song and Dance* (1982), which again was a greater success in London than it was in New York. Webber’s following show was his most popular and most acclaimed. *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986) currently holds the title of longest running Broadway musical, and it features the songs “All I Ask of You,” “Phantom of the Opera,” and “Music of the Night.”

However, Webber’s more recent projects have never reached the level of his earlier ventures. *Aspects of Love* (1989), which featured the title song; *Sunset Boulevard* (1993), which featured “With One Look” and “As If We Never Said Goodbye”; and *Whistle Down the Wind* (1996) failed to attract New York or London audiences to any substantial degree. The reworked *Jeeves*—dubbed *By Jeeves* (1996)—only had a limited West End run. And based on football or what Americans call soccer, Webber and Ben Elton’s project *The Beautiful Game* (2000) never transferred to Broadway. In addition, Webber founded the Really Useful Company, which is
now called the Really Useful Group in order to produce and promote Webber’s material. And during his career, Webber wrote a one-act operetta called Cricket with Rice, a requiem mass in 1985, and two film scores for Gumshoe (1971) and The Odessa File (1974). Webber currently lives in London, England.

**Wildhorn, Frank**

Frank Wildhorn (Composer/Librettist) is one of the most successful new Broadway composers in the later part of the twentieth century. Wildhorn’s first venture on Broadway was when he contributed songs to the Julie Andrew’s vehicle Victor/Victoria (1991). But in 1999, Wildhorn was the first composer in twenty-two years to have three Broadway musicals running simultaneously. Wildhorn’s first Broadway musical, Jekyll and Hyde (1990) is also his most popular and critically praised work. Based on the famous novella, the show features the songs “Someone Like You,” “A New Life,” and the popular music crossover hit “This is the Moment.” Beginning as two different concept albums and a workshop at the Alley Theatre in Houston, Texas, Jekyll and Hyde took Wildhorn and lyricist Leslie Bricusse over ten years to create. With lyricist Nan Knighton The Scarlet Pimpernel (1997) was Wildhorn’s second Broadway show, and it featured the adult contemporary popular music hit “You are My Home.” During the show’s run, critics continually gave the production extremely negative reviews. In order to retool the show, The Scarlet Pimpernel was the first Broadway show in nearly sixty years to close and re-open twice after its original premiere. Once the creative team finally cemented the show’s material and cast, the production had a moderately successful run, and it has had two international tours. With Jack Murphy and Gregory Boyd, Wildhorn then created The Civil War (1998), which also had two different concept albums: “The Civil War”: The Nashville Sessions and “The Civil War”: The Complete Work. Featuring current pop, rock, Broadway, and country
singers the albums had such varied performers as The Blues Travelers, Hootie and the Blowfish, Travis Tritt, Trisha Yearwood, Linda Eder, and Betty Buckley. The Civil War’s Broadway production received mixed reviews and had a short run.

Wildhorn’s more recent productions have been many, but they have also been met with mixed reviews. With Nan Knighton, Camille Claudel (2003) had a short Broadway run, but it featured the song “Gold,” which was the theme of the 2002 Olympic opening ceremonies. Dracula the Musical (2004) also had an extremely short Broadway run, and the show had a devastatingly negative critical response. And based on F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald’s lives, Waiting for the Moon (2005) was with Jack Murphy, and it also had poor reviews. However, Wildhorn has many projects that are currently under development. Cyrano is with Leslie Bricusse, and it will open in London in the fall of 2006. Vienna is with Jack Murphy and Nan Knighton, and it will open in Budapest, Hungary in the fall of 2006. Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein (2006) is with Gregory Boyd and Jack Murphy, and it too will open in the fall of 2006 in Houston, Texas. Wildhorn’s other future projects include Excalibur with Jim Steinman and Gregory Boyd, which is a modern adaptation of Carmen; a rock version of Alice in Wonderland; and Bonnie and Clyde with Don Black. Wildhorn is currently an Associate Artist in Musical Theatre at the Alley Theatre in Houston, Texas, and he plans to open Global Vision Records with his associate Jeremy Roberts.

**Williams, Bert**

Bert Austin Williams (Performer/Composer/Lyricist) was born Egbert Austin Williams in Antigua, West Indies on November 12, 1874. As a young man, Williams moved to San Francisco and starred in minstrel shows, where he met George Walker, and the two formed the comedy team “Williams and Walker.” With unbelievable success on the touring circuit, Victor
Herbert invited Williams and Walker to perform in Herbert’s short-lived musical *The Gold Bug* (1896). The team then began creating their own material, and they toured with their own sketch “Clorindy, or The Origin of the Cakewalk” in *The Senegambian Carnival*. After this success, Williams and Walker joined with managers Hurtig and Seamon, and they produced *The Policy Players* (1899), *The Sons of Ham* (1901), and Williams and Walker’s most famous show *In Dahomey* (1902).

After *In Dahomey*, Williams and Walker separated, and Hurtig and Seamon unsuccessfully tried to sue the team when the managers learned that Williams and Walker were making $20,000 in profits. Williams used the “awkward, slow-witted darkey” character that he created for *In Dahomey*, and he continued to use it in *Abyssinia* (1906), *Bandana Land* (1908), and *Mr. Lode of Koal* (1909). However, Williams’s true fame came when he starred in nearly ten versions of *The Ziegfeld Follies*. His most notable appearance was in *The Ziegfeld Follies of 1905* when he performed his original song “Nobody.” Williams then performed in *Broadway Brevities* and *Under the Bamboo Tree* (1922), where he collapsed on stage during a performance in Detroit. Bert Williams died eleven days later in Detroit, Michigan on March 4, 1922.

*Willson, Meredith*

Meredith Willson (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born Robert Meredith Reiniger in Mason City, Iowa on May 18, 1902. Beginning his musical career as a concert flautist, Willson played with the famous Sousa band from 1921-1923 and then with the New York Philharmonic from 1924-1929. Willson transitioned to working as a musical director for NBC and other popular radio stations where he also began composing; his most popular songs from this era were “May the Good Lord Bless You and Keep You” and “I See the Moon.” Also writing for bands,
piano, orchestras, Willson eventually composed the films scores to *The Great Dictator* (1940) and *The Little Foxes* (1941).

Frank Loesser, encouraged Willson to write for the musical stage, and on his first attempt, Willson composed the smash Broadway sensation *The Music Man* (1957), which eventually became one of the greatest international successes of the 1950s and 1960s. Willson’s next scores were *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* (1960) and *Here’s Love* (1963), which was the musical adaptation of the popular film *Miracle on 34th Street*. Even though both shows were long-running Broadway successes, they never reached the heights of *The Music Man*. Willson’s final musical was the obscure *1491* (1969), which was produced at the San Francisco Opera and the Los Angeles Civic Light Opera, but the piece never transferred to Broadway. Willson died in Santa Monica, California on June 15, 1984.

**Young, Rida Johnson**

Rida Johnson Young (Composer/Lyricist/Librettist) was born Ida Louise Johnson in Baltimore, Maryland on February 28, 1866. After graduating from college in 1882, Young chose to pursue life in the theatre. She tried to make her career as an actress, but Young eventually earned a job in the press department at Witmark Music Publishing. As a playwright, her first project was *Lord Byron* (1900). James Young—who would eventually become Young’s husband—produced the play in Virginia. Young then wrote the lyrics to “A Song of Yesterday” with composer A. Heindl, which was strangely interpolated into the musical *The Sultan of Sulu* (1903). But all the while, Young continued to write non-musical plays, and her work *Brown of Harvard* (1906) was her first big success.

Young then attempted another musical theatre project, and she adapted the well-known German play *Krieg im Frieden* (1907). With composer Lulu Glaser, the project was called *Just
One of the Boys (1911), and the Shuberts produced it. Young’s next musical was the romantic Irish comedy Barry of Ballymore (1910), which featured the international hit “Mother Machree.” Young’s first musical theatre success was with composer Victor Herbert on the operetta Naughty Marietta (1910). Set in New Orleans, the popular songs were “Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life,” “Tramp, Tramp, Tramp,” “I’m Falling in Love with Someone,” and “Neath the Southern Moon.” Young then adapted her own failed play Next into the musical The Red Petticoat (1912), and she adapted an English version of Wie einst im Mai called Maytime (1917), which featured the song “Do You Remember?” With a musical about Mormons and multiple marriages, Young wrote His Little Widows (1917). But the project was poorly received until much later when Firth Shepard rewrote Young’s libretto, and they added new music and called the work Lady Luck (1927). Young also collaborated with Rudolf Friml on Sometime (1918), with British composer Augustus Barratt on Little Simplicity (1918), and with Victor Herbert again on a The Dream Girl (1924). Rida Johnson Young died in Southfield Point, Connecticut on May 8, 1926.
STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

Introduction

While Patrick and I wrote A 16 Bar Cut to appear whimsical, capricious, and silly, the show’s construction is actually very intricate and calculated; it operates on many different levels. At its core, A 16 Bar Cut legitimately tells the history of American musical theatre. Like the Emcee says in the opening, our show has “Every era, genre, and style of musical theatre, even the major players.” But at the same time, Patrick and I did not want to create a giant, evening-long history lecture with some illustrative songs that might as well have been a PowerPoint presentation. We also did not want to create a traditional cabaret that would undoubtedly leave out huge amounts of information, since conventionally singers perform complete songs in a cabaret. And in that format, we simply would not have time to progress through all of musical theatre history in a single evening. So Patrick and I embarked on creating a show that explored the recently developed “Abridged” style of theatre. Using this new sub-genre, we would be able to travel the entire length of musical theatre history and create an enjoyable, accessible, and entertaining evening. But merging these two ideas together—legitimate history and hilarity—into one solidified theatre work is a complicated compromise that requires utmost scholarship and the crafty wherewithal to know that a man in drag is almost always funny.

Style

The unifying whole that ultimately holds legitimate history and hilarity together is the “Abridged” style of A 16 Bar Cut. Just as cabaret or musical spoofs like Forbidden Broadway are sub-genres of musical theatre, the “Abridged” style of theatre is its own sub-genre of comedy. In the early 1980s, Jess Winfield, Reed Martin, Adam Long, and Daniel Singer—
known as the Reduced Shakespeare Company (RSC)—wrote *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*, which started a theatre empire that continues to grow to this day and has created the “Abridged” style of theatre. This style takes a famous body of work and reduces it with parody and spoof. Using poorly made, gaudy, and ridiculous technical elements, an “Abridged” show should appear as impromptu and thrown together as possible and make no apologies about it; direct address, audience participation, and improvisation are also a necessity. The RSC has found “Abridged” success with several of their additional shows about Western literature, the Bible, American history, Hollywood movies, Christmas, and many others. But to my knowledge, no other writing team has taken this new style of theatre and made it their own. Patrick and I have learned from the RSC’s style and created a new experience about musical theatre. However, while *A 16 Bar Cut* was written in the “Abridged” style, our show also takes on the additional task of educating our audiences about musical theatre. Arguably, the RSC’s plays center around bodies of work on which audiences have a greater knowledge base than musical theatre. Typical high school curriculum requires courses in Western literature, Shakespeare, and American history but leaves out compulsory musical theatre study. Therefore, *A16 Bar Cut* cannot exist as simple parody like the RSC’s cannon. Patrick and I knew that our show had to contain a great deal more actual information about musical theatre history if we wanted the audiences to be let in on our jokes.

**Scene “Conventions”**

Within the “Abridged” style, Patrick and I created different—what we termed—conventions for each of the major scenes in our play. Each of these scenes and conventions helps to complete the show’s objective of history and hilarity marriage since the scenes’ conventions cleverly illustrate and often parody the point in history that they represent or a part
of a musical’s structure (e.g., the opening number, the entr’acte, the curtain call, etc.). Examining each of the scenes individually will more fully verify each scene’s purpose and role in fulfilling the show’s objective.

The “Pre Show” exists to welcome the audience into our world and establish the mood and tone of the evening as irreverent and fun. Patrick and I did not want to have an overture of any kind because an overture would spoil the fake-out, serious moment at the top of the “Opening.” But without the “Pre Show,” the fake-out moment might be too jarring for audiences to fully appreciate the joke. In addition, an opening announcement is such a staple of pretentious, theatre seriousness that we knew we had to make fun of it. So while the “Pre Show” is the only portion of the script that could be removed and the play’s integrity would still be intact, the “Pre Show” is an opportunity to let audiences know, “Hang on. It’s going to be a bumpy ride.”

The “Opening: It’s Greek To Me, Me, Me” builds on the silliness of the “Pre Show” and establishes the “Abridged” style. We knew that we wanted to open with a nod to the Greeks, which made the total timeline of the show feel very long and also made a clever transition into “Comedy Tonight.” Linking “Comedy Tonight” and “Willkommen” demonstrates how succinctly we will present the musical cuttings in the show, and speaking to the voice over and to the audience immediately alerts the audience that we will be addressing them and playing with theatre conventions. Yet while the scene accomplishes these tasks, the opening is also a parody of musical theatre opening numbers in that we parody the spectacle and opulence that is often associated with musicals. In addition, Patrick’s random “All That Jazz” also parodies the “big finish” mentality in musical numbers.
“Cirque de Sucker” is the first formal scene of the show and is also the most straightforward. Because circus did not radically affect musical theatre other than its mere existence as a stepping-stone toward vaudeville, this scene is the most uncomplicated scene. The only “convention” that we use is describing and illustrating circus as nominally as possible and within the no-budget style of the show. In order to avoid mere exposition at this crucial moment in the play, Patrick and I added an arc within the scene. Patrick starts the singing section telling the audience about P.T. Barnum’s famous line, “There is a sucker born every minute.” I get the idea to ironically trick him and make him the sucker, so I persuade him to purchase a ticket and enter the novelty museum. But Patrick ultimately returns disappointed. We had originally wanted to use period music from the circus, but our searches were unfruitful. Utilizing the Barnum music is a clever and applicable substitution since the music aides the story that we wanted to tell in the circus section and since the Barnum music captures the same spirit that we wanted from the period music. Even though the circus scene leans more towards conveying historical information and less silliness than others that follow it, circus is a necessary scene that is still entertaining and starts the momentum build of act one.

The scene about vaudeville and minstrelsy, “Vaude-strelsy,” has similar problematic points as the circus scene. Since a general public audience typically does not know much information about vaudeville, this scene should be highly expository, but Patrick and I did not want to use the same convention as circus. So we choose to do a condensed vaudeville evening—the first of several condensed moments in the show. We were able to hide the expository information about vaudeville by literally performing a vaudeville show—complete with period-like dialogue and actual songs from vaudeville. However, this convention would not work for minstrelsy since minstrelsy is too sensitive a subject to be handled as lightheartedly as
vaudeville and since we did not want to immediately copy ourselves. Because Patrick and I did not want to offend, minstrelsy is the only subject that is handled with any kind of tact; Patrick and I use my character’s scholarly approach to theatre, and I give a small lecture. But without any kind of humor whatsoever, this point in the show would seem out of place. Therefore, we have Patrick acting confused and preparing to put on blackface. This well-considered joke allows the section to have humor, reinforces the fact that blackface is offensive, and also allows us to keep our record for equally poking fun at everyone.

Patrick and I use the already-established lecture idea from minstrelsy and build upon it in “The Operetta Opus.” Being the pretentious scholar, my character wants to have the operetta section all to himself; this objective allows my character to relay the necessary information. But Patrick’s character finds operetta boring and does not want the audience to lose interest; his objective adds the bulk of the humor to the scene, and we both mocks the airs of pretense that are often associated with operetta but in different manners. In this satirist vein, Patrick repeatedly enters wearing ridiculous costumes, while I attempt to maintain my supposed dignity in operetta. During the interplay, Patrick and I sing multiple songs that demonstrate various composers and song styles in operetta, and we conclude the scene with the two of us singing a rewrite to “Modern Major General.” Singing this song not only exhibits another song style and composer, but it also completes each of our scene objectives; we are both informing the audience about operetta and being silly at the same time.

While circus is the most straightforward and uncomplicated scene, “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld” contains the most information (dates, names, etc.) in any one scene. Patrick and I could have fallen in the trap of repeating the convention we used for vaudeville since both vaudeville and variety shows like the Zeigfeld Follies offered song, dance, and skits in the same presentational
manner. To avoid this problem, Patrick and I use a *West Side Story* rumble between Florence Zeigfeld and George White as the convention, which gives the first half of the scene form, objectives, and obstacles. The rumble also serves several other purposes. The surprise juxtaposition of early twentieth century variety with a rumble and the spoofed *West Side Story* movement adds humor to the scene. And Flo and George’s constant attempt to top each other offers a wonderful opportunity to add historical information and impersonations, where we get to feature two canonical songs and people from musical theatre history. The second half of the scene is essentially a tag to the first half. Patrick and I felt that *Show Boat* was an inescapable work, so we used the show’s connection with Zeigfeld as a transition. We use a similar convention with *Show Boat* as we do with minstrelsy—I try to speak and sing about something serious while Patrick screws it up. But adding Justin helps us to vary this section and quickly change to the next.

Scene five “The Golden Up-Tempo” is an excellent counterpoint to “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld.” Whereas “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld” contains the most specific historical information, “The Golden Up-Tempo” contains virtually none. Rather, Patrick and I attempt to express the mood of the period and the style of the music in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. The humor in this scene is not entirely absent, but it is largely replaced by the cleverness in the one-liner medley. Hearing how we join the songs together adds interest and amusement to the scene, and within the giant medley, we are able to illustrate all of the major composers in the era and the multiple types of songs in that time—uniting the need for historical information and entertainment.

Closing Act One, “The Dynamic Duo” is the only scene that solely focuses on artists rather than a specific period, yet these artists fit exactly in the timeline that we use in the show. Examining Rodgers and Hammerstein II allowed us to spend a large amount of time on
Oklahoma!—their most important single work—and the rest of the R and H cannon—arguably the most popular shows in musical theatre. Oklahoma! is the second time we use the condensed convention, but in Oklahoma! the convention is the most elaborate and is the purest use of the “Abridged” style. Patrick and I are able to convey the significant plot points and themes that made the show a landmark, but we are able to make the section perhaps the funniest to that point. The constant carefully crafted sexual jokes emphasize the fact that Oklahoma! was one of the first shows to contain sexual themes. And our spoofed “Dream Ballet” displays Oklahoma!’s inventive and important use of dance. None of these points could be adequately illustrated without the condensed convention. In addition, the use of drag, purposefully bad costumes, and feverish pace, also add some of the greatest humor in the show. Since Rodgers and Hammerstein have such a wide and popular body of work, looking at each piece with the same care as Oklahoma! could be justified, but that is simply impractical. So in order to at least mention the bulk of R and H’s work, Patrick and I created the game show. This convention allows us to include a multitude of information and facts, but we are able to disguise this “information dump” in a way that is interactive and fun.

“Entr’acting” exists to feature Justin Fischer, our accompanist, and to refocus the audience’s attention into the world of the play. A typically structured musical has an overture and an entr’acte, and since we do not have an overture, Patrick and I thought that an entr’acte would help to link our show to the musical theatre world that we are discussing. Patrick and I also added the comedic bits with the percussion toys to reunite the audience with the witty and silly tone of the show.

The convention of “My Fair Laddie” is one of the most ingenious and one of the most applicable conventions in the show. Since the major historical point in the 1950s and 60s is the
transitions from a classic musical theatre sound to a more pop/rock sound, Patrick and I personify that change in Patrick’s Elizo character. All the while, we have created a spoof of *My Fair Lady* that gives arc to the scene and also acquaints the audience with the *Pygmalion* premise of *My Fair Lady*—one of the most popular shows in the 1950s. The humor in this scene stems from the parody and also from the two characters’ slightly biting interaction. The final allusion to *Phantom of the Opera* also adds another level of parody, while still conveying the important historical points of the period.

