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THD07535 - Curatorial Practice in the Arts.

Prof. Terry Fox

Final Proposal

Title: *Rodgers and Hammerstein: Then and Now*

Format: A curated exhibition examining four of Rodgers and Hammerstein's works including *Oklahoma!*, *Carousel*, *South Pacific*, and *The King and I*. The exhibition will examine their original production and their most recent Broadway revival. The exhibition will also include a series of moderate discussions and lectures as well as a musical performance celebrating the works of Rodgers and Hammerstein.

Venue: The Morris Museum, Morristown, NJ

Background: With its roots in vaudeville and cabaret performance, musical theatre was seen as a comedic, frivolous form of theatrical performance in the 1920's and 1930's. Music and dance numbers were merely there for entertainment value as there was little to no plotline in the works being produced on stage. When Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, premiered *Oklahoma!* on Broadway in 1943, they transformed the artform by combining the elements, of music, choreography and plot in on cohesive fashion to tell a story. It was the start of a revolution. Had it not been for the genius of their collaboration, musical theatre as we know it today would not exist.

Other than combining the elements of musical theatre cohesively, Rodgers and Hammerstein also touched on challenging social issues at the time, proving that musical theatre could be a dramatic artform. Such issues included domestic abuse in *Carousel*, race and

relationships in *South Pacific*, and the differences in eastern and western culture in *The King and I*. Together, they composed some of the most beautiful songs ever written from “You’ll Never Walk Alone”, to “Some Enchanted Evening”.

Rodgers and Hammerstein have often been called timeless, and that certainly seems to be true. Their works have been revived on Broadway on several occasions, especially within the 2000’s. *South Pacific* and *The King and I*, both received revivals at Lincoln Center’s Vivian Beaumont Theatre, under the direction of Bartlett Sher. *Carousel* was revived in 2018 directed by Jack O’Brien. Yet no revival was as radically different than any of its previous incarnations that of Daniel Fish’s 2019 revival of *Oklahoma!*, at the immersive Circle in the Square Theater. In this revival, gone is the choreography of Agnes De Mille, or the lush orchestrations of Richard Rodgers. What we are left with instead is the original book, all words intact without revision. The story is now set in a present-day Oklahoma community center and the musical accompaniment is a modest seven-person band. In this production, Fish emphasizes realism and does not shy away from the show’s darker, sexual, prejudice, and violent themes.

With Fish’s revival, we see a musical that is beloved for its iconic songs, and its seemingly joyful, innocent plot, turned on its head. Fish’s radical yet specific directing style aside, this revival does spark the question, “Are Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals truly timeless?” How do we justify the problematic themes of domestic abuse and redemption in *Carousel* in the midst of the #MeToo movement? With the major differences between democracy in the United States and communism and dictatorship