Scene eight “70s, Dancer, 70s” hinges on the major choreographers of the mid twentieth century. Rather than simply discussing these choreographers and characterizing these historical people like in “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld,” Patrick and I chose to represent their work. We knew that we wanted to present their legitimate dance styles and movement, so we had to create an adroit situation in which to dance if we wanted to find humor. Using “There’s Gotta Be Something Better Than This” provides the thematic glue that holds all of the choreographers together; it also provides a humorous arc, where each of the dance styles try to top each other. In addition, the song gives us funny “one-liners” like when Patrick complains that Fosse made him feel dirty, so he remarks, “There’s gotta be something cleaner than this.” Simply relying on the “Abridged” style also helped us find humor. Being prostitutes in the Fosse section, playing with giant dice, and transitioning into Can-Can girls in the Kidd section were simple and pertinent ways to make the scene funny.

Out of Bennett in the 1970s, scenes nine and ten are united and held together by characters from *A Chorus Line*. In “The Eighties are a Drag,” the Diana and Connie characters use audition experiences to convey information about the significant composers in the eighties and their contributions. This scene is perhaps the most irreverent in the show. Since audience
members probably have a wider knowledge base about this time period and about the composers we discuss in this scene (i.e., Webber, Sondheim, and Schonberg and Böubil), parody is easier, so we use the full brunt of our biting-humor abilities. Aside from playfully mocking the composers’ works, a large portion humor in the first section of the scene comes from Diana and Connie’s fight over which ethnicity has more problems getting cast; this tension also gives obstacle and objective. In the second portion of the scene, the Sondheim section, the humor comes from Diana’s attempt to play all of Sondheim’s major female characters. Exposing a large portion of the repertoire, my character adds variety to this section since I thwart each of Diana’s efforts with one of Sondheim’s hyper-masculine characters; this interaction not only gives arc to the section also but also comments one Sondheim’s characterizations. Bringing Sondheim on stage as a sock puppet is the fitting and cyclical ending to the scene. Sock puppets are funny, but this ending also shows reverence to Sondheim’s longevity and significance.

“Ninety Million Tenors” carries over the convention from A Chorus Line and focuses on Al and Kris. Lampooning the married couple from A Chorus Line not only provides the jealous arc in the scene, but it also satirizes the fact that many people associate musical theatre with homosexuality. The second operating convention within this scene is the original song “Tenor Envy,” which works on several levels. Al’s lament for new baritone roles provides the glue for the music and composers in the nineties, presents an opportunity for musical parody, and comments on the nineties and the current casting trend to cast tenors over any other vocal range. The song’s resolution also operates on several levels. Singing “I’ll Cover You” proves that baritone songs do exist in the 1990s, but Kris’s rendition of “Seasons of Love” with high riffs after “I’ll Cover You” reemphasizes the tenor-casting trend; the tenor envy problem is not resolved.
The convention in “Revivals 2000” is very simple, apt, acerbic, and funny all at the same time. Once we hit the turn of the twenty-first century—contemporary musical theatre—we discover that revivals dominate Broadway. So to illustrate this point and to satirize it, Patrick and I revive our show at an almost manic pace. Aside from mentioning the invention of what we term the “radio-pop revue,” this scene does not attempt to examine specific shows. Rather, the scene illustrates that current producers mount more revivals than original material. After we finish the revival, we make the same argument in a more subtle and calming fashion; we sing “One More Beautiful Song.” This truly sincere and legitimate moment is a moment unlike any other in the show. The stark yet suitable section in the play gives the audience a moment to breath after the feverish revival, and the section’s genuineness makes the song’s objective ring true. Hopefully audiences will want new and original musical theatre.

The “Curtain Call” is just that, but we give a witty way to say goodbye. This ending also appropriately gives the audience the “One last laugh before it’s over” that we sing about in “One More Beautiful Song”—a fun and fitting ending.

**Historical Arc**

Like most of A 16 Bar Cut, the historical arc appears elementary but is, in fact, quite sophisticated. In a show that claims to capture all of musical theatre history, starting at the beginning and ending with today would seem the obvious journey, but where to start and where to stop along the way becomes highly problematic.

Patrick and I began with the Greeks because most scholars credit the invention of theatre to the ancient Greeks. Other forms of oral storytelling and religious presentation date back to the ancient Egyptians and early Mesopotamia, but these details are too scholastic and impractical to include in our stylized show. Most theatre history and musical theatre history begins in ancient
Greece, and so do we. Even though the Greek section only lasts a moment, we still include the Greek’s major theatrical advancements like the chanting chorus, and we emphasize that theatre was tied to mysticism and religion. Although the Romans have their own rich theatrical history, they are quickly lumped with Greeks in our show because their traditions are directly linked and often lifted from the Greeks and because the Romans did not specifically add to musical theatre history. We decided to give these ancient historical periods a brief nod in our show not only because they are extremely important, but also they are not as specifically related to musical theatre as later periods. Patrick and I would have included more about these early times, but we believe that ancient times and most early musical theatre history is not as funny to contemporary audiences as more recent periods because of contemporary audiences’ knowledge base.

As the creators of A 16 Bar Cut, one of the significant development questions that Patrick and I constantly had to ask was “What historical eras are most important to musical theatre history?” This question affected all scene choices and was the crucial question that we asked before writing scene one. In the theatre world, medieval theatre, commedia dell’arte, Elizabethan and Restoration theatre are inescapable subjects for discussion. In the music world, the entire music history timeline (medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods, the invention of opera, etc.) is a complete study unto itself. All of these topics and many others have bearing on musical theatre history, but none of them have a specific and direct lineage to Show Boat—the musical from which all modern musicals flow.

Although Patrick and I wrote a short connecting scene that mentions some of the above information, we begin the detailed history of musical theatre in scene one with the circus in the mid-ninetieth century. The choice to start at this point came from our knowledge of Show Boat—the first musical that most clearly used music to advance plot and characterization.
Moving backwards from Show Boat, every period and style has a link to another until the circus. In my research, no other historical era or style directly influenced circus, so we chose to start there. Including circus was even debatable since circus did not purposefully tell stories through music, but since circus has an immediate connection with vaudeville—a paramount style to musical theatre history, we chose to include circus.

Even though we use Show Boat’s heritage as the guide for early musical theatre history, forms like vaudeville, minstrelsy, variety, and operetta—which all affected Show Boat—developed and operated in the same eighty-year time span. Using specific dates of shows and songs would be too confusing and complicated for our audiences, so we grouped all the historical information by musical theatre forms. We used their connection to Show Boat to decide the order in which we would present them. The vignette style of vaudeville delineates from the circus, so vaudeville naturally follows circus. And minstrelsy naturally follows vaudeville since minstrelsy is arguably a form of vaudeville. The next most logical connection is actually vaudeville to variety shows given that variety shows like the Follies are structured similarly to a vaudeville evening, but variety uses different music and presentational styles. However, Zeigfeld’s connection to Show Boat is a seamless transition that Patrick and I wanted to use, but we did not want to omit operetta and its contributions. So we placed operetta before variety, and then Show Boat followed. Nevertheless, we cleverly hid a historical disclaimer in our show when Patrick checks the chorus line and sees that all the styles overlap. This way hopefully no true scholar will complain.

The historical arc after Show Boat in act one is notably more straightforward since styles and periods are not as interweaving. Shows near, around, and slightly after Show Boat make up the Golden Age of American musical theatre. Even though my character makes another
disclaimer about the dates in this period, Patrick and I use the style of songs and typically cheerful subject matter in this period to unite the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. We purposefully excluded songs from Rodgers and Hammerstein despite the fact that they composed in the Golden Age because the team has the following scene to themselves. Having a section on R and H gave Patrick and I the opportunity to examine Oklahoma! and its headway in emotional depth and structure. And since R and H wrote in both the Golden Age and the 1950’s and 60s, the R and H section allows us to bridge the historical gap between these two sections.

Act two is organized by decades, so its historic arc was considerably easier to negotiate. The 1950s and 60s flowed easily out of the R and H scene, and the 1970s section logically follows that. But making the 1970s scene the dance section was slightly problematic. The 1970s is the perfect decade to focus on dance since seminal choreographer/directors like Fosse and Bennett were most active and successful during this decade. But other famous choreographers like Robbins and Champion were popular during earlier decades. Rather than mudding previous scenes with historically accurate but out-of-place dancer information, Patrick and I opted to use the 1970s as a catalyst to discuss influential choreographers. Even though “There’s Gotta Be Something Better Than This” is the principle convention in the 1970s scene and the song was composed in an earlier decade, this discrepancy is congruent to the scene. The song is not a historic problem in the 1970s scene, since we discuss choreographers from different decades and since we use various, non-1970s music with which the choreographers used to dance. In addition, we also use a similar kind of juxtaposition in “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld” that does not feel out of place. Using “There’s Gotta Be Something Better Than This” as the convention to unite the dance section is a conscience decision that fits the style of the show provides historically accurate material.
Discussing Bennett at the end of the 1970s makes an ideal transition in the 1980s, particularly with the convention. And since scenes on the 1980s and 90s would sensibly trail a scene on the 1970s, they do. While the 1980s and 90s contain different styles and movements of musical theatre, the famous composers that wrote during these decades typify the times. This trend is predominantly true in the 1980s with Webber, Sondheim, and Schonberg and Böubil. Although all of these composers have written and write in other decades, they all hit demigod-like statues in 1980s. Examining Webber and Schonberg and Böubil at the top of the scene illustrates the “British Invasion” of musical theatre during this decade. (The “British Invasion” was actually an early convention for this scene.) But Stephen Sondheim’s appearance at the end of the scene solidifies America’s influence on American musical theatre.

The 1980s scene contains an abundance of popular repertory, and we continue this trend in the 1990s; we include the literature because audiences are more familiar with it. Using the “Tenor Envy” convention we also focus more on repertory in this scene because we are too close to the decade to truly discern any critical and scholastic trends. Rather, we note music and stylistic trends. We draw particular attention to the use of pop-rock ballads and the tenors who sing them in the 1990s. Additionally, we also briefly parody Smokey Joe’s Café, which alludes to our discussion of “radio pop revues.” We close the show and the historic arc with that brief dialogue about “radio pop revues” and our satiric note on revues. Arguing that Broadway’s current trend is recycling rather than originality, we encourage the audience to create and support the birth of new musical theatre—thus, trying to perpetuate the history of American musical theatre.
**Structural Arc**

A 16 Bar Cut contains one unifying storyline; the show is not just a series of historical vignettes. Even though each scene focuses on a specific style, era, or genre of musical theatre and even though each scene has one center “convention,” Patrick and I sculpted the show with a semi-traditional, Aristotelian plot. Complete with rising action, climax, falling acting, and denouement, we tell the story of musical theatre through comedy. Patrick and I do not loosely string together cleverly written and historical-based scenes. We artfully use these scenes to tell a complete narrative. In our own way, the genre of musical theatre becomes a character, and Patrick and I become the minstrels and pageant-wagon players that sing and act out that character’s journey. But instead of telling Everyman or Ulysses’ story, we tell musical theatre’s story.

Throughout the show, Patrick and I “check the chorus line” after nearly every scene. The chorus line is the entire show’s “convention” that reminds the audience of the evening’s scope and helps us form the plot—the history of American musical theatre. The rising action in the story is musical theatre’s evolution, and each scene gets closer and closer to the “Revivals 2000” scene, which is the climax. Since the eleven distinctive comic scenes tell the story on the chorus line, the rising action is tied to the show’s comic pacing. And within the rising action, there are two well-defined hills and valleys that are united to the comic pacing. Starting with a low to medium pace in the circus scene, the show builds in speed and zaniness and peaks with the “Modern Major General” rewrite in operetta. No comedy—no matter how funny—can be constantly at full throttle; there must be breathing room for the audience and the performers. So Patrick and I provide this breath with “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld.” The scene is still funny in its own right, but the comedy is at a lower velocity so it can build again to the end of the act. This cycle
repeats with the slow rise to the R and H scene, which is the fastest-paced and most outrageous scene to that point. This crest makes the R and H scene the perfect end of the act. The beginning of act two starts at the bottom of the comic valley and begins the steady climb to the climax. Using the convention of *A Chorus Line* in the 1980s and 90s scenes is a fitting, fulfilling, and exciting means to build the momentum in act two because Patrick and I have been moving through the chorus line during the entire show. But the revival in the “Revivals 2000” scene is ultimately the climax since Patrick and I end musical theatre history’s journey there and since the revival is the most insane and fastest-paced scene in the play.

![Rising Action & Pacing](image.png)

**Figure 1: Rising Action & Pacing**

The remainder the show is the falling action and the denouement. The falling action is the brief dialogue after the revival until the musical interlude and dialogue break in the middle of “One More Beautiful Song.” This succinct section allows for the transition and leads into the denouement. Asking the audience to create and support original musical theatre is the formal denouement and is a fitting ending since it gives the evening a clear resolution and a clear
purpose. The legitimate performance and strikingly slow and subtle tone all emphasize this moment’s importance and gives the audience the necessary relief after the high-energy climax. The finale “New York, New York” moment is also a part of the denouement, but this ending reemphasizes the comic color of the show and provides a figurative musical button at the end of the play.

In addition, our show not only has an Aristotelian plot, but it also follows the Aristotelian unities. The informality of the “Abridged” style allows for all the unities of character, place, and action. Even though Patrick and I become more than fifty characters each, we are always the heightened characters of Patrick and Rocky pretending to be the other personas. Only using costume pieces and regularly breaking character for comic effect reaffirms that we never drop the Patrick and Rocky characters. Since we never pretend that our theatrical locale is anything but a stage, we maintain the unity of place, and since the entire world of the play occurs in the present, we maintain the unity of action. So even though Patrick and I perform a multitude of characters in various locations throughout the majority of Western Civilization, the style of the show allows us to uphold the Aristotelian unities.

Additional Notes on Structure

Patrick and I also use the classic comedy writing technique of funny man and straight man in order to give more cohesion throughout the show and to add more humor in the dialogue. From the opening scene, my character is the pretentious scholar who wants to perform a legitimate evening of musical theatre, and Patrick’s character is the goofy partner who wants to sing and be silly—straight guy and funny guy. Using these characters helped Patrick and I unify the show. Since we move through a multitude of people, times, and places, having these
consistent characters gives the audience a home base to which they can return after each scene and allows them to more easily understand the scope and timeline (chorus line) of the evening.

These characters also opened up a world of humorous opportunities that allowed Patrick and I to convey important information. From the start of the very first scene, my character attempts to seriously teach and inform the audience about musical theatre while Patrick’s shenanigans always seem to spoil my genuine intent. Without Patrick’s character, sections like minstrelsy and Show Boat would seem dry and out of place. But at the same time, Patrick and I wanted to vary this formula, so our characters did not become predictable and stale. Therefore, Patrick and I shrewdly switch the funny man and straight man characters for short and specific times. Patrick relays the historic information and makes me appear stupid in the vaudeville scene, and he provides moments of well-spoken intelligence in “The Golden Up-Tempo” and “My Fair Laddie,” while I take the scholastic back seat. Having this funny man and straight man structure and varying this structure gives our characters much needed texture and color as we playfully romp through musical theatre.

Another structural element that adds consistency and helps solidify the show is the running jokes. The principle running gags are jokes about awful or poorly received shows in musical theatre history and jokes about homosexuality. Since the bulk of A 16 Bar Cut is about the most seminal and canonical shows in musical theatre history, Patrick and I introduce lesser musicals and quickly poke fun at them; these jokes are additional fodder for any musical theatre aficionados. Jokes about homosexuality are unavoidable since musical theatre is so often associated with gay culture. If the show did not contain any of these jokes, I fully believe that audiences would miss them and mention it. Opening with “Willkommen” and Patrick’s portrayal of Fritzy establishes that we will incorporate various gay jokes, which are very lightly
peppered throughout the script. These jokes culminate in the 1990s scene where Patrick and I depict a gay couple. Without the running gags about bad musical theatre and homosexuality, the show loses the small amount of inside jokes for musical theatre fans, and it loses a portion of its congruency.

The use of anger became a considerable point of discussion in script development. Just as Patrick and I wanted to vary the straight man and funny man structure in the show, we also wanted to make sure that we did not make the show “too angry.” Playful and catty digs at one another are peppered throughout the show since they are fun and sometimes easy ways to find comedy, and topping one another is a convenient technique for adding objective, obstacle, and general structure to a scene. But with that in mind, Patrick and I made sure that these methods are used sparingly and appropriately in the context of the show. The text contains what I call an anger arc that skillfully employs these humorous anger techniques without allowing them to infest the script as a whole. (Patrick and I are supposed to be a team during the show; we do not want to appear antagonistic.) The anger arc begins in the vaudeville scene and climaxes in “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld.” My frustration with Patrick starts when Patrick destroys the minstrelsy section. My irritation increases when Patrick continually interrupts my lecture on operetta. And our aggravation explodes in “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld” when we West Side Story rumble. However, each time we are angry at each other, this choice is specifically tied to the journey of the play and the scene convention. Patrick and I also quickly move away from anger during these scenes: at the end of operetta we playfully sing “Modern Major General,” and at the end of “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld” we move to the joyous “Golden Up-Tempo.” The only other time in the script where Patrick and I use a heavy dose of anger is in the 1980s, but in that scene, we are portraying characters other than ourselves, which applies to the scene convention. Most importantly, the use of anger as a
scene tool and as a vehicle for comedy was a carefully considered choice that was used appropriately and scarcely.

The show also contains two other notable constructional points: costumes and outside voices. Within the “Abridged” style, costumes become an anticipated, important, and fun component in the show. The cheap-looking, gaudy costumes support the play’s impromptu feel; they help establish the multitude of characters, and the drag costumes provide a great deal of comedy. In order to maximize the costume’s effectiveness and humor, Patrick and I have a small costume arc. We wait until the drag in operetta to introduces the first big and funny pieces, and then in the Oklahoma! section, we use the greatest amount of zany costumes and quick changes. We then delay the next big costume scene until the 1980s since that scene has the most drag and so that the audience does not tire of the costume humor.

The two kinds of outside voices are the voice over and Justin. We first thought to use a voice over during the scenes that use A Chorus Line. Using the voice over pragmatically allows me to change character and costumes, and it allows Patrick and I another character with which to interact. This character addition is a fun surprise and a variance for the audience. So that the voice over does not seem out of place in act two, we use the voice over at the top of the show and during the rumble—both are applicable and funny. While the voice over is a rogue character, Justin is truly the third character in the show. Patrick and I both agreed that within the style of the show, we could not ignore Justin’s presence. We acknowledge him in the opening scene and throughout the play, and we interact with him at key moments. Having Justin participate in the vaudeville scene, try to steal my thunder in “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld,” and narrate in the 1980s gives Justin his own mini-storyline as our comrade in zaniness. Therefore, the use of costumes and outside voices is a planned structural element that serves the style and character of A 16 Bar Cut.
Point of View

Unfortunately, musical theatre is too often viewed with skewed and pretentious perception. Because musical theatre’s roots are linked to forms of theatre like vaudeville and variety that focus on spectacle and comedy, elitist scholars and many theatergoers consider musical theatre a lesser kind of genre. These uninformed audience members often believe that musical theatre only exists for pure entertainment; it has no dramatic profundity. And they often believe that musical theatre performers do not need or necessarily possess the same kind of depth as other actors, since these theatergoers believe that musical theatre performers only have singing, dancing, and presentational abilities. To these snobs, a new Broadway play is worthy of scrutiny, but a new Broadway musical is not.

Patrick and I believe that musical theatre holds an important place in theatre history and that musical theatre is a challenging and effective means of storytelling. Not to sound pretentious myself, but A16 Bar Cut is our homage to the genre. Through an evening of comedy, Patrick and I explore the genre’s origins, important works of literature, and its range of storytelling. We attempt to prove that the history of musical theatre is just as long, intricate, and valuable as non-musical theatre. For example, we reveal that Greek theatre—the first kind of theatre—was musical. We also illustrate a large selection of canonical musical theatre literature, and we bring many important and popular songs back to their theatrical origins (e.g., “Old Man River” and “My Funny Valentine”). And Patrick and I unfold for the audience an abundance of exciting plots and stories—a small example of the people and worlds that musical theatre can create.

Ironically, Patrick and I try to honor musical theatre and refute the elitist view of it with a show that is written in the “Abridged” style—a style that could be viewed as unimportant and
stupid. But our zany romp through history gives Patrick and I the opportunity to present a wealth of musical moments. With nearly 100 songs performed during the evening, the emotional qualities in the show’s music borders on limitless. In our show, Patrick and I are able to provide a wide array of musical expression and give the audience more than just a taste of a musical’s storytelling ability. In addition, our performances in the show also serve as examples of the range of ability needed to perform musical theatre. Not only do we have to sing and dance in a multitude of styles, we also have to portray a plethora of varied characters, provide a true connection with the audience, implore numerous comedy techniques, and be able to seamlessly switch gears and have moments of deep sincerity.

Most importantly, Patrick and I respect and find joy in musical theatre, and we want audiences to do so as well. After seeing A 16 Bar Cut, we want audiences to feel that musical theatre is valuable: it has a long and important history; its performers are craftsmen; and it is worthy of a future.

**Accessibility**

Even though our show is about musical theatre, Patrick and I wanted audience members who have no previous knowledge of musical theatre to be able to understand, appreciate, and enjoy their evening. Obviously, the show has constructional layers and different levels of jokes. The more an audience member knows about musical theatre, the more they will appreciate the show’s cleverness. An informed audience member will realize the witty juxtaposition of *West Side Story* and Flo Zeigfeld, and they will have a deeper comprehension and appreciation for how we use the *A Chorus Line* characters. They will also get the more obscure jokes about Cathy Rigby, Barbara Cook, Patti Lupone, etc. However, during our writing sessions, Patrick and I were consciously aware of the completely uninformed audience member. Most of the jokes are
simply funny jokes that do not require a knowledge base, and we also give a great deal of historical information. Providing this information is a show purpose, but it also helps us to set up the jokes for the uninformed audience member; if someone does not know about operetta, then they cannot laugh with us about it. If Patrick and I were to extract all of the pure historical information that we use to introduce each scene, then we would have a clear and succinct essay on the journey of musical theatre. Providing this information was our goal. However, as mentioned in earlier sections, we did not want to sound like a history lecture. Our use of funny man and straight man helped us mask the “information dumps” as we called them during writing session, all the while filling in any historical gaps that an audience member might have. We cannot pay homage to musical theatre if anyone in the audience does not understand the context. Patrick and I want to promote musical theatre; we do not want to leave people confused and resentful of it.

**Conclusion**

Ultimately, A16 Bar Cut is a calculated and well-structured script. Through careful planning, Patrick and I have developed an original musical that uses the “Abridged” style and our own “conventions” to their fullest potential. In this new way, we not only negotiate our historical arc of musical theatre history, but we also present a clear and organized play structure that at the same time seems impromptu and zany. Moving through musical theatre, we accomplish our goal of history and hilarity; we are able to show reverence to and teach audiences about musical theatre and made them laugh while we do it. We achieve the complicated comprise of scholarship and comic craftsmanship.
ROLE ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter is best appreciated with an understanding of the “Production and Performance Journal.” After having experienced and reflected upon the entire thesis process, the following essays serve as a synthesis of that process, and they evaluate each of my roles as playwright, producer, and actor. Reading the “Production and Performance Journal” will give a more detailed retrospective on how I experienced each step of the thesis as it was occurring. This chapter, however, is a crystallization of those experiences and a discussion of successes, failures, and what I learned from each role.

Playwright

Serving as the co-playwright of my thesis project was the longest of the three main thesis roles, and it is—perhaps—the most rewarding. This role was one of the most valuable components of my thesis because it was the most foreign to me. I have taken playwriting classes and written scenes and even composed songs, but I had never created anything of A 16 Bar Cut’s scope, size, or style. I have also never written anything with such a long gestation period or anything that was fully mounted or co-written. Having never tackled these issues before, the script’s development becomes a fascinating journey of ingenuity and instinct.

Patrick and I needed thesis roles, so we decided to write our own. Since Patrick and I are both highly creative and motivated people, we refused to do something expected or simple; we did not want to merely create a small project for the sake of creating thesis roles, so we began brainstorming something new. The idea for A 16 Bar Cut appealed to us on many levels. We knew that the project would encompass and challenge every single aspect of our MFA program,
and we thought it would be fun. Patrick and I were also excited to collaborate on the project because we knew our potential if we combined our efforts.

I am amazed at how many ideas from our very first brainstorming meeting were actualized in the final performance. And I am astounded that approximately eighty percent of our ideas from the second brainstorming meeting made their way in some form into the finished product. I do not think that the longevity of our original ideas is an accident, nor do I think it is creative laziness. Patrick and I stumbled upon an amazing concept for a show, and our knowledge of musical theatre and aesthetic sensibilities are a perfect match for this concept. While we had much to learn and a long journey ahead of us, I am proud that many of our first instincts were so exactly on target.

After bringing our concept and show outline to John Bell, Patrick and I were charged to write our first scene. John had trepidations about the project because he thought that we might live in a comic world that only the most educated or our personal friends might find funny. He was also worried that Patrick and I were living in a “seventy-two hour high” that comes from the initial germ of a project. To prove our project “thesis worthy,” Patrick and I set out to write our first scene. We chose to start with the eighties since we had a clear vision of the scene as a whole, and since we knew the historical material and literature incredibly well. Working with Patrick was a joy. Since we had developed an intimate creative relationship as classmates over the previous two years, collaborating with him was ideal. We spoke very openly, and we were very forthright about our ideas for the scene and for the voices of the characters. We were not shy about disliking each other’s ideas, but we were also supportive. When we took the scene to John, he enjoyed it but was worried about the mocking tone and the length of the scene. We informed him that the eighties was supposed to mock musical theatre, and it was one of the few
times in the show that we would employ this device. In addition, this scene was going to be one of the longest because audiences were more familiar with this material. He approved the project, and I think that we impressed him with our specificity about the scene and about the scene’s role in the overall evening; to be honest, having this kind of understanding so early on impressed and surprised me too.

Over the next four months, Patrick and I wrote the first draft—one scene at a time. We worked at a very quick pace (e.g., working even when we did not want to, making sure that we set deadlines for ourselves, etc.). But we consciously allowed time for our scenes to breathe. If we were stuck, we let the scene lie, and we came back to it in a day or two with new vigor. Even though we both wrote the show, over time we naturally fell into the pattern of writing our own lines. Of course there are many exceptions, but since the characters are heightened versions of ourselves, we knew how we would turn our own phrase. As a collaborative team, Patrick and I had our own strengths to bring to the table. While we are both funny men, I fully admit that Patrick is funnier than I am, and I feel that it is safe to say that I have a greater understanding of dramatic structure. While we both did everything, I was the constant voice of story arch, and Patrick came up with some of the zaniest ideas and the best “one liners.”

After we would finish a scene, we would give it to John. He would read it over, and then we would—for lack of a better term—workshop the scene. What surprised me the most was that, at times, John had very little to say. On more than one occasion, John’s first notes would only be spelling corrections. On the scenes where John had little to say, I took his response as a compliment, but I think that John abstained from saying everything he probably wanted to say because he wanted to let Patrick and I own the project. And as an author, I think he did a good job at riding a very fine line. We wanted and needed a third eye, but John never intruded into
our process. He would make us clarify moments, remind us to think about consistency, and make sure that we were not crossing too many offensive boundaries. But without question, John’s greatest contribution to the show is the ending. John adamantly fought for a serious and dramatic moment in the show, which I adamantly fought against. As a thesis project, John wanted us—his students—to showcase that we had learned how to handle legitimate moments as well as comic. The three of us brainstormed various ideas including one about a dramatic overture of sorts, but I thought that the moment would feel disjunctive from the rest of the evening. Patrick and I eventually came across “One More Beautiful Song,” and we incorporated it into the end of the show. In addition to filling John’s requirements, this new ending gave the story a denouement and provided a contextualized purpose to the show, and it definitely improved the flow and feeling of the evening.

In addition, most people find it fascinating that we almost wrote the show completely backwards. I find their fascination odd because I use that technique in non-fiction writing all of the time; if you know where you are going, it is much easier to get there. In addition, since we had a greater knowledge of more recent musical theatre, we wrote all of act two and the Rodgers and Hammerstein scenes before we tackled act one, which would require more research. Writing in this order created several interesting after effects. Act one and act two are vastly different. Act one has shorter segments with Patrick and I playing ourselves through most of the action; whereas act two has longer scenes with Patrick and I playing other characters through the majority of the material. Even though I feel that the show has an overall consistency, the differences in the acts are because of the change in musical theatre history (moving from short sketches like in vaudeville and then to full stories like Les Misérables, for example), and the differences are because of Patrick’s and my process. Patrick and I developed the style for the
show as we wrote, and since act one was last, it has the most consistent and most developed style. During the writing and rehearsing process, however, the differences in the acts played in our minds. At times we would think that act two was stronger, and then we would think that act one was stronger than act two. And then we would go back and forth again. Eventually, we had to tell ourselves to wait for an audience’s response.

Once all of the scenes were written, they remained remarkably intact for the remainder of the thesis project. Patrick and I did slight revisions once all of the scenes were written in order to give greater consistency. But we had focused on that point throughout, so the revisions were minor. In addition, Patrick and I gave ourselves free reign to change anything in the script during the rehearsal process. Most of these changes were very simple; lines that tripped our tongues were reworded. Some larger changes were made once we discovered that a scene could not be technically accomplished on stage. The greatest examples are the West Side Story section in “Ol’ Man Ziegfeld” and the eighties. During the West Side Story bit, Patrick could not make a costume change, and the scene felt long anyway, so we cut a large chunk and tightened the scene. And the eighties scene was very awkward since it was the first scene that we wrote, so we organized the Sondheim section and added Justin’s lines. These changes were wonderful lessons in the difference between ideas in our heads and the pragmatic world of rehearsal; pragmatism always wins. The only other major rewrite was for my song “Tenor Envy,” but this song gets its own journal in the appendix. The greatest lesson learned from this process was to be bold in making major overhauls even when time is short.

However, the greatest tool for a playwright is an audience. In knew this theatre tidbit in theory but had never experienced it before, and as the playwright, going in front of an audience was daunting, exhilarating, and incredibly useful. I dare say that I was more nervous for the
designer run than I was for opening night because Patrick and I had literally received no feedback for eight months except for John, Justin, and my friend Musetta. We were, of course, elated that John, our designers, and our few select friends liked the show, but I was most interested in their constructive feedback. Without any help, I could simply feel that the game show and the eighties scene were too long, and John’s notes supported this feeling. John also thought that the show was confusing in that he felt there were four different endings. And while this particular comment was unexpected, I agreed with the majority of this note. So with all of this help, Patrick and I were able to clarify specific moments and slightly streamline the show before we opened.

But nothing compares to what a playwright learns from a fully mounted production in front of a large group of people, and this next step is exactly what Patrick and I needed for the life of the show. First and foremost, Patrick and I learned that the show works. All of the thought, planning, and rewriting that we had done to make the show funny, enjoyable, and accessible to a wide variety of audiences worked. (For a discussion on structural analysis, see the chapter called “Structural Analysis.”) But even though I enjoyed the audiences’ positive responses and the praise, I was also engrossed in what I could glean from the weekend of performances. I believe that act one is a slick, well-oiled machine that moves at an incredible pace, but as we feared, act two is another matter. The longer scenes in act two are too long and too different from the first act, and while audiences seemed to enjoy Patrick and I playing other characters for short periods of time, they are more interested in Patrick and Rocky’s relationship and journey.

The scenes in act two that were most successful were the scenes that were most like act one (i.e., the entr’acte, the seventies, and the revival); the other three scenes need some retooling.
The nineties scene is the easiest fix. Patrick and I have already ready said that we will do “Tenor Envy” as ourselves and drop the A Chorus Line convention. (We will still need to discuss the “gay ninties” because it is so historically important and because it so nicely ties into “I’ll Cover You.”) Even though we shrunk the eighties scene, it was still way too long, and it needs a structural makeover. As the first scene we ever wrote for the project, I sensed that the audience could somehow feel that the eighties scene was different and less “put together” than the rest of the show. And as for “My Fair Laddie,” a part of me thinks that the scene could work, a part of me thinks that we should scrap the idea and start over, and a part of me thinks that we could skip this section entirely. While Patrick and I executed the scene well and while the concept for the scene is good, it simply does not fit into the rest of the evening. I could say that we could go straight from the entr’acte into the seventies since technically we cover most of the fifties/sixties material in the “Golden Up-Tempo,” but then we would skip belting. Also, the seventies would not be as funny without warming the audience up at the beginning of act two first. And I could say that we could skip the entr’acte, skip the fifties and the sixties, and make the show a ninety-minute one act, but I do not think that any two actors are physically and vocally able to do that.

Looking back over the project, one of the aspects that Patrick and I succeeded at the most was playing to our strengths. During our very first discussion while we drove back to Daytona Beach, Patrick and I developed ideas that were appropriate to our abilities, and comedy is one of them. Writing a musical in the “Abridged” style was a project about which we would be excited, and it would hold our interest for nearly a year. In this very first meeting, Patrick and I also knew that I would be the straight-man/professor and that Patrick would be the funny-man/screw up. Even though both of us flipped these roles at various times in the script, knowing how to
play to and write for our strength was one of the most important elements of our thesis, and we continued this pattern throughout the entire process.

I also know that Patrick and I were able to succeed because we were fearless. Great rewards can only come from great risks, and taking on this project was a huge risk. Patrick and I had never written anything of this nature or on this scale. And we could have very easily become lazy, overwhelmed, or resentful during the course of this year, but we never did. We were also fearless in our script. We were not afraid to go too far; we were not afraid to think outside of the box; and we were not afraid to make fools of ourselves. And we were fearless in the rewriting phase. We were not afraid to admit that something was not working. We were not afraid to take a note, and we were not afraid to change something that would make the script better, even if it were at the last minute. I could argue that Patrick and I were fearless in nearly every aspect of our thesis, but I think it is most apparent and applicable during the playwriting process because this role was so very new and uncharted.

If the playwriting process had any failures, the biggest one would be that there was not an over-riding third eye during rehearsals; there was not one individual who only thought about the script. This difficulty was also a problem during the acting process, but during the playwriting process, the benefits of not having a third eye outweighed the disadvantages. Due to the nature of our two-man show, it was best that the actors could freely change the script, because our acting instincts could override any “heady” playwriting garbage, or in other words, the actors could make the text sound more natural. If the actual script has failures (and it does), these failures are an expected and accepted part of the larger playwriting process; every script reaches a point where it needs an actual audience to improve.
At the end of it all, the greatest testament to my role as a playwright is that I am still excited about A 16 Bar Cut, and I still want to make it better. Patrick and I plan to workshop the discoveries that we made during the run of the show, and eventually we want to take the show to the text level. We will work to obtain rights to the songs we use, while we will pursue other performance venues and other forms of representation, and I hope that we continue to work as diligently and as steadfast as we have during the past because that will take us far.

Producer

While Patrick and I worked incredibly hard on the production aspect of the show, the role of the producer is not as glamorously creative as an actor or a playwright, so I did not journal the role of the producer as much as the others. Notating that I signed checks, wrote emails, and ironed my costume pants are not the typical things of which monograph documents are made. However, if the plethora of these time enveloping tasks were not completed, the show would not have been possible, so the role of the producer deserves its due here.

The role of a producer is a very specific one in professional theatre, but in my thesis context, I label the role as everything other than playwright or actor. That said, my producer role was just as arduous and daunting as my playwriting or acting roles, but producing was more tedious because it was accomplishing one thousand little jobs instead of just two big ones. I cannot possibly catalogue the steps taken on my producing journey because it would be like counting the stones on the road to Damascus; there are too many. Even one simple task like finding two, moderately priced cowbells was a journey into and of itself, which included emails, voicemails, phone calls, a wasted trip, more phone calls, a search on the internet, and finally a sixty-mile round trip car ride to a hay and feed store in the middle of the woods. But even though I cannot catalogue the journey, I can crystallize the experience.
Being the producer was first and foremost a lesson in organization and diligence. As for organization, Patrick and I kept categorized lists on the wall of our office; they were a constant rotation of items being scratched off and items being added with Patrick and I trying to divvy out the work equally. We had lists for everything: music that we needed to find; music that needed to be inputted; costumes and props that needed to be found, made, or fixed; meetings we needed to make or have planned; agendas of those meetings; and the lists of the lists goes on. As for diligence, this topic is somewhat self-explanatory. Patrick and I had to stay focused on one goal for nine months. There was a period of time that whenever we would watch television, we would sew rhinestones on our jackets or input music into Finale; I do not even want to think of the hours I spent doing those things. And in our spare time, we would search for, shop for, build, fix, or buy costumes and props. We spent large amounts of time working on the production end because Patrick and I both agreed that even though our show was supposed to be “low-budget,” we wanted everything that we had to be of the highest quality possible. The best example of this is the program. After Patrick and I had made, printed, and folded the programs, we discovered a very obvious error in the song list, so we invested in printing the programs again. The only time that my organization skills failed me was when I forgot an important box in Daytona on our preview night. But as a testament to our earlier organization, my forgetfulness did not hurt the tech week process whatsoever.

As the producers of our show, our greatest strength was using our contacts, which, as anyone in the theatre will tell you, is half the game. And Patrick and I exhausted every resource we had to make the show as professional and as outstanding as possible. Our friend Justin charged us approximately ten percent of what he normally charges because he liked the project and likes us. A friend of mine who is a costume designer helped us find some of the more
elaborate costumes. A graphic artist friend of mine did the poster for free. Patrick’s mom and dad helped build some of the costumes and the letters for our set. Our friend Debbie gave us lots of producer-relevant tips. And she has an immense library, so over half of the score came from her house. I am most proud of the fact that we premiered our show at a regional theatre instead of at a school because Patrick and I can now market the show to other theatres without the stigma of a “thesis show.” But this was only possible because our friends Dave and James at the Orlando Rep like us, had worked with us before, and thought that the show sounded like fun. They gave us the space for less than a twentieth of what they normally charge, and they offered to design the lights and the sound for bottles of liquor. This experience reiterated for me that theatre is about people, and Patrick and I were blessed to have so many helpful friends.

Another successful component of the production role was our marketing. Even though Patrick and I sent out multiple emails to everyone we know and we hung up posters, I took the marketing reigns. I made sure that our show went out on the theatre department’s listserv, UCF’s listserv, and the Rep’s patron and high school student listservs. And without shame, I also sold the show to anyone and everyone who seemed interested, which I am sure annoyed my friends and other people around me. I talked to checkout clerks, people in retirement homes, and waiters, and I passed out flyers at local theatre events. With all of our work and with the help of our friends telling their friends, Patrick and I had excellent houses for both our performances, and I am most proud of the fact that there were many people each night that I had never met.

Our greatest failure as the producers of our show was not finding any kind of outside financial help. All of the costs were out of Patrick and my own pocket, and we could have cut costs significantly if we would have been willing to borrow props and costumes. But Patrick and I wanted to invest in these items because it will make mounting the show again immensely
easier. Not finding any other outside funding was not for the lack of trying. We investigated many different grants, but because our show was associated with a school project and because we had not written the grant two years earlier, we were ineligible for almost everything that we could find. I also asked my uncle, who is a high-ranking Florida political official, to help us find two thousand dollars, which he did. But at the last minute, he was unable to help us because of new Florida legislation about political fundraising. If Patrick and I had had any kind of financial help, I think that it would have solved what I view as our two biggest production failures. I would have liked to have rented and/or bought the backdrop that we describe in our script. Even though the letters were sufficient for our set, I thought that the look of the stage was weak, and I wish we could have had the backdrop. In addition, with extra money Patrick and I would have done a mail out to further increase our house sizes. My experience is that mail outs are the most cost effective way to target a theater-going audience, and it pains me that we could not do it.

Being the producer of the show was one of the surprising joys in the process because it made the show truly my own. Patrick and I only asked for help on the things that we literally could not do, and if many of the production tasks had been farmed out to others, the show would not have been so special. I could look at the show and say, “I made that prop,” “I arranged that song,” and “I hung up the posters to get these people here.” Doing production work was also wonderfully humbling and grounding because after the high from each tech rehearsal or show, we had to do our own laundry and sweep and mop the floor. And it is that kind of real-world stuff that actually makes “the magic of theatre” happen.

**Actor**

This entire thesis process existed to give Patrick and I thesis roles, which we turned into showcase vehicles. Throughout all of the planning and all of the rehearsals, we knew that we
had created a two-hour show that stretched our abilities and totally revolved around us. So as some of the middle school kids I have worked with have said, Patrick and I had to “bring it.” Translation: we had to perform at our highest possible level. I believed that I reached that level, and as expected, getting there was journey.

The rehearsal process for our show was completely abnormal and extremely sporadic, but it was very functional, incredibly organized, and highly creative. For the vast majority of our rehearsals, Patrick and I were the only people in room. The only exception until our designer run was Justin. But Patrick and I had rehearsal calendar, and we stuck to it. Even though rehearsals were sometimes late in the evening or only for an hour in between other activities, we set specific goals for each rehearsal and did our best to accomplish them.

When looking at my project, I found it nearly impossible to focus solely on my role as the actor at any given moment other than in performance. When looking at my previous analysis, Patrick and I held almost every job for this show, so focusing only on my acting during rehearsal would have been completely irrational. But this complexity to the rehearsal process made my project so much more enlightening and much more meaningful. Other than serving as stage manager, the two most important metaphorical hats that Patrick and I had on during our acting rehearsals were our playwright and director hats, and fulfilling these two roles had a direct affect on my acting process.

As the actor and the playwright, and I had a unique opportunity to make my acting instincts come alive in the text. When I was writing with Patrick, I was thinking about my acting choices and how they would drive the script, so when I entered the first rehearsal, I was light years ahead of where I normally start on the first day. I did not have to discover my arc; I had outlined that back in September. I did not have to find the beats; I wrote them to fit my personal
sense of comic timing. I did not have to build relationships from scratch; I had known Patrick for years. As the actor who was also the playwright, I had the greatest creative freedom that is imaginable. If something felt like it did not work, then I would change it. When I found a fun, new moment, I did not have to make it work; I changed the script so that it did work. But with complete freedom, there comes a price. The voice of the playwright never left my head, and it sometimes got very annoying. I would try to connect to a line or listen to Patrick, and I would question if I should reword my last line. Once Patrick and I had gotten the script and the show in a place that we could do runs, I had to reteach myself how to focus on the moment. And I only truly achieved this with the pressure and the adrenaline of a performance. But as the actor/playwright in this rehearsal process, I gained a greater sense of exploration. I pride myself on being creative, but I have held myself back in previous shows and rehearsal because I was afraid of being “wrong”; I was afraid that my new choice might not be what was intended. And so I fought my instincts and did not go down a path that could have brought new life to my character. These restrictive feelings might always be a personal challenge, but my thesis process was a great lesson in not being afraid to shake things up.

The other important role that I had to fill while acting was the role of the director. Patrick and I accomplished much of the directing work as the playwrights. We already knew the world of the play; we knew what it would sound like and look like, and we knew the style. And we knew the story that we wanted to tell. We knew that we wanted the evening to be a playful homage to musical theatre that encouraged a bright future for the form, so we made this point very clear in the script. Therefore, staging became the principle role of the director in the rehearsal process, and Patrick and I worked on this together. We blocked organically because we agreed that it would be the most efficient way. Even though we had virtually no set and there
were only two actors, the blocking was difficult because we had to find ways to vary the stage pictures and use the entire space, which I think—for the most part—we accomplished. As the director, I ran into the same problem as I did being the playwright: the voice never stopped. Even after Patrick and I would block and run scenes, I still had a constant eye out for the stage picture, and I had to trust our work as the director and live in the moment.

But as the actor/director, I had the unique opportunity to make my acting my own. Since no one was there to give me notes except for Patrick, I had to give myself notes. I had to force myself to give a richer and more complex performance. As an aftereffect, I have become more self aware in rehearsal, which is a thing since I can help myself. But with that, I cannot forget the role of a director, and I must trust him or her as well. If I could have changed our rehearsal process, I would have liked a director because actors simply need a third eye. Justin and John served as the third eye during several points in the rehearsal process, and Patrick and I yearned for more of that. A director would have improved our staging, would have more easily solved any conflicts, and would have been another trusted sounding board and problem solver. Patrick and I have agreed that when and if we mount the show again, we must have a director.

I would absolutely love to be able to describe my acting technique for this show and give a clear explanation of how I developed my character. And if this was any other character in almost any other show, I feel totally confident that I could do that. But as I just described, this thesis process is unique; I did not develop this character in the traditional sense. I was not handed a script, so I could go home and do my actor’s homework. No director or musical director ever worked with me and shared with me his or her vision. I did all of those things and more and not in that order. I started developing my character as I brainstormed the show. I knew that I would be a heightened professorial version of myself, and I knew that the show
would revolve around my character’s relationship with Patrick’s character. So I started from there. But when I got into the rehearsal studio, I found—as I always knew—that acting starts and ends with the text. If I was having a problem, I would go back and ask myself how this moment fit into the show, and I asked how this moment fit into the scene. I would then evaluate the moment based on Uta Hagen’s famous scoring principles, and I made sure that I understood each tactic and how it got me to my objective. Since I had to create many different characters, exploring different kinospheres and gravity centers also solved many problems. I also constantly reminded myself to make small journeys within the larger journey of the show. Since so many of the songs were very short, I had to remind myself that there was still a journey within each song’s cutting. This note in particular gave my performance a much deeper complexity than is written into the script.

There were several performing challenges that I knew about before rehearsal started. The first challenges were the technical demands of the show. Since it is a two-man show, quantity of material that we had to memorize was immense, and there was a time that I was overwhelmed. But Patrick and I overcame this challenge with proper planning. We knew how busy our lives were going to be in the spring, so we began rehearsals approximately four months before we opened. In addition, we knew that the demands of a two-person show were also going to be stressful on our bodies and voices, so we slowly built up the strength to perform the show. And we made conscience choices to give ourselves plenty of rest.

The other performing challenge that I knew before rehearsal started was about my role in the structure of our show. I had never played the straight man in a comic team before; I was always the dummy. Even when I performed in The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged), I was the goofy one who did not know anything about Shakespeare. But as I got into
rehearsal, I did not find my role as large a leap as I had imagined. Perhaps it was because I knew that material so well going to rehearsal or perhaps it was because I am truly pretentious at heart, but I enjoyed my role as the slightly wacky straight man/professor. And I found the way into my character when I began using my words as if I were in a classical acting piece. The heightened-language sensibility clicked with my character, and it became the jumping off place from there on.

During the rehearsal process, I also had to deal with several challenges that I did not foresee. Since we had no real set and since the show is very presentation in nature, I had a long time getting comfortable in body. Throughout the show, Patrick and I literally stood still for longer periods of time, and we often made big, huge crosses. So it took me a while to get comfortable on stage. (I do not think that it was a staging problem because of the show’s style.) I concurred this problem by literally telling myself to get over it and focusing on connecting to my text. The other problem that I did not foresee was that Patrick and I were holding back our characters and our stage energy. Perhaps it was our need to protect our bodies, but in early rehearsals, we were slightly reserved. When we asked Justin for any notes, he gave us not to be afraid and to push our characters forward. Once he told us this, Patrick and I came unglued, and John even said at the designer run that we were a bit over zealous at times. This was a good place to be at the designer run because we could find the happy balance by the time the show opened.

But in addition to the technique that I brought to the role and the challenges that I overcame, I was most successful in my role because of my knowledge and understanding of style. Not only did I have to understand and perform in the “Abridged” style of theatre throughout the entire show, but I also had to perform in multiple acting, singing, and dancing styles throughout musical theatre history. I had to have vocal mastery in order to quickly change
from operetta to “The Golden Up-Tempo.” I had to have the physical nuances and technique to
dance like Fosse and then turn around and dance like Bennett. And I had to have the acting
“chops” to capture the acting sensibility of the 1940s during our Oklahoma! spoof and then to
sweetly deliver the message in “One More Beautiful Song.” As the title says, I had to literally
perform the history of American musical theatre, and I believe that I did.

The greatest failure for me as a performer was that I took too long to find the focus that I
needed as an actor. With all of the other hats that I had to wear, I could not let myself focus just
on my performance until it was very late in the process. I feel that I eventually was able to live
in the moment, but I was not able to get to that point until I was in front of an audience, and I did
not really feel that I was there until Saturday night. I know that I could have reached an even
deeper connection if I had found this groove earlier, but such is the multitasking nature of my
thesis project. I would relish another opportunity to perform the show again because I know that
there is still more performing layers and nuances to be found.

That said, without shame and without pride, I can whole-heartedly say that I delivered
one of my best performances to date—if not the best. I am a character actor, and the blessing
and the curse of the character actor is that you are hardly ever the lead. I have come close to
carrying a show before, but A 16 Bar Cut was the biggest role that I have ever had. And as one
of the leads in a showcase vehicle musical, I think I showed myself off very well. I showed that
as a performer, I not only have the technical ability to carry a show, but I also can do it with
depth, texture, and an understanding of style.

Conclusion

Taking on all of these different theatrical roles in my thesis show made my thesis
experience infinitely more valuable than if I had simply been cast in a show. Not only did I gain
a significantly deeper knowledge about almost every facet of theatre, but I learned how to use
this knowledge and apply it to myself as an actor. And this experience gave me the greatest
master class in collaboration that I could have ever wished for. (The mere fact that Patrick and I
are still alive and are still very good friends after this process is a testament to us both.) Even
though my MFA program was geared to develop musical theatre performers—not playwrights or
producers, having a working knowledge of the other aspects theatre is incredibly valuable, and it
makes for an immensely stronger performer.
PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE JOURNAL

Introduction

In a very valid but still comic way, this show is Patrick’s and my baby, and I do not think it is a coincidence that the process was nine months. If I kept a truly accurate journal of my thesis process over this time, I would have a journal entry for nearly every day. So to streamline the journaling process, the production journals for the fall focus on the writing process, and the journals for the spring focus on the rehearsal process. Even though I have included other relevant entries and discussions at various times—such as notes on my role as producer, I believe that the writing and rehearsal processes are the most important to journal. Recording these aspects of my thesis will be the most valuable for evaluating the project and for any kind of retrospective in the future.

Production Journal: Fall 2005

August 26, 2005

After other planned and promised thesis opportunities did not materialize, Patrick and I decided today to write our own two-man thesis show. After bouncing traditional cabaret ideas around, we both knew that this kind of show would bore us and would not be fulfilling enough to spend an entire year developing. In our first brainstorming meeting, Patrick pushed very hard for a show that focused on musical theatre history. I thought that his history idea was possible but had the danger of being too much like a lecture with music. I came up with the idea to use an “Abridged” style show that was created by the Reduced Shakespeare Company in The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged). (I did the show in college.) Using this style to write a show about musical theatre sounded brilliant and fun. We immediately had ideas for scenes.
Minstrelsy would be a little racy. Rodgers and Hammerstein would be a game show. (Patrick and I agreed that a game show would be a fun way to avoid an “information dump.”) Operetta would be a G and S spoof with new lyrics for a famous patter song. Vaudeville would be a West Side Story spoof of Zeigfeld. And we even wanted to write a new song called “Tenor Envy.” Writing a new work would not only display Patrick and my vocal strengths but would also give us a chance to exercise our composition abilities.

August 27, 2005

In a three-hour car ride to West Palm Beach, Patrick and I fleshed out an outline for the show. Working with Patrick is already rewarding because we’re not afraid to be honest. If we don’t like an idea, we say so and then move on. Neither of us gets offended. This is a rough outline that we created.

- Opening – using a similar Hercules spoof for the Greeks.
- Opening number – we will write our own.
- Circus – we don’t know yet.
- Revue, Vaudeville, Minstrelsy – we will use a black face bit and more.
- Operetta – G and S spoof.
- Turn of the Century – West Side bit, which will include Show Boat.
- Golden Age – The Golden Up-tempo. We don’t know what this will be yet.
- R and H – Game show with a version of Oklahoma!
- 60s – Boy Meets Girl everything is happy. Use Lerner and Loewe, Styne.
- 70s – This will focus on major dancers.
- 80s – power ballads. English composers overcome by Sondheim.
• 90s – Tenor Envy.
• Today.

August 29, 2005

We typed out and expanded our show outline, and we roughed out an abstract outline to show to John Bell.

August 30, 2005

We had the first of what I am sure will be many meetings with John Bell. Patrick and I were both excited to present our ideas, but we also had slight trepidations. We both really wanted this project to fly. When we pitched our idea to John, he was at first very reluctant. He was afraid that our show would only be a spoof, would rely on many inside jokes, and would be inaccessible to a general theatre audience. We assured him that there would be no inside jokes and that our show would have tangible historic content and would be very accessible. He agreed to green light our show, but he wanted to see a scene. He warned against a 72 hour “high” from an idea, and he wanted to see us produce something. In addition, he also brought up several key questions that I’m sure will become major writing points. “What is the arc of the show, and what is your specific point of view about musical theatre history?” We knew answers to these questions, but it was good to have to formulate these answers for John.

August 31, 2005

We immediately began writing a scene for John. We agreed to start with the 80s since it would require no research on our part; we knew it already. We had to scrap our idea about the
London composers conquering America because we wanted to use the convention of *A Chorus Line*. We chose Diana because she is a foreigner like the London composers. But instead of talking about acting class, we have her talking about auditioning. We thought it would also be funny to have Connie Wong enter to talk about *Miss Saigon*. We’ll develop that later.

September 1, 2005

We retooled the beginning of the scene and made it tighter. And we did decide to add Connie. I’m going to do that character with an Asian wig and walking on my knees. We wrote her opening speech.

September 3, 2005

We got tripped up with Connie’s scene because it was getting too confusing. So we decided to separate the scene and divide up *Les Mis* and *Miss Saigon*. We also made Sondheim into a sock puppet. But we’re having a difficult time with his scene. We don’t know how to get out all of the information. I also think it’s funny that we’re going to have sock puppet Steve only speak his lyrics.

September 4, 2005

We changed the title of the scene to “The Eights are a Drag.” That was my idea; I’m very proud. We also solved the Sondheim section. We decided to have Diana discuss all of the Sondheim roles that she would like to play. So we’re able to hit *Forum* and *Night Music* also using the braggart soldier stock character as a through line. I’m very excited about Glynis Johns singing “Send in the Clowns.”
September 5, 2005

We decided to add *Into the Woods* into the Sondheim section, and we changed some of the order. I think that the scene is cleaner and also opens up the ending to include a *Passion* joke and a song from *Follies*. I love our ending—“I wish.” Patrick also thought up a great intermission joke about Barbara Cook.

September 6, 2005

This morning at 8:45, Patrick and I had a meeting with John to go over the scene that we wrote. After having polished it late last night, we were very proud and very ready to have John read our scene. We were pleasantly surprised when John openly laughed on numerous occasions when he read the scene.

John’s major note was that he thought that the scene leaned too heavily toward mockery; he felt that that we need to be more reverent to the art form. We told him that we would be very reverent, but it would be within the larger context of the show. He also wanted us to think about a duet in the show to have a serious moment in the show. We said we would think about it, but I’m not sure. We also talked about performance dates in April and our abstracts. John said to make sure that we talk about what we are contributing to the art form.

John went ahead and gave us the go ahead with our show. He wanted to reiterate to us that we knew that the show would be a lot of work; we said that we knew. The meeting ended with John saying that he would chair both of our committees, but I would have to check with Julia Listengarden to see if that was possible.

Patrick and I also brain stormed a few more ideas later in the end.

- End with “Farewell” from *Sound of Music*. 

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• Have a “chorus line” on stage instead of a time line.
• I try to “fly” Patrick during Peter Pan.
• Someone gets happy during Hair and starts stripping.

September 8, 2005

Patrick and I began working on the R and H section. We had a brainstorming session and finally agreed on how we wanted to game show to feel. We also wrote out all of the questions for the show. We also had a long talk about pacing in the show. We agreed that some of our ideas would have to be cut because of the quick nature of the show. For example, we would like for the game show to have podiums, but it would take too long to set up. So we came up with an even better idea: the cowbell bit.

September 15, 2005

We started working on the Oklahoma! section of the show. Patrick wasn’t sure about this section. I really wanted to condense the entire plot of Oklahoma!, but Patrick was afraid that if we condensed this one show, then our show would get overloaded with condensed shows. I assured him that we would only do one and that Oklahoma! was the perfect one to do it with because of its importance to the genre. It would also build the energy up to the game show, which would be the perfect “high” to end act one. We wrote almost this entire scene in one sitting. Patrick also had a great idea to use “There’s Gotta Be Something Better Than This” to unite the 70’s scene.
September 21, 2005

We started working to complete and tweak the *Oklahoma!* section, which we did, but we got on a role and worked for several hours on the 70’s section. We nailed down the choreographers that we want to use, but we had a big discussion about verisimilitude. I agreed that we should have Robbins in our list of dancers; he’s the grandfather of choreographers. And I love the use of “There’s Gotta Be Something Better Than This” in this section. But I was concerned about the fact that both of these things aren’t 70s. Patrick argued that we could word the Robbin’s section to make it work and that we were combining time periods with *West Side Story* and the turn of the century section, so this convention would work. I agreed.

We spent most of the writing time working on how we wanted to convey the dancer’s style. I think I’ll like the Fosse section best of all. We began with him because it reestablishes that we’re in the 70s. We also worked on how to transition the *Chorus Line* section into the 80s.

September 22, 2005

We finished the entire 70’s scene today. The biggest problem was that we had to scrap the idea to use *A Chorus Line* for this scene since it was too constricting. We decided just to let the song be the unifying factor instead of the *Chorus Line* convention. I think that it actually works better. And I do like the Fosse scene the best. And I had the idea to end the scene with Bennett and that makes a great transition to the 80s. I also like how we used “There’s Gotta Be Something Better Than This.” I only hope that the scene isn’t too long.

Later, in a car ride, we talked about how we would do the 50s and 60s. We decided to combine them since the music style is the same. But we’re not sure what to do with it. Our best idea so far is to have a “Boy Meets Girl” like story where each character represents a different
style of music. We could then show the transition of musical style in that period from the
classically based to the belt/rock style.

September 23, 2005

Patrick and I worked to compile a list of composers in the 50s and 60s and their major
works. We both remarked that this was the first bit of research that we’ve had to do in our
month of writing—a testament to our degree. But we still don’t know what to do with the scene.
Our only idea is the transition of styles, but we can’t yet find a way to make that funny.

September 28, 2005

We spent another day in Panera Bread. We spend most of our writing sessions at either
Panera or Barnes and Nobles. Most of today was spent working on one scene and then going to
another. We knew that we weren’t getting anywhere with the 50s/60s, so we moved on to the
90s. We began by making a list of important 90s shows. This information showed us how
prevalent revivals were becoming in the 90s and then now into the 21st century. That discovery
gave us the idea to make the “today” section about the “radio pop revues” and revivals.

We tried to get back on track by coming up with lyrics for our new song for the 90’s
“Tenor Envy.” We got a few germ ideas fleshed out, but we got wonderfully side tracked with
an idea for the end of the show. So we wrote the end and the curtain call. Sometimes being
sidetracked is a good thing.

September 29, 2005

Today Patrick and I met with James Cleveland and Dave Upton at the Orlando Rep. We
would like to perform our show there, so we discussed show dates, rehearsal dates, rental prices, and prices for James and Dave to design our show. They made everything very easy and affordable. I love having friends. In addition, we also spoke with Kathy Wagner, the Rep’s grant writer. She gave us some helpful websites and ideas for getting a grant.

September 30, 2005

Patrick and I have been researching grants for several days and spent today looking at some of the leads that Kathy gave us. But we are having trouble since we are students and since we are NOT a non-for-profit theatre. So, I had a great idea to call my uncle who is a Florida Representative and on the Board of Education. He generously offered to help us find the money needed for our show.

October 4, 2005

We finally had time to format our show. John Bell gave us an example of a properly formatted scene, and we made ours match. It was long and arduous. I’m sure it’s just one of many long formatting days.

October 5, 2005

We spent hours kicking around ideas for 50s/60s, and we finally had a break through. I thought of using the convention of My Fair Lady. We, however, would do the opposite of the story—having a character being taught how to go from a classical sound to a belt sound. We got half of the scene written. We also decided to write two new, short songs for this section. Today was also a difficult day because outside affairs in our lives were making Patrick and I get on
edge. We also went by Gary Cadwallader’s office and picked up a bunch of scores to start working on music.

October 6, 2005

We worked on lyrics and a melody line for our song in 50s/60s based on the *My Fair Lady* song “Why Can’t the English.” We also spent time copying music; we returned it to Gary.

October 8, 2005

Patrick and I worked on lyrics for the second song in 50s/60s; it’s very Coward-like. We then finished the last half of the scene. I was surprised at how quickly it came considering that it took so long to think of an idea.

October 9, 2005

I looked over the scene again and fixed some transition stuff and fixed formatting; it’s a skill of mine, and I like doing it. We’ve been titling all of our scenes, and we can’t think of a good one for this scene. We also did an hour worth of house keeping. We decided to label all of the scenes differently, and we made sure that we both have copies of everything in case of a catastrophe.

October 10 & 11, 2005

Patrick and I are in abstract hell. We stopped all work on our show to focus on our abstracts; they have to be perfect since they outline our thesis. I’m not very excited about creating a glossary of every composer, lyricist, and book writer that we mention in our show. We
will at least I be working on something that’s applicable to our show and not just a wild research project.

October 12, 2005

Patrick and I worked on the 90s section, and we’re not sure how to end it. Spoofing Smokey Joe’s and Frank Wildhorn is easy, but we don’t know how to go about doing Rent. Our best idea is to close with singing almost the entire song “I’ll Cover You” with Patrick dressed like Angel, but we think that this might be going too far with the gay theme in this section. Patrick is especially unsure, and I don’t blame him.

October 13, 2005

Today was very exciting. We solved the Rent problem by adding a section to the song that spoofs Joann’s phone conversation. This lets us sing just a small portion of “I’ll Cover You” that will end with a bit of “Seasons of Love.” Patrick and I are both more comfortable with this change.

We also got the software program Finale. Getting this program will help us as we work with the music for our show. (It will, however, be a lot of work.) But I’m exciting because I think that it will add a level of professionalism to our show that it would otherwise lack. So Patrick and I spent a large portion of the day playing around with the program trying to learn it.

We had another meeting with John. He liked the R and H section but didn’t enjoy some of the sexual humor. He thought that there was too much of it and that some of it was too crude. We assured him that this section was the only part that was full of sexual humor because we’re
commenting on Oklahoma!’s sexual themes. We did, however, take some of his notes on the sexual humor that wasn’t as clever and witty as others.

October 14, 2005

I’m still having Finale problems as I try to learn this software program. I spent the better part of my time today inputting music for “Tenor Envy.” Inputting is fun until I reach something that I don’t know how to do. I have a feeling that when I finally learn how to do it all, inputting will no longer be fun.

October 15, 2005

I worked on the melody lines for “Tenor Envy” by myself today. I find that trying to compose music with Patrick is difficult because I need time to formulate the musical phrases, which I have to do by myself. Working with Patrick on composition makes me frustrated at myself and not at Patrick since I can’t formulate the musical phrases fast enough. But Patrick liked every thing that I did, so it all works out for the best.

October 16, 2005

Patrick and I spent some time today thinking about the notes that John gave us. We agreed with his notes on the R and H section, so we worked through them. In our last meeting, John again mentioned the need for a “legit” moment in the show—a chance to show that we’re not just funny; we can sing a song with real intention as well. I asked him if this thought was a personal preference for his students or if he thought that the show truly needed this moment. He honestly answered, “Both.” He thought that perhaps a duet like he mentioned earlier would
work or even an overture-like moment at the top of the show. I hated the overture idea, but we agreed to keep thinking about it. Therefore, Patrick and I discussed some possible duets, and we found a great one from *A Class Act* that we’re going to offer as an idea. I love the song, and I think that it will easily fit with the dialogue that we’ve already created for the end of the show. In addition, finding this song gave us an idea for the top of the 2000 section, so we quickly knocked that out. Doing this section so quickly taught me that we’ve really learned the style of our show, and we’re able to write easier and quicker since we’re, as John says, “Totally immersed in the world of our play.”

October 17, 2005

I sat for several hours and inputted music for the R and H section. I’m getting better at Finale but not faster.

October 18, 2005

Patrick and I finished all of the lyrics for “Tenor Envy,” and we tightened the scene that precedes it—very funny. We also took some time to go over to Debbie’s house and get the music to *A Class Act*. Her library is amazing. We have a date to go get more music for the Golden Up-tempo section.

October 19, 2005

I was right. The glamour and fun of inputting music in Finale is quickly over. It’s work. At least I can now input while I watch TV.
October 20, 2005

We had another meeting with John today. He gave us very positive feedback on the 50s/60s, which is good because I was afraid that the section might be confusing. We even got good feedback on our abstracts.

Patrick and I began working on operetta, and I don’t think I like where the scene is going. I think that it’s too didactic and not funny enough. We know that we want to end with the patter song rewrite, but getting into that is becoming quite a trick. Also, I finally finished inputting the R and H section. That took forever.

October 22, 2005

Patrick and I took a trip to Valdosta, GA to see our friend Chris. While we were there we took the opportunity to start the parody lyrics to “Major General.” We decided to use the original rhyming scheme because it will give us a framework with which to play. But we’re not sure what the arch of the song will be. Patrick argues that the song should be random G and S information since “Major General” is very random. I think that it should have more form.

We also had a chance to read our show to Chris and his friend Ron. They both seemed to enjoy it. They understood the concept and laughed at nearly every joke. Chris’s only comment was that he thought the 90’s section was too long. I see his point, but I don’t think that it will seem as long when it’s put to music. Time will tell.

October 24, 2005

We took the time to clean house and get all of our paper work in order. We made sure that we both had electronic copies of everything and that we had a hard copy on file.
October 26, 2005

We finished the G and S song. To do so, we combined both of our ideas. The song is full of randomness, but it ends with a list of all of G and S’s shows. So there is form to the madness. Speaking of madness, Patrick and I had an insane day when tried to get our committee forms signed. We had everything done except when we went to turn the form in, we found out that we had the wrong form and had to start over again. I hate university bullshit.

October 29, 2005

We got a base structure for the operetta scene, and we solved the didactic problem through creative wording and by Patrick’s character coming on in different silly costumes. I think that seeing two different shows today helped me. I know that seeing theatre always reminds me to simply play; don’t get caught in my head. I know that this reminder helped us come up with the solution to the operetta scene.

October 31, 2005

I inputted “Oh, Sweet Mystery of Life.” And Patrick and I discussed how we want to do the pre show. We didn’t originally plan on having a pre show, but we can’t resist of opportunity to make fun of the opening announcement.

November 1, 2005

Patrick and I quickly finished the opening message, and then we moved on to the turn of the century section. This section is going well since it’s been in our heads since the beginning. But we’re having trouble deciding how we want to divide out the material. I am also constantly
concerned with the show becoming too didactic. Patrick and I thought that adding some impersonations would liven this section up, so we are in search of applicable music for the different characters that we want to do.

November 2, 2005

I met with Nick and had a few of our questions about operetta answered. With this information, Patrick and I were able to totally finish operetta with this information. To finish out this operetta day, I imputed the music to *The Merry Widow*.

November 3, 2005

Patrick and I met with John, and he gave us the end of the show and the 90’s scene back to us without any notes. We also got the opportunity to read the *G* and *S* song to John and Justin. They liked it very much, but they gave us some prosody notes that we need to fix. Later in the day, we worked on the turn of the century scene and brainstormed how to talk about *Show Boat*. Our only idea now is to make a Titanic joke, but we’re not sure how.

November 4, 2005

I inputted all of the music to “I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise” in one sitting. For the first time, I inputted a piece of musically perfectly. I can’t believe I’ve only had this program for a few weeks; it feels much, much longer than that.

November 7, 2005

Today was a brainstorming day. We think we solved the *Show Boat* problem by keeping
the scene simple; that always seems to be the key. And we talked a lot about the golden medley.
I think we decided that we’re going to pattern it after a medley that a friend of Patrick’s put
together. It’s a one-liner medley that makes jokes with its structural playfulness. Ours, however,
will use music from the 20s, 30s, and 40s.

November 8, 2005

Patrick and I have spent the past several days listening to music from the 20s, 30s, and
40s. We’ve put together a list of songs that we know we want to use and a list of songs that we
could use. Putting this medley together is actually one of the most daunting parts of the show.
There’s just so much material, and we don’t exactly know how we want the song to flow. We
have a beginning and an ending. But negotiating this amount of music is hard.

November 9, 2005

We were very theoretical today. We finished the turn of the century scene, and we had a
discussion on how this scene fits into the show as a whole. In every show, there must be peaks
and valleys. Since this scene comes after the operetta scene, it’s a valley. Patrick and I were
concerned that this scene wasn’t as zany and hilarious as other scenes, but we’re okay with that
since the scene is interesting and funny enough and since it’s a valley in the larger arch of the
show. Patrick and I also had to work very hard in the century scene to make sure that the
“information dumps” didn’t seem like information dumps. And we had to go back through the
script to make sure that we weren’t too “bitchy” throughout the show. In order for the rumble to
work in the century scene, we need to make sure that we aren’t playing that one dramatic action
too often or too long.
November 10, 2005

We meet with John today, and he read the century scene. He liked it very much but questioned our George White convention. He thought that the convention is very clever and very funny, but he doesn’t think that in actual theatre history George White is as big a player as we and our muse for this section, Gary Flannery, think that it is. However, we all collectively agreed to keep the convention.

November 11, 2005

Patrick and I knocked out the introductory scene in the Golden Up-tempo, but it took significantly more time than we thought it would. We’re having a more difficult time disguising the information dumps since we’ve used all of the obvious tricks. Yet we found a good way to introduce the scene, and we thought that writing this bit would inspire us on the medley. But alas, we got frustrated and left the medley alone. The problem with this material is that we don’t know it as well as more contemporary material. When trying to be clever, it’s easier if you just know the material instead of having to go back and listen to CD after CD. But I know that we’ll get it eventually.

November 12 & 13, 2005

Patrick and I have been thinking of ways to do the vaudeville scene, but we’re not quite sure how. Everything that we come up with is too much like the operetta scene that will come right after it. I would like to note that even amidst all of our difficulty with scene and medley ideas, I’m not frustrated. Patrick and I are giving ourselves enough space and time to work though each scene, and I know that we’ll be proud of our work in the end.
November 14, 2005

Patrick had an idea for the opening number. We had originally thought that we would compose our own opening number, but with the other songs that we want to compose and with our self-imposed time crunch, we both agreed to cut the original song. Patrick thought that using “Comedy Tonight” would be a great opening to the opening, and I agreed. This song was going to be the stylistic model for our original song anyway. I’m actually relieved that we’re going with this option. I think that it will make life a lot easier.

November 15, 2005

We wrote the entire opening sequence today; it was amazing how fast it went. After “Comedy Tonight,” I thought that we should have a bunch of opening numbers in this sequence, and Patrick suggested that we use “All That Jazz.” I suggested that we use the Emcee from Cabaret. So we decided to use both of them. We’re not sure about having two Kander and Ebb songs together, but we think that with the stop in the music and the transition time it will work. We’ll also see what John thinks.

November 16, 2005

We polished the opening number and cleaned up the dialogue before “All That Jazz.” We found that yet again—less is more. Since we were on a roll with the top of the show and since the medley wasn’t happening yet, we decided to plough ahead and move on to circus.

Patrick had the great idea to use music from Barnum since music from the actual circus era simply does not exist. I had never heard anything from this show, but it’s absolutely perfect for this section of our show. I was very concerned with keeping this section exciting and
interesting since it’s right after the opening number, and I think that this music accomplishes that. With this new music decided upon, Patrick and I immediately wrote the opening to the circus scene focusing on keeping the pace and energy up after the opening number.

November 17, 2005

We had a meeting with John, and he gave us the prosody problems in the G and S song. In a previous meeting, John had simply mentioned that there were problems, and we asked him to take some time to point them out to us. We said that our ears were so used to hearing our lyrics that we weren’t able to hear any problems. We also asked John about our idea for minstrelsy; we were concerned that we were being offensive. (We had even run the idea by a few other trusted friends to make sure that we were okay.) John said that he didn’t find us offensive, but he would have to wait until rehearsal to see if the idea flowed. Later, we took some time to polish up a couple of jokes in the circus scene.

November 18, 2005

Today we focused on the vaudeville scene. We think we’re going to be able to solve it by condensing the entire format of a vaudeville bill. Using this convention will also give some parallelism to the Oklahoma! scene and the eventual revival scene. However, we’re finding that this scene is not coming easily; sometimes the well is just a little dry.

We also worked on the prosody problems that John gave us. We fixed everything that we could. But on a few notes, we disagree—particularly on the sock joke. John doesn’t get the joke. But we ran it by a few people, and they all seem to get it. So we’ve decided to go against his
advice and keep the joke. But that’s okay because he’s just supposed to be an artistic sounding board, not the ultimate authority.

November 19, 2005

We went over to Debbie’s house—the source of all music—and got the sheet music for all but just a few songs that we think we’ll need for the medley. We told her our idea for the medley, and she even had a few song suggestions as well. I also spent some time and inputted all of the music for the opening number.

November 20, 2005

Today was a better day for the vaudeville scene; we got it finished. Having Patrick lead this section opened up the scene. This way our roles of straight man/funny man are reversed, and it adds a lot of variety to the show without being confusing. I also love that we are using Justin more and more in the script. It’s something that we didn’t anticipate, but I think that it’s a nice layer. I also spent some more time inputting the music to the opening number.

November 21, 2005

After today, Patrick and I have completely finished writing the show—except of course for that nasty medley. We sat down to write the revival, and it essentially wrote itself. After having spent months now in the world of the play, Patrick and I knew exactly how this section should work. I also took some time to correctly format some of the newer scenes that we’ve been cranking out over the past few weeks. I’ve become an expert at that too.
November 22 - 29, 2005

This week Patrick and I made ourselves work on the medley, which we finally completed except for imputing a few lines of music from a couple of songs. The entire medley was essentially a puzzle that we had to put together, and Patrick was the driving force behind it. We would both come up with various ideas, but I found myself liking his ideas more than mine. My only real concern with the medley now is that we wrote it without real consideration for how it will be staged. We also haven’t assigned who will sing what. Although, I’m not sure that will be a problem. We have many built-in line jokes, and I think that rehearsal will let us try various line assignment and staging ideas. Now that the medley is completed, I’m very proud of it, and I think that it will be one of the highlights of the show.

December 1, 2005

We had another meeting with John today to go over the opening sequence. He thought that the concept was clever, but he was confused at some of the specific moments. He thought that the copyright joke with the chorus line was contrived; it needs to be simpler. He also thought that the transition into “All That Jazz” was confusing. Later in the day, we took those notes and added a new transition and altered the copyright joke. I think that these changes make the sequence cleaner, although I miss the Cameron Macintosh joke. I guess you can’t have everything.

December 7, 2005

We took another trip to the Debbie library and got the rest of the music that we need for the medley. We’re so close to having everything I can taste it.
December 8, 2005

I now know Finale like the back of my hand. And I quickly inputted “Give My Regards To Broadway” and “New York, New York.”

December 9, 2005

I started the first of the major formatting overhaul today. I thought that putting all of the scenes into one document and cleaning up the editing would be a simple task, especially with all of the formatting work that I’ve already done. But doing all of this is turning out to be a Herculean task.

December 10 – 12, 2005

Over the past few days, I’ve been inputting the music for the prologue. Inputting this music has been fun since it’s required me to compose, transpose, and search through scores. I don’t know how we ever thought we could do all this without Finale.

December 14, 2005

Today was a very satisfying day. Patrick and I sat down and ran though the entire show out loud. We knew that we needed to hear the show with all of the scenes in order, and we knew we had to hear the show in our voices since we knew that we would have to clean jokes and possibly change some sequences. But we were pleasantly surprised at how little we had to do. There were some obvious grammar and editing errors. And there were a few jokes that we reworded. But other than that we just simply enjoyed our own work.
Several months ago, I contacted an old friend who is a costume designer. I told her all about our show and asked for her help. She loved the idea of our show, and she was more than happy to help. I gave her a copy of the script and the costume plot that Patrick and I put together. And today she and I met to go over some of her ideas and to collect a bunch of costume pieces that she was donating to our show.

Working with her was simply a joy. She had wonderful suggestions on how to solve some of the costume problem spots. I loved her suggestions for the Oklahoma! section; I think that this scene will look a lot cleaner because of her help. In addition, she had a script note. Being in her forties, she said that she missed the “Jesus Plays” in our show. She said that they were so important in the seventies that it would be a miss to skip them in our show. I instantly came up with the idea to use Superstar in the 50s/60s section.

After our Christmas break, Patrick and I went through all of the costumes that I had procured from my friend. Patrick loved them. He even combined a few of the pieces to make some more. We then went through the script and the costume plot and made a list of everything that we need to fix and everything that we need to build and/or buy. With this list in hand, Patrick and I went to Michael’s and Joann’s Fabrics to get various materials. Looking at all of the costume work that we have yet to do, I now know that our show will not only be a test of everything we’ve learned in graduate school, but it will also be a test of all of our theatre knowledge—period.
January 1, 2006

I spent more time than I ever thought I would need making sock puppet Steve Sondheim. I hope this gets a laugh.

January 1-3, 5, 9, 13, & 15, 2006

We have spent hours upon hours working on the opening number jackets. With making all of the trim and sewing all of the trim, this may be more trouble than it’s worth. On January 1st, I hoped that sock puppet Steve will get a laugh; well, these jackets better get a laugh.

January 3, 2006

Patrick and I called ASCAP about the rights for our show. We won’t need them for our actual thesis performance, but when we want to do it after that, it will be a major issue. ASCAP basically brushed us off since they said that they don’t deal with theatrical rights. They gave us another number to call, and it was the number of a copyright agent who charges $75 an hour. She said that we should email her with our situation, and she would see what she could do. I can already tell that the rights are going be a huge, long process.

January 5, 2006

Patrick and I had a ball listening to silly music with James Cleveland, our sound designer. It’s a testament to how much music we know because we simply sat down with our CDs and Patrick’s ipod and planned out the entire pre show. It’s going to be great.
January 30, 2006

Well, I hope today was not a bad sign. Patrick and I had our first little rehearsal planned, but we could not get into the brand new News Journal Center. This snag, however, was actually a blessing in disguise. Patrick and I were able to go home and work on the accompanist’s book. This way, all of our music was ready for Justin and also for ourselves. I know that it is kind of sappy, but I look at today as a metaphor for the show. It started off under bad circumstances, but by the end of it all, the show will be a blessing in disguise.

January 31, 2006

Today, we began rehearsal, and we started at the very beginning—the very best place to start. This rehearsal went as I thought it would. Patrick and I were able to openly share ideas. We added to each other’s comments and suggestions, and we quickly and efficiently debated ideas. And we always made sure that we tried our ideas at least twice before we threw them out. For a good portion of this rehearsal and probably for a large portion of future rehearsals, Patrick taught me his choreography. This is a particular strength of his, and it is not one of mine. He wanted to choreograph the show, and I gladly let him. To his credit, he is able to accept my criticism, which I am sure will be very minimal. My only note today was about a particular movement that detracted from the humor in a sung line.

However, Patrick is only choreographing the true dance sections. For the staged movement portions of the show like the circus section, we are blocking them together. Patrick and I were able to get a start on the circus section, and we had to remind ourselves to keep it simple. When we first began working on the circus number, we let the style of the period hinder the song’s patter. We simplified the movement, and this change seemed to solve our confusion.
I also think that it will help us sing the difficult patter instead of hinder us. In this section, I feel that we do not have to add any flair; the vocal acrobats are quite enough.

February 1, 2006

We continued on in our blocking rehearsals. Patrick and I decided that we did not want to plan the blocking before going into rehearsal. I absolutely love working on my feet, but Patrick is not so keen on it. But since both of us are serving as director, sitting in our apartment and planning the blocking on paper would be silly. We would eventually have disagreements, and the only way to solve these disagreements would be to get the blocking on its feet. So we cut out any of these problems, and we are organically blocking; we have also given ourselves enough time to organically block. Moving through vaudeville was quick and easy because of how it is written. But we both remarked during the rehearsal that we have to keep many balls in the air during this process. Since we are making small script revisions as we put the show on its feet, we have to think like playwrights, directors, and actors all at the same time. I find it impossible to isolate any of these roles, so Patrick and I have to run things several times to see if all the many voices in both of our heads like what we are doing. I must admit that in my/our position, I find the directing eye to be the most difficult since I am acting in the show. I constantly have to think about making pretty and purposeful pictures with our bodies, but it is so very hard to evaluate these pictures when I am a part of it.

We began working on the “Modern Major General” song, and this number proved to be more difficult than anticipated. We both thought that the number was a “stand and sing” number, but being stagnant for so long felt very awkward. We began trying to create movement/choreography for this song, and we both became very frustrated. We went through
several different versions, and we hated them all. (They reminded us of the horrid choreography that we had to do for Under the Bridge this December.) Patrick was more frustrated than I because he hates and/or refuses to choreograph on his feet. We both agreed to let the number sit, and we would start fresh on another day.

February 2, 2006

Since I knew that the seventies scene was going to be some real “hard core-ish” dancing, I wanted to start early, and Patrick obliged. Patrick is a quick but unforgiving choreographer. I told him this, and he said he would try and be more kind. All of the choreography is in my ability, but I know that it will take some time to master it. We then spent the rest of rehearsal starting anew with “Modern Major General.” Of course, our first instincts were right; it is a “stand and sing” kind of song. Any sort of large movement or dance takes away from the cleverness of the patter and the lyric changes. But to give a sense of style and to fill in the musical breaks, Patrick and I added some small comic movement to spice up the number. I think that the revision is very successful, and it goes to show that good things need practice. And I am reminded that some times you have to acknowledge when something does not work and start over.

February 3, 2006

Today was a short discussion rehearsal rather than an “on our feet” rehearsal. Patrick wanted to take some time and create his choreography for the West Side Story bit, so we talked through how the scene should feel and how it should flow. We planned entrances and exits and acting choices that would inform the choreography. We then talked through the Golden Up-
Tempo. We divided up the parts and discussed the arch of the song and our characters’ journeys through the song. My character is the romantic, while Patrick’s is comedian. The journey of the song will be that we both find each other amusing until Patrick pushes me aside. The song then becomes a light-hearted completion that ends happily with “There’s No Business Like Show Business.” We also both agreed that heavy choreography would get in the way of the medley, and we agreed to stage it on its feet.

February 13, 2006

Working with Justin for the first time on our show was exciting and frustrating. I was excited to actually sing the material with an accompanist since Patrick and I do everything without music in our staging rehearsals. But I was also annoyed at myself because I realized that I am behind. Even though I know the majority of the material, I do not have many of these songs in my voice yet. And I am very unfamiliar with the more obscure songs like the ones in the circus section. So today was good for me because it lit a fire underneath me to work harder on my music. With so many balls in the air, it is hard not to tell one of them drop, but I simply cannot let that happen.

February 14, 2006

Our rehearsal was short because we started to get on each other’s nerves. Patrick taught me his choreography for the West Side Story bit, and I told him that he needed to be more patient. I am not sure whether he thought I was lazy or bored or upset or what. But we finished the scene and stopped because we were not accomplishing much in our irritated states.
February 15, 2006

Today was a train wreck that eventually found its way back into the station. We began by going over the West Side Story scene again, and all hell broke loose. I was upset with Patrick because he is quick to anger when I told him I would need time to learn the dances. He was upset with me because he does not think I am working hard enough, and he hates teaching things more than once. And Patrick was also upset because he does not think that the scene is working, and I think it is fine. The situation was not pretty. But even though we had a full-blown fight, we bulldozed forward and finished the scene and moved on to the “Golden Up-Tempo.” We were both still agitated, but we put it aside to stage the number. We went through several drafts, but when we were done we were very proud of the number, and this helped us salvage the evening. We desperately needed a bright point in our rehearsal because we were getting down on our work and ourselves.

February 17, 2006

To be honest, it was nice to have a rehearsal without Patrick today. We have been fighting in rehearsal, so it was nice to get away from the rehearsal room and just focus on singing. I was really able to focus on vocal style in this rehearsal with Justin. Running through all of my music, helped me see where I was comfortable in the style and also in my acting choices, and this rehearsal also taught me where I still need to work. Fortunately, I have been working very hard since my last rehearsal with Justin, and I feel much more comfortable with my music.
February 18, 2006

Today was a great day in rehearsal; the show was fun again, and Patrick and I were back to our old team again. We skeleton blocked the R and H section and the game show. The Oklahoma! section was very tedious since we had to account for costume changes, but I think that we have made the blocking very user friendly for ourselves. Although, we both red-flagged this section because we do not know how long the costume changes will take. The game show was also difficult because our writing was jumbled. We had to stop rehearsal and rearrange the game show sequence in order to make the necessary costume and set changes. Thank god we have given ourselves enough time to deal with these unforeseen problems.

February 19, 2006

I finally and literally locked myself in my apartment and made myself finish “Tenor Envy.” I threw a lot of what I created over Christmas out, and I built from the main theme in the “chorus.” I particularly like the variation that I created in the “bridge.” I think that this section has a really nice build, and it captures the character well. After spending 14 consecutive hours working on the song, I officially hate it, but I think that once I am away from the song for a few days and once we start staging the number, I will really be proud of it. I am already proud of it now.

February 22, 2006

Our rehearsal was like most rehearsals—it was both fun and frustrating. We stumbled through act one, and I mean we stumbled through act one. It was pretty rough. We were on book of course, and we had to keep making corrections as we went. But we got through the act,
and it was exciting to see and experience the show on its feet. I feel disconnected from my
color at the moment. As the actor, I feel that I am unprepared because I am. I am frustrated
because I want to be off book. The timing and the abandon that must come with this show can
only be achieved by being off book, and I am simply not there yet. I did, however, find some of
the physical posturing that I will use as my character through the show, so that is positive. But I
want to be further along, and I am just not there. I guess I just have to be patient, but I feel like
time is ticking away. We have barely started act two.

February 23, 2006

Today was short and sweet because an hour was all we had. Patrick reviewed the dances
that he has already taught me in act two, and I am excited to see that I have a good grasp of them.
But today’s rehearsal was not particularly fun. Patrick was upset because of a personal matter,
and I was not in a really good mood either. So we reviewed the dances that we desperately
needed to review, and we called it a day.

February 24, 2006

I would like to note that I do not journal everything I do for our thesis show. If I did, I
would have a journal for almost everyday of the year, and these journals would be extremely
long. For the most part, the fall journals focused on the script and these spring journals focus on
the rehearsal process. However, today Patrick and I spent about twelve hours shopping for crap
we need for the show. I hate shopping so very, very much, so by God, this day gets a journal.
On the good side, we are almost done with procuring almost everything we need for the show.
February 25, 2006

From dawn to dust to midnight, today was totally devoted to the show. Patrick and I spent the morning finding the last few prop and costume items that we needed. (I would like to note that we had to drive sixty miles and pay thirty dollars for two cowbells; the lengths we will go for a bit.) We then rehearsed all afternoon. We cleaned up the first act, and then did a run through of the act. I was very relieved and proud that I did everything but the last scene off book. I think that I am developing my character nicely, but I was surprised to find that I rushed the majority of my solo material. I was so worried about keeping the fast pace of the show that I actually hit a lighting speed that was uncontrollable. That is a good problem to have, I supposed, but it just surprised me. Patrick and I then spent the evening cleaning up the script and making sure that all of the changes we made in rehearsal were being recorded.

March 9, 2006

We have finally made our way to act two. Thank the Lord that we started rehearsing in January; we knew that this process would be slow going. But having the process over the course of months, allows us to breath the material. I came into rehearsal today knowing exactly how I wanted to attack the first scene in act two. I believe that Patrick and I have a better knowledge of how we should juggle the actor, playwright, and director balls. We were able to block the scene, make a few script changes, and even think about characterization. Patrick and I have written the show well for us. I easily made the leap into my over-the-top impersonation of Rex Harrison, and Patrick is easily the comic foil. These sub characters in the show also minor our main characters as Rocky and Patrick—good for us. Patrick also taught me the rest of the dances
in the seventies, and we put that scene together and fixed some of the small pacing and fluency problems.

March 12, 2006

Patrick and I are tired of not having our material down. So even though we could not rehearse, we took the time to run all of our lines in the show. I realize that I have some gaps in act two because some of it is not on its feet, but I am excited that I am getting close.

March 13, 2006

We went back to the seventies today and reexamined it. We cleaned up the staging, and made it simpler and cleaner. A big motto for us during this process has been the old saying—KISS: “Keep It Simple Stupid.” We also skeleton blocked the eighties section, and we made the blocking even easier but more complicated. In the first act, I only enter and exit stage left, and Patrick only enters and exits stage right. This blocking solved many problems in the first act. We had thought that we would keep this pattern going through the show. But in the eighties scene, this blocking formula was making life more difficult. We started over, and allowed ourselves to break our pattern. I think that our change makes the eighties cleaner, and it also gives some variety this late in the show, which is needed. We also noticed that the flow in the Sondheim section was terrible. Patrick and I brainstormed this problem, and we retooled the Sondheim section to include Justin. He will take on the role of narrator, which will free up Patrick and I, so we can make the necessary costume changes. This change also fills out Justin’s character. In the script, he is almost the third actor, and this change makes it official. The change also validates all of the other times we use Justin. Today was a good lesson in not being
afraid to break your own rules and not being afraid to rework something that you thought was genius.

March 14, 2006

As Patrick and I had our final blocking rehearsal today, I realized that blocking act two was significantly easier to block than act one. I do not think that the material is any easier in act two; I think that Patrick and I have learned the style of the show, and we have learned how to work with each other. This pattern is similar to the writing process. We wrote act two first and had an easier time writing act one. By the time we got to writing act one, we knew the style and how to communicate and collaborate. Therefore, blocking the nineties to the end of the show was a breeze, and we did it in very little time. The revival still feels sloppy to me, but I think that being off book will help this problem. I am very excited to have the entire show on its feet. I know that it needs lots of polish, but I think we have a good show.

March 15, 2006

I want to make sure I remember today. Patrick and I met our classmate Mark at his home and took publicity shots. I have rarely seen people act so insane without the help of alcohol; we simply had a blast. And I think that our joy comes across in the photos. Just three crazy men in dresses taking pictures. No, Mark was not in a dress . . . or was he?

March 24, 2006

After having spent so much time blocking and working on choreography, I was excited to simply sit with Justin and sing through the show. After having worked with characterization on
its feet, it was nice to apply what I have learned about the characters to my singing voice with an accompanist. I also got to hear “Tenor Envy” played by a human. That was an education about my composition. As a composer himself, Justin liked the over-all concept of the song, and thought that the song was strong. He particularly liked the bridge and said that it was excellent piano and vocal writing. But he felt that the opening was disjunctive and strange. He also gave me some notes on my musical notation, which would make some of my composition more "user friendly." Justin is an amazing resource, and Patrick and I are lucky to call him our friend.

April 8, 2006

Because of our involvement with Sunday in the Park with George and life in general, Patrick and I have been unable to rehearse. So even though we did not feel like rehearsing, Patrick and I forced ourselves to go in for two hours today and work on the show. During the day, we ran all of our lines for the show. And in the rehearsal room, we focused on dance. I believe that I am coming along fine with my dances, but my pace is still not up to Patrick’s demands. But we managed to escape without any emotional fireworks. We truly do enjoy working together and working on our thesis, but the stress of everything gets to us at times. Even though I do not like arguing, I think that because of the nature of our project and our close-proximity relationship, tempers are bound to rise.

April 11, 2006

Rehearsal today was wonderful. Patrick and I were finally able to have the long rehearsal that we have wanted for several weeks, and today was the first day in a while that we have both been anxious and excited to be in the rehearsal studio. We focused on walking through and
cleaning up act two since it needs the most work. We took the time during the seventies to do a
dance clean up, and I was happy to be very close to having all of my dances down. Most of
today was off book, which was very exciting, and Patrick and I were able to get some of the
same performance energy that we have had during act one rehearsals. When we got to the
revival, I suggested that we rethink the blocking. We wanted this scene to have the greatest speed
and excitement over anything else in the show, and our current blocking was not achieving that.
Patrick had the genius idea to perform the entire scene on the chorus line. This change allowed
Patrick and I the close proximity to gain the speed we need, and if we went up on our lines, we
could simply look down and get back on track. We ran this scene multiple times to polish the
pacing. After today’s rehearsal, I left feeling more confident in the show. I know that we still
have much more work to do, and I know that we have a long road ahead as we near tech week.
But the goal seems reachable, and all of our rehearsal in the previous months seems to be paying
off. I am so thankful that we thought ahead and planned for the huge rehearsal break that we
would have to take during Sunday in the Park.

April 13, 2006

Patrick and I took the time to work Justin into act one. For all intensive purposes, he is
the third actor in the show, and he needs time to find his rhythm. To get Justin used to the feel of
the show, we spoke through all of the dialogue and had him play at the appropriate times. Justin
is amazing, so everything went according to plan. When we gave Justin his dialogue in the
eighties scene, he instantly created a bored accompanist character. This choice is not what I had
envisioned for his character, and I am not sure if I like it or not. I am going to let it sit and
develop. It could be very funny, but I just do not know. We also took the time and did the
opening and the Golden Up-Tempo on our feet with Justin. Patrick and I were able to find the tempos with Justin in the medley and connect with him on this very intricate number. I am starting to get excited.

April 14, 2006

Today was all about getting act two in my voice and in my body. We spoke through act two with Justin just like we did act one. And I feel that I am very close to being comfortable with this act. Also after hearing Justin’s interpretation with his dialogue for a second time, I think I really like it. This just goes to show the power of an actor with written material; it is a wonderful reminder. Some times their interpretation is completely different from what was intended, but their read is total brilliant and perfect. This is an amazing lesson to learn from our accompanist. We also ran the seventies on its feet, and I am happy to say that I have a firm (but not perfect) grasp of my choreography.

April 17, 2006

For the very first time in rehearsal, I felt in control. Patrick and ran through act one with costumes, and I was very proud of our work. I felt connected to my character throughout the act, and I was aware of myself in the space. The costumes added another challenging element to the rehearsal process, but it was not a train wreck. The most difficult costume moment was, of course, Oklahoma! But we knew that it would be difficult, and we know how to solve it. This costume problem will be solved with timing—knowing when to stretch lines out and when to speed them up will make the costume changes appear seamless. Working with the costume
pieces a few more times will help as well. I left the rehearsal feeling more excited than I have ever been before.

April 18, 2006

Patrick and I ran through act one on our feet with Justin. This rehearsal built upon yesterday’s rehearsal, and I felt that I controlled my material; it did not control me. I was able to practice the pacing of the show with the music, and I am very surprised that it does not feel very different with an accompanist. Of course, having Justin there adds another dimension to the rehearsal, but I think that being able to connect easily with Justin with so few rehearsals is a testament to Patrick’s and my musicianship. I also hope that I do not eat these words.

Having Justin at the rehearsal was good in many ways. He laughed at some of the truly funny moments, which was nice. And we asked him for any notes that he might have. One of the most difficult parts of this process is not having a director. Actors just cannot adequately judge pacing and pictures and things of this nature, and Justin helped us fill some of this void. He had a note that many musical theatre directors have—bigger, louder, faster. He also mentioned that the cues need to be picked up in the transitions, and he added that we should not be afraid of our characters in the transitions and the “information dumps.” He can tell that we are holding back, when in this style that is a cardinal sin. Patrick and I agreed that we were glad to have Justin’s input because we thought we were doing all of those things. Actors need a third eye to push them at times.

April 20, 2006

Today, we ran act two by ourselves. Even though I thought I was in a good place with
act two, I am not. When I tried to perform the act without my book, I fell apart in the eighties and the nineties. I also noticed that my characters in act two are not as advanced as I would like them to be. My through-line, Rocky, character is very solid, and the “My Fair Laddie” character is fine, but the Connie Wong and the Al characters are very underdeveloped. I have significant homework to do before tomorrow’s rehearsal with Justin.

April 21, 2006

As planned, we ran act two with Justin, and I am more encouraged than yesterday. After some homework, I was able to get through act two. I was nowhere near letter perfect, but I got through it. My problem characters were better because I had made conscious choices about how they move through space and because the text was there, but the comic timing that these characters need is still very muddy. Patrick and I took the notes that Justin gave us for act one, and we tried to apply them to act two. I feel that I sent my character out, especially during the transitional scenes, and I made sure to pick up my cues—all of which are good things. In addition, I specifically asked Justin if he felt there was a consistency between act one and act two. He said, “Yes,” but he noted that act two is built differently than act one; act two has longer sections and scenes. I had never really thought about this. He said that this was neither good nor bad; it was just an observation. But I wonder if this will be a point of concern and/or discussion after the show goes in front of an audience.

April 22, 2006

Today was a landmark day because we finally put the entire show together. We did not have Justin with us today, so we spent some time cleaning specific spots. And then we ran the
whole show. Patrick and I vocally marked the run since we wanted to protect our voices, but we
gave full physical energy. I was still not perfect on my memorization, which is upsetting to me,
but I got through the show without stopping. I felt much better about my problem characters in
act two, and act one felt very solid. In addition, the costume changes were much more
comfortable, and they now enhance my performance rather than hinder it. Knowing that I still
have to work on lines in act two, I feel prepared for the designer run.

April 24, 2006

Today was another day that was entirely devoted to the show. After privately working on
my lines in the morning, Patrick and I had a clean up rehearsal in the afternoon. With the
pressure of the show, Patrick and I snapped at each other quite a bit, but we were very apologetic
afterwards. During this rehearsal, we cleaned up my dancing in the seventies, ran the dialogue in
the eighties and the nineties, and worked through the opening number—we were having costume
problems with the opening number robes. After doing what need to be done, Patrick and I made
a quick exit. We both agreed that we did not want to sit and brood about the upcoming designer
run.

The evening was the designer run. This was a huge milestone for Patrick and I. We both
agreed early on in the rehearsal process that we wanted to be as professional as possible in all
that we did. That included being completely performance ready by the designer run, and I am
proud to say that we were. We invited some friends, and with our designers and our thesis chair,
we had a small crowd, which was wonderful because it gave us the opportunity to be laughed at.
The crowd also gave us some much-needed feedback. On the whole, everyone said that they
truly enjoyed the show; this was a huge relief. Our designers liked the show so much that they
even offered to go beyond what we had asked them to do. Dave Upton, for instance, offered to
add some extra cues that he thought would be funny.

However, in spite of the general positive attitude for the show, there was now work to be
done since Patrick and I had some good feedback. I felt that we had some excessive energy due
to nerves, and I felt that the game show and the eighties scene was too long. John Bell agreed
with these notes, and he had some of his own. He also thought that the evening was too long.
He wanted us to slow down our patter. He wanted us to make sure that we commented on
ourselves during the operetta scene, and he had a concern about the ending. He was very kind in
saying that he thought that the show was strong, and I could tell that he did not want to
discourage us. He did not. I left feeling excited and also challenged since Patrick and I were
presented with one final big push to make the show better.

April 25, 2006

Today, Patrick and I made big decisions about the show. We took our notes and John’s
notes, and we formulated what we would do. As for our performances, we both agreed that we
would relax more into the show now that we had had an audience. We also agreed that we
would slow down the patter, and we liked John’s note about commenting on ourselves during the
“Modern Major General” song—this note will take that song to the next level. As for the script,
we cut a small chunk from the West Side Story bit that was not needed. We cut the game show
questions in half, and we retooled the eighties. We cut several chunks and even a song that I
never liked in that scene. I think that this will help the show’s length problem.

As far as John’s note about the ending, I am of two minds; I agree with some of his notes,
and I disagree with some of them. He said that it felt like there were four times when we were
going to end the show. The first was at the top of the revival scene. Patrick and I changed some
of the verbiage in that scene, so it did not sound like we were coming to a close. John felt like
we were ending the show for a second time after the revival, so Patrick and I changed and
extended some of the dialogue to give a better transition into “One More Beautiful Song.” The
third ending was after “New York, New York.” This is fine since this song is the end of the
show. But John did not like the fact that we closed with “So Long, Farewell.” He said that it
was confusing. Patrick and I agreed that this song is an encore, and we were confused as to why
John was confused. We liked closing with that song, so we did nothing. After Patrick and I
made all of these changes in the script, we did not focus on the show any more that day. We
wanted some distance before we started the show again.

April 28, 2006

This rehearsal was a great opportunity, and it was brilliant of us to add it into our
rehearsal schedule. It was our final rehearsal that was just for ourselves before we added all of
the technical elements. Fortunately, we had planned for Justin to be with us, so we were able to
update him on the script changes. He, of course, was not fazed in the slightest. Even though I
went up a few times on my line, I felt so much more comfortable with the show. The cuts
seemed to really work—especially the cuts in the eighties scene, and I was able to handle all of
the new acting notes. Patrick and I also seemed to gel in this rehearsal. I was able to listen
more, and I found new and richer character developments as well as a funny new bit with Jud.
As for the acting part of the show, I feel confident in myself, and of course, confident in my
partner Patrick. I now feel ready for tech week.
May 1, 2006

Our rehearsal today was very simple. We knew that we had a hell of a week coming up, and we did not want to tire our voices or ourselves. But we both felt the pressure of the show and the pressure of remembering all of the material. So we simply did a dry run of the show without props or costumes. And we marked everything—the speaking, the singing, and the dancing. This rehearsal was more for our confidence than for the show itself. I needed today, so I can say to myself, “Don’t worry about it; you know the show. You know the show; don’t worry about.”

May 3, 2006

Patrick and I had our first technical rehearsal in the evening. We were finally able to leave all of our props and costumes at the Rep, and we were able to set everything up in the space, which was a relief. Patrick and I had anticipated simply running the show in the space with costumes, props, and Justin. We had assumed that we would tech in the show on the following date; tonight would simply be a space through of sorts. However, much to our surprise, Dave Upton—the lighting designer—had already written all of the cues. So we were able to do an entire technical rehearsal.

Of course, Dave’s work was superb, and Patrick and I had to do very little adjusting to find our light and make the space work. But there were still a few spacing changes that Patrick and I had to do. The major adjustment was to play the Oklahoma! scene a little further out in order to make the costume changes.

As an acting note, I need to fill the space with the body, but this is a typical note when you move a large space so that should not be a problem. Patrick and I also need to work with the
backstage microphone. We worried that all of the dialogue that we speak in the wings would be
difficult to hear, but James and everyone assures us that they hear everything perfectly. He also
says that the balance with only hanging microphones and floor microphones is fine. This is also
a relief because we were worried that body microphones would be a problem with all of our
costume and wig changes.

May 4, 2006

Looking back on this day, I am so very happy that today was not hectic. It was a busy
day, of course, but not hectic; Patrick and I worked hard and did a lot of planning to make sure
that everything went according to plan. In the morning, we finished moving into the space.
Patrick and I worked on painting the chorus line. And while I finished setting up the front-of-
house displays, Patrick finished the line. The only problem in the day was that I forgot a few
items back in Daytona Beach, so I had to take two hours out of the day to dash back home and
get them. Because of this glitch in the day, I am very thankful that Dave was ahead of us in the
lighting cues. His planning made our tech rehearsal in the afternoon very short. All we had to do
was clean up a few cues. I felt that the lighting in the “Golden Up-Tempo” was too dark for the
time period, and Dave agreed. So he showed us the new cues, which Patrick and I liked. In
addition, Patrick and I ran through the voice over cues with James, and this went according to
plan. The day was so relaxed that Patrick and I were able to have dinner with my family before
the rehearsal.

The final dress rehearsal was a make-shift preview show for Patrick and I. My parents
are not able to attend an actual performance, so my parents along with about a dozen other
friends served as our first audience. The run went very well. James told me during intermission
that I was not loud enough at the beginning of the show, but I eventually found a good volume. I
equate this problem to nerves and also to the fear of tiring my voice. Vocally, I have been fine
throughout the rehearsal process, so I should not fear the show since I have built up the stamina
for it. But being reminded to project is always a good note to get, and I was glad that James gave
it.

I felt very good after this rehearsal. I think that Patrick and I have given ourselves
enough time to polish the show, and I think today was proof that our show is very solid. I
noticed that the costume changes did not feel as frantic, and I felt more secure with my body in
the space. I was also relaxed enough to find some new acting choices. I added a different and
stronger characterization with Laurie in the Rodgers and Hammerstein section and also the Al
character in the nineties. The only major fault in the rehearsal was the opening dance section.
Patrick changed a part of the choreography about ten minutes before we started. And I was so
worried about getting that new choreography that I messed up some of the original material that
we have been working on since January. But I am sure I will get it tomorrow. Even though I was
very nervous during the day and I am sure that I will be nervous tomorrow, I am very excited for
the show.
Performance Journal

May 5, 2006

As I always knew and what I have been counting on is that hard work pays off. Opening night was everything that I hoped it would be. As a producer, I was very pleased. We had a very large crowd of approximately eighty people, and they were extremely responsive. And as an actor, I was relieved when I felt connected to the play from the opening number. Last night, it took me until the vaudeville section to feel truly in the world of the play, but tonight, I took the time to properly focus and warm up. Of course, after the show, I obsessed about the three lines that I skipped during the “My Fair Laddie” section, but that was so minor that Patrick said he did not even notice. On the whole, I was very proud of my acting work. Whenever I do a comedy, I am always amazed and relieved when the audience laughs for the first time. It is a high that does not come with drama. And it has been so long since I have stretched these kinds of comic muscles, I am proud that I can still accomplish this kind of material. But I am most proud of how I have added to my abilities since I last performed in this style. I now know how to add more texture and nuance to my acting, even in this style. The perfect example is how I relate to Patrick when I am angry. Several years ago, I believe that I would have played all the times I am upset with Patrick on one acting note—angry. However, I was conscious of this script structure and perhaps, at times, this script problem, so I was able to find different reactions and tactics to handle this script requirement. In addition, I would never have been able to act, dance, and sing in the various styles that the script requires. (But then again, before graduate school, I did not know what many of these styles were.)

As the playwright, opening night was a master class in what material worked and what material did not. I can thankfully say that I believe the show works as a whole. My parent’s
friend who knows nothing about musical theatre and my professors who know much all enjoyed and understood the show. I think that act one is incredibly solid, but there are some trouble spots in act two. The “My Fair Laddie” scene is too still and too different from the rest of the show. And despite our best last-minute efforts, the eighties is just too long. I was very proud of the seventies; that got a much better response than I thought it would. And the ninties got a much better response that I thought it would too; I was worried that it was too much, too late in the evening. I am not sure about the endings. I was too excited to tell if I thought the endings worked. Maybe tomorrow with shed light on that subject.

May 6, 2006

Tonight was very typical of a comedy. Audiences for a drama are pretty steady; they either like it or they do not. Audiences for comedies are like the tide. After such a tremendous response from the opening night crowd, tonight could only be a letdown of sorts. Again, as a producer, I was proud of the house size. But the audience was not as responsive as the opening night. But as is typical with a comic audience, they probably thought they were riotous, while Patrick and I thought they were not as responsive.

As an actor, tonight was better for me than last night. I was much calmer. I allowed myself to focus; I did not force myself to do so. I had my wits about me on stage tonight, whereas last night, I was too nervous and excited to think onstage. But tonight I was able to listen more, and I rode the audience better, and I got a better taste of sitting into the show. Doing only two shows is almost unfair to an actor in any show but especially in a big comedy, because the audience is another character; you have to learn how to play with them. But I got a greater sense of that tonight, and I was proud of my work. I was even able to say all of my lines.
As the playwright, I can say without doubt that act two needs some work. While the audience enjoys the second act, it is a different animal than the first. And I think that Patrick and I need to make the second act feel more like the first act. The eighties and the nineties do not need the Chorus Line convention, and “My Fair Laddie” just needs to be rethought. Over the two nights, I was also disappointed in some of the sight gags. I thought that the entrance with me and Laurie doll, Connie Wong’s entrance, and Andrew Lloyd Webber’s leap on stage would get big laughs, but there was little response. I think perhaps the fault comes in the setup. I am convinced that these comments are funny, but our timing is off there. In addition, there is still to hard a gear chance right after the revival, and this needs to be reworked. But the rest of the ending is fine. However, with all of my discussion on the problems, I would like to say—without shame—that I am very proud of our work. I think that we have made a damn fine piece of theatre and a damn funny one at that.
EVALUATION

John Bell, the Chair of my Thesis Committee, wrote the following evaluations. John Bell is an Associate Professor in Performance and the Graduate Coordinator of Musical Theatre at the University of Central Florida Conservatory Theatre.

Thesis Project Assessment #1

Fall 2005 – Throughout the semester, I met with Patrick Moran and Rocky Sansom to discuss the development of the libretto and score of their two-person project “A 16-Bar Cut: The History of the American Musical Theatre.”

The early stages of my work with the gentlemen was serving as a sounding board for their ideas and as their first “audience member.” That is, they would come in, every couple of weeks or so, with a new scene or two. I would read the scene and we would discuss my reaction to it.

Much of my response was a reaction to either the accuracy of the content, the tone and/or diction of the content, and/or suggestions about the overall structure of the piece. As for accuracy, I would occasionally query them, looking for a defense of their understanding of the history of the form. In almost every case, they were either “spot on” or could defend their choices vigorously. I did raise consistent concerns about some of the tone of the piece, especially where I felt it either became to sophomoric or vulgar. And finally, once the piece began to take shape, we had lots of discussions about structure and flow.

Throughout these early stages in the process, both Patrick and Rocky were open and very reflective. Both were inquisitive, invested and committed to the subject as well as to the demands of Thesis-quality work. They took constructive criticism extremely well, considered all
points of view and, as they should, eventually settled on their own choices. Not once did either student become territorial or defensive. But they were both able to assert their knowledge and passion for the subject and, as it should be, the piece that they were to create would definitely be theirs.

**Thesis Project Assessment #2**


After the rehearsal I provided Rocky and Patrick with feedback aimed mostly as the length of the piece and at a caution or concern I had for their vocal health as they started the final stage of the project, ramping up toward opening night.

The rehearsal showed professional quality attention to all aspects: music, design and performance. Their technical and design team, Dave Upton and James Cleveland, were also present.

My biggest note for the two was that I felt the piece was too long. I encouraged them to make judicious cuts. I shared with them that I felt they were in a good place: the place where a writer has more than enough material and can pare things down to make them more potent.

Both Rocky and Patrick received their notes very well. I was clear that they were both in that stage of complete immersion in the work. I was aware that while they wanted and appreciated the feedback I was providing, they were both very eager to simply get the work “set” and therefore, the notion of script changes was a hard idea to process. I told them that, if as they rehearsed over the next week, cuts emerged and made themselves feel very apparent, to take them. Otherwise, leave the work as it was and play it before an audience. That, I told them, would tell them a lot.
Thesis Project Assessment #3

May 6, 2006 – I attended the second and final performance of “A 16-Bar Cut: The History of the American Musical Theatre” at the Orlando Repertory Theatre. There were approximately 70 people in attendance. I hear the preceding evening had a similar sized audience.

It was evident from the event that Patrick and Rocky had succeeded on all fronts: construction, performance, marketing, production, etc. The audience was full of supportive and interested people and the show itself was engaging and informative.

If we think of a Thesis project as a capstone experience designed to showcase the complete range of a student’s educational journey, I can’t think of a project that could have achieved that objective better than this one.

In essence, Rocky and Patrick, through the course of their study, chose a subject which fascinated and intrigued them. Through their public presentation they were able to showcase their abilities as performer, writers and scholars. To me this is what a high-quality MFA degree should be able to produce. When I think of a student walking out the door, I want to think of them as being competitive as performers, but also think of them as being intelligent and articulate theorists and analysts. In Rocky and Patrick, I think we have evidence of this level of achievement.
CONCLUSION

Ultimately, A 16 Bar Cut: The History of American Musical Theatre was the perfect capstone project to my MFA because creating it taught me that I am able to operate and succeed at the highest possible level for a theatre practitioner. I often joke that most theatrical folk enter a life in the theatre because of extreme, deep-rooted self-esteem issues. But if most theatre artists are really honest with themselves, I think that this statement holds some merit. I have pursued an MFA not only for the training and the doors that it will open, but I also pursued it to prove to myself that I could. And after this thesis process, I can unreservedly say that I am an artist; I create. I have the talent, the training, the resourcefulness, and the sheer drive to make art happen.

I have never had a project so absolutely and totally consume my life. I rarely had a day in nine months that did not involve my thesis in some form or manner. And while my MFA coursework was demanding, it was still formal schooling, so it was very structured. Real life is not structured. During this thesis process, I had to make my own art without the helpful guide of a classroom setting; it was the real world. And while my MFA coursework was difficult, my production output during this thesis process was—without a doubt—the highest of my life. Between my thesis show, my thesis paper, my graduate internship, other outside creative projects, and other necessary outside jobs, I often worked myself to my breaking point, and a few times, I worked passed my breaking point. But I learned how negotiate my time, my mind, my body, and my resources in order to accomplish all of the tasks that were before me. And knowing how to manage and organize myself at my highest possible productivity rate is a skill that is just as important to learn as anything in the classroom if I am to be a true master of the fine art of musical theatre.
I know that a life in theatre is and will continue to be a hard life. My current and probably life-long quest for a career tells me that theatre is a hard life. My checkbook tells me that theatre is a hard life. I even have complete strangers on the street tell me that theatre is a hard life. But I choose to do it because theatre is what I love; it is what I do. And my year with A 16 Bar Cut taught me to value the art that I am making; it rekindled my joy of theatre—the very thing it seemed that my internship this year was trying to steal from me. I dare say that I might have given up the theatre after this excruciatingly trying year. But A 16 Bar Cut constantly reminded me that theatre is play. It reminded me that theatre—as Max Reinhardt and my favorite old pal Uta Hagen say—“is the most joyous hide-away for all those who have secretly put their childhood in their pocket and gone off and away with it to play on to the end of their days.” When I was onstage during my thesis show, I felt like the kid who used to write his own plays and put them on for his mommy and his daddy, using sheets and trashcans and the essential turkey baster for a microphone. My thesis show was the closest I have ever felt to my long-forgotten four-year-old self, who did not need an MFA to act, dance, or sing. This rejuvenation, new passion, and new delight for theatre is exactly what I needed this year, and it is exactly what I need as I leave the safe cocoon of a graduate program.

And finally, A 16 Bar Cut taught me the value and the reward of truly long and hard work. It taught me that if I want something deeply enough and am willing to work for it, I can make it happen. During my three-year MFA program, all of the theatre education that I received was important. But the tools of my craft and the life lessons that I gained during my thesis were the most difficult to learn, and they are the most rewarding. And not everyone with an MFA gets to say that.
APPENDIX A:
FIRST SCRIPT OUTLINE
First Script Outline
August 2005

Working Title—The History of Musical Theatre: A 16 Bar Cut

1. Beginning of the show
   Start in Ancient Greece
   Have a voice over describing Greece where we cut him off
   This will be a take off of Disney’s Hercules

2. Opening Number
   Vamps with clever interjections setting up the evening
   Lyric re-write to “Open in Venice” from Kiss Me, Kate
   Lyric re-write to a gospel number

3. Circus
   Necessary time period
   Nothing specific at this time

**Note: At this point in time, theatre history overlaps with different varieties of theatre and genres happening at the same time. We will start with vaudeville and minstrelsy and then move to operetta.

4. Vaudeville & Minstrelsy
   As Rocky lectures on Minstrelsy, Patrick will add humor. Dialogue example:

   ROCKY: “And from Minstrelsy, we are given many well-known icons, such as
   Aunt Jamima (Patrick pulls out a syrup bottle), playing the bones (Patrick pulls
   out a skeleton and plays it like a xylophone), and also what is called black face.
   Blackface was a make-up in early theatre. The proper way to make blackface was
   to burn a cork in a little dish. (Patrick proceeds to do what Rocky is explaining)
   Patrick, what are you doing?”
   PATRICK: “I’m making black face.”
   ROCKY: “You can’t do that we’ll be sued.”
   (Patrick raises his fist.)”
   ROCKY: Patrick put your hand down.”
   PATRICK: “But I have a question.” (Patrick straightens out his fingers.)
   ROCKY: “Well, what is it?”
   PATRICK: “What do you do after you burn the cork?”

5. Operetta
   Touch on the history and big names of operetta concluding with G&S.
   G&S Spoof
   Condense all G&S works into one patter song (e.g., “Modern Major General” or
   “When I Was a Lad.”)
6. Turn of the Century (1900-1920)
   Flo Zeigfeld and George White battle through dance to a West Side Story rumble music with clever interjections. Dialogue example:

   FLO: “Well, I married Billie Burke in (date), and she is the star of my Zeigfeld Follies.”
   GEORGE: Burke is your star? How much do you pay her… for the marriage?”

   Show Boat Sequence
   Discuss the show’s major influence on theatre followed by an open mockery of “Ol’ Man River”

7. The Golden Age (1920-1950 [not positive on the dates])
   A medley spoofing how every show is extremely happy

8. R & H
   Discuss the impact of Oklahoma! on theatre and how it raised theatre to a new level.
   R&H Game Show
   A game show format where two lucky members of the audience are pulled on stage to answer questions about famous R&H shows. They will each have an R&H buzzer (one a cowbell and the other a Japanese fan). The host will sing the first line of a song and the contestants will have to answer by singing the rest of the line. If not sung, points will be deducted (like in Jeopardy where if you do not answer in the form of a question, you are wrong!)

   **Note: The rest of the show will use the convention of A Chorus Line with each subsequent decade or movement being a character from the show. (We will possibly use the most recognizable 8 bars of each character to start off each section.)

9. The 60’s
   Boy Meets Girl
   Use the convention of “boy meets girl, boy loses girl, and boy gets girl back” as seen in major shows of the time. (Possible motif: “Hello 12”)

10. The 70’s
    Dance Decade
    Featuring the major choreographers (Fosse, Robbins, Kid, and Bennett)

11. The 80’s
    London invasion overcome by Sondheim
    Characters personify rock and pop opera with an appearance by Connie for Miss Saigon

12. The 90’s
    “Tenor Envy” sung between Rocky and Patrick
    Rocky has tenor-envy because of Patrick’s high notes
Use the married characters from *A Chorus Line* (Possibly use portions of “Sing”)

13. Today
   Broadway is just revivals and “best of” albums turned into shows
   Our show is done as a revival from start to finish
   The character of Paul who personifies musical theatre falls and injures himself.
   Use the phrase “Musical Theatre Down!”
APPENDIX B:
FIRST VERSION OF “TENOR ENVY”
Notes on Appendix B

In the show’s early development stages, I had the idea to compose a song about tenors taking all of the Broadway roles away from baritones. Interestingly, our song about the baritones’ plight was not initially tied to the 1990s scene. As we were discussing the song, Patrick suggested that we use Marcy and Zina’s cabaret song “Alto’s Lament” as inspiration for this new number. Their song is about an alto who wants a chance to sing a show tune melody; the soprano’s get all the glory. From Marcy and Zina’s work, we knew that we wanted to weave familiar work with our own original work. This appendix is a formatted version of some early notes and ideas that Patrick and I had about the number. I thought that opening with recitative would be clever, and I thought that a waltz with a strong “oom-pa-pa” feel would be a charming way to playfully poke fun at tenors and to connect the pre-existing material that we new wanted to use. At the time we made these musical notes, we did not know the other material that we would weave together, and we did not know where the song would fit in the show.
Is It A Crime To Be A Baritone?

(The first sketch of what would later become "Tenor Envy")

Patrick Moran & Rockford Sansom

A
Reclitative

Voice

When I get to sing a song, it must be in my range. From G to G preferably with

Boisterous refrain

B
Chorus

Is it a crime to be a baritone? Must I be caught in the middle?

I'm not a bass or a tenor so high. So why must I watch as the nineties pass by?

Figure 2: First Version of "Tenor Envy"
APPENDIX C:
SECOND VERSION OF “TENOR ENVY”
Notes on Appendix C

Once we decided to make “Tenor Envy” the convention of the 1990s scene, we threw away all of our notes, and we started anew. As a solo composer, I typically write many of my lyrics at the same time as my melody lines. However, working with Patrick, we needed to write the lyrics first, so we could develop the arch and structure of the song/scene. We decided to make the song about my baritone character that encounters different tenors who upstage him. This structure is different from “Alto’s Lament” since both Patrick and I will sing. We also use larger sections of cuttings since we are writing a scene instead of simple song.

After we wrote the scene and the lyrics to the song, I then went away and composed the music myself. I kept my original idea and opened with recitative, but I created a new musical world for the song’s glue—the verses that tie the preexisting material together. The arch of the song moves from lighthearted to extremely agitated, and this evolution is expressed in the composition.

Additional notes:

• At the end of Section D, there are three notes with railroad tracks that appear to be random. These notes were for a bit that never made it into the show. Justin was going to give me the starting pitch for the song that Patrick sang in Section D, and I was not going be able to sing the pitch. The bit would have been very funny, but it broke the rhythm of the scene.

• If Section B is the first verse, then Section E acts like a second verse. However, I only included the end of the verse. I wanted the audience to reconnect with the musical idea in Section B, but repeating an entire verse felt redundant. We also did not include an entire second verse because Patrick and I could not think of
clever enough lyrics. The best we could come up with was “Tenors/They kill me/I’d rather have a dentist go and drill me.” These are terrible lyrics, and I would not allow myself to sing them.
Tenor Envy

Lyrics by Rockford Sansom & Patrick Moran
Music by Rockford Sansom

Section D: Music by Lieber & Stoller
Section F: Music by Frank Wildhorn, Lyrics by Nan Knighton
Sections J & K: Music & Lyrics by Jonathan Larson

A
Quarter = 125

Rocky:

Every year on Broadway when the new shows all appear
I scrupt, I save, I scorce, and scrape to get to the theatres and hear
All the brand new songs and the

stars that I hold dear Those ballads and up-tempo when suddenly it's

Pno.
Tenor Envy

Freely - Approx. Quart.=115

here. My biggest fear. Tenors I hate them. Tell me God, Why did you create them? Now they're singing oh so high. They make me want to pulse and die! Oh, tenors Oh, tenors I hate them! Well I au-
Tenor Envy

Piano

determined for a show, a new revue called Smokey Joe's. And I was handed a new dirty from the

score. But then the guy before me sang and he created such a bang, I knew bet-

ween us there was gonna be a war! Gonna buy me a ticket. And

ride on that B_ And O. Gonna buy me a ticket. And ride on that B_ and O_

297
Now with tenors taking all the rolls they’re ripping

Out my very soul. Oh, tenors Oh, ten I went to

Broadway and saw a new show. The latest Frank

Wildhorn I thought it would blow.
Tenor Envy

The male lead came on stage and surr-ed real

lose

I thought a

Patrick:

bar-i-tenor at last. But then there came a blast. Yes, it's

higher and higher and in-to the fire. We go in-to fire.
Tenor Envy

Onward, Hol...

Quartet: Rocky:

Why are all the new shows made for tenors? Please tell me why

am I resigned to sit and wait? Why can we
Tenor Envy

please just return things to the way they were, the

baritones were kings of the stage, and singing low was the latest rage, we

Patrick:

ruled the time called the Golden age. And now you're all dead because of old age.

I Rocky:

Well it's finally here. A new show in the nineties with a baritone lead.
It's been since Les Mis since I had a good role.

God bless Jonathan Larson and his

new show Rent.

A baritone, no more chorus this time.

--

With Patrick:

J

Rocky: Freely

And we got paid!

Open your door, I'll be your

tenant. Don't got much baggage to lay at your feet.

But
Tenor Envy

sweet kisses I've got to spare I'll be there. And I'll cover

With Patrick: Dotted Quart-100

you I think they meant it when they said you can't buy love. Now I know you can rent it. A new lease, you are my love.

Patrick:

don life be my life. Season of
Figure 3: Second Version of "Tenor Envy"
APPENDIX D:
THIRD VERSION OF “TENOR ENVY”
Notes on Appendix D

With only three weeks left before we opened, I made some major revisions to “Tenor Envy.” During the rehearsal process, I did not like the opening to the piece. Since I was acting like the “butch” in a gay couple, I felt disconnected from the music; the playful tone of the recitative did not fit the character and his emotional state.

In a music rehearsal, I gave the song to Justin, and he noted some technical items that I needed to rework, but he also mentioned that he like Section H and that he thought it was well written. His comment gave me the idea to rework the opening of the song. I rewrote all of the lyrics in Section A and made the section about my character’s wants. This change is more connected to the song, and it is more connected to the preceding dialogue. I also completely recomposed Section A, and I altered Section B so that the piece is more uniform and so the song fits the character’s angered emotional state. I also cut Section E to only three measures. This change continues the momentum of the song, and it keeps the entire song in the style of the opening.
Tenor Envy

Lyrics by Rockford Sansom & Patrick Moran
Music by Rockford Sansom

Section D: Music & Lyrics by Lieber & Stoller
Section F: Music by Frank Wildhorn, Lyrics by Nan Knighton
Sections J & K: Music & Lyrics by Jonathan Larson

A quarter=150

Voice

Piano

Quickly drawing near, I hope this year will be the year when I call Broadway my career.

I want the multitudes to cheer. I want my...
Tenor Envy

Songs to bring forth tears. I want no singer as my peer. I want the critics up my rear. But all my hopes soon disappear 'cause only high notes are revered.

B

Tenors I hate them. Tell me God, Why did you create them? Now to

enter cattle calls the men must cut off their own balls! Oh, tenors Oh,
Tenor Envy

30's Rock
Quartet: C

Pno.

Seniors—I hate them!

Well I sus-

Pno.

ditioned for a show, a new revue called Smokey Joe's. And I was handed a new ditty from the

Pno.

cscore. But then the guy before me sang. And he created such a bung. I knew bet-

Pno.

D Patrick: Jazz Improv

ween us there was gonna be a war! Gonna buy me a ticket. And

Pno.
Tenor Envy

ride on that B_ And O_ Gonna buy me a ticket, And ride on that B_ and O.

Pno.

E Rocky:

Ch, ten-oes Ch, ten I went to Broadway

Pno.

and saw a new show:

Pno.

Wild- horn I thought it would blow.
Tenor Envy

The male lead came on stage and sur - ed real

lose ______

I thought a

bar-i-tere______ at last. But then there came a blast. Yes, it's

high-er and high-er and in-to the fire____ We go____ in-to fire.
Tenor Envy

Onward, Hol...

Quartet: Rocky:

Why

are all the new shows made for tenors? Please tell me why

am I resigned to sit and wait? R: While the tenors steal all the freakin' glory! Why can we

Pno.
Tenor Envy

please just return things to the way they were: the

baritones were kings of the stage, and singing low was the latest rage, we

ruled the time called the Golden age. And now you're all dead because of old age.

Well it's finally here. A new show in the nineties with a baritone lead.

P. Remind them how long you had to wait for this role.
Tenor Envy

It's been since Les Mis since I had a good role.
P: Well, I have a good role, too. God bless Jon-athan Lar-son and his

new show Rent. P: He writes for tenors too!
A bar-i-tone No more chor-us this time

With Patrick:
J

Rocky: Freely

And we get paid! Open your door. I'll be your
ten-ant. Don't got much bag-gage to lay at your feet. But
Tenor Envy

Sweet kisses I've got to spare. I'll be there. And I'll cover

With Patrick: Dotted Quart-100

You... I think they meant it when they said you can't

Buy love. Now I know you can rent it. A new lease, you are my love

Patrick:

On life be my life. Seasons of
Figure 4: Third Version of "Tenor Envy"
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**Total Cost:** 1702.61
Table 2: Costume Plot

Act I

**Opening**
- Black Robes - 2
- Grecian Masks - 2
- Tux Jackets - 2
- Tux Rip-away fronts - 2
- Base Costumes

**Scene 1**
- Barker Hat (R)

**Scene 2**
- Base Costumes

**Scene 3**
- Operetta Cape (R)
- Merry Widow (P): Robe/Hat/Gloves/Black Skirt
- Rose-Marie (P): Indian Drape/Head Piece
- Mikado (P): Robe/Wig/White Skirt
- Penzance (R): Hat/Eye Patch/Sash/Pirate Shirt
- Sailor Hat (J)

**Scene 4**
- Follies Girl (P&R): Drape/Fan
- Bert Williams (R): Top Hat and Gloves
- Ethel Merman (P): Fur Wrap/Hat
- Show Boat (P): Sailor Hat/Life Vest

**Scene 5**
- Base Costume

**Scene 6**
- Curly (P): White Hat/Black Vest w/ Trim
- Will (P): Brown Hat/Brown Vest
- Ali (P): Bowler
- Dream Laurie (P): Yellow Skirt/Cheap Yellow Wig
- Eller (R): Grey Wig/Brown Skirt
- Laurie (R): Blonde Wig/Yellow Skirt
- Ado (R): Brown Wig/Blue Skirt
- Jud (R): Black Vest/Black Hat
- Game Show (P&R): Red shirt/Cape/Huge Wig (P)
- Suit Jacket (R)
Act II

Scene 7
Smoking Jacket (R)
Laddie Hat and Vest (P)

Scene 8
Red Bowler
Blue Bowler
4 Bandanas (P&R)
Fiddler Hats: Milk (P)/Soda (R)
Leg Warmers (P)
Matching Head Band (P)

Scene 9
Cats (R): Tail/Mask
Connie (R): Wig and Robe/Black Skirt
Miles (R): Roman Hat/Cape
Prince (R): Crown/Cape
Philia (P): Blonde Wig/Leaf Crown/White Skirt
Cinderella (P): White Skirt/Blue Robe/Brown Wig
Desiree (P): Grey Wig/Fat Dress

Scene 10
Al (R): Leather Vest/Hat
Kris (P): Tied-up Shirt

Scene 11
Base Costume
Table 3: Prop List

Act I

Opening
  None

Scene 1
  Dollar Bill (P)

Scene 2
  Kazoo (J) Preset on the Piano
  Table (P) with Make-up/Cup/Cork/Bowl

Scene 3
  None

Scene 4
  Chair with a Cup of Water (P)

Scene 5
  None

Scene 6
  Butter Churn (R)
  Satchel with Elixir Bottle (P)
  Laurie Doll (R)
  Knife (R) Preset in Jud’s Vest
  2 stools/2 Cowbells (P) During the Gameshow
  Question Cards (R) Preset in the Jacket

Act II

Entr’acte
  Table with Instruments (R)
  Triangle (P)

Scene 7
  Business Card (R) Preset in the Smoking Jacket
  Bowl of Marbles (R) Preset on the Piano

Scene 8
  2 chairs (P&R) During Fosse
  Fuzzy Dice (P) During Kidd
  4 Bandanas (P&R) During Kidd
Scene 9
   Chair (R)
   Stool (P)
   Sock Puppet Steve (R)

Scene 10
   2 Rent Microphones (P)
   Chair (P)

Scene 11
   2 Stools (P)
   2 Towels (P)
APPENDIX G:
PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Patrick John Moran & Rockford Sansom
Telephone Number: Sansom Cell (407) 924-5915; Moran Cell (973) 342-2276
Fax Number: (386) 274-2931
Email Address: patrickjohnmoran@yahoo.com; rockfordsansom@yahoo.com

Orlando, Florida.

Who: Patrick John Moran & Rockford Sansom


When: May 5 & 6, 2006 at 8:00 pm

Where: Orlando Repertory Theater, Edyth Bush Theatre in Loch Haven Park

Cost: Admission is free

The outrageous and irreverent Patrick John Moran and Rockford Sansom present a zany, two-man, original musical unlike the world has ever seen. *A 16 Bar Cut: The History of American Theatre* is a high-energy wacky romp from the ancient Greeks through the Broadway of today. Ethel Merman, Florence Ziegfeld, Ado Annie, P.T. Barnum, the Modern Major General, Diana Morales, and Stephen Sondheim all make appearances. With new music and snippets from nearly 100 songs, *A 16 Bar Cut* features singing, dancing, wit, drag, slapstick, audience participation, and sometimes even moments of intelligence. Admission is free, but audience members may feel the need to throw money after the show.

For additional information and/or promotional materials:
Contact: Patrick John Moran & Rockford Sansom
Telephone Number: Sansom Cell (407) 924-5915; Moran Cell (973) 342-2276
Fax Number: (386) 274-2931
Email Address: patrickjohnmoran@yahoo.com; rockfordsansom@yahoo.com

Re: A 16 Bar Cut

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Figure 5: Press Release
APPENDIX H: POSTER
Figure 6: Poster
APPENDIX I:
PLAYBILL
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
(People we would like to thank and have to thank.)

Justin Fischer, Chris Layton, Debbie Tedrick, Josephine Leffner, Chris Staffel, Michael Swickard, Kip Taisey, the Orlando Repertory Theatre, James Cleveland, Dave Upton, Paul Lartonoix, Debbie Dean, Simone Smith, Cathy Wagner, the University of Central Florida Conservatory Theatre, Dr. John C. Hitt, Dr. Kathryn Lee Seidel, Dr. Roberto Sloan, John Bell, James Brown, Dr. Steven Chicurel, F. Gary Flannery, Dr. Julia Listengarten, Earl Weaver, Nicholas Wuchmann, Isaac & Lizzy Kreiger, Karen Hiscox, Ron Hornsby, Seaside Music Theater, Gary Cadwallader, Florida Formal Wear, Musetta Jensen, Linda Esser-May, Daniel & Donna Moran, Our family and friends.

The World Premiere of an Original Musical Romp!
May 5 & 6, 2006 at The Orlando Rep


Patrick John Moran* & Rockford Sansom*
CAST
Patrick John Moran* with Rockford Sansom*
Justin S. Fischer
(Accompaniment, Additional Arrangements & Musical Supervision)
& The Voices of Christopher Layton

CREATIVE
James Cleveland
(Sound Design)
& Dave Upton
(Light Design)

ACT ONE
It's Greek to Me, Me, Me
Cirque du Sucker
Vaude-atrely
The Operetta Opus
Of Man Zeigfield
The Golden Up-Tempo
The Dynamic Duo

ACT TWO
Entrancing
My Fair Laddie
70s, Dancer, 70s
The Eighties are a Drag
Ninety Million Tenors
Revivals 2000

SONGS
(In Alphabetical Order) *Original song **New Lyrics
"2B Street" *"I Can't Say No"
"A Little Bit of Rain" "I Need a Little More"
"A Little Bit of Rain" "I Need a Little More"
"I Love You" "I Need a Little More"

*Appears courtesy of AAA and US Food Stamps
APPENDIX J:
FAVORITE PRODUCTION PHOTOS
Figure 8: Act One Collage
Figure 9: Act Two Collage
Figure 10: The Orlando Repertory Theatre
Figure 11: "Entr'acting"
Figure 12: Rocky with Sock Puppet Steve
Figure 13: Patrick as Diana
Figure 14: The Bottle Dance
Figure 15: Reviving
Opening: “It’s Greek To Me, Me, Me”


Scene One: “Cirque du Sucker”

Coleman, Cy. “There is a Sucker Born Ev’ry Minute.” Barnum. 1975. New York: Tams-
   Witmark, 1980.

Scene Two: “Vaude-strelsy”

Durante, Jimmy and Ben Ryan. “Inka Dinka Doo.” The Vaudeville Song Book. New York:
   Bourne, 1933.
Cohan, George M. “Give My Regards to Broadway.” Yankee Doodle Dandy. New York: Hal

Scene Three: “The Operetta Opus”

Friml, Rudolf, comp., Oscar Hammerstein II and Otto Harbach, lyric. “Indian Love Call.” Rose-
Herbert, Victor, comp., Rida Johnson Young, lyric. “Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life.” Naughty


Scene Four: “Ol’ Man Zeigfeld”


Scene Five: “The Golden Up-Tempo”


Scene Six: “The Dynamic Duo”


“Entr’acting”


Scene Seven: “My Fair Laddie”


Scene Eight: “70s, Dancer, 70s”


Scene Nine: “The Eighties are a Drag”


Scene Ten: “Ninety Million Tenors”


Scene Eleven: “Revivals 2000”


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REFERENCES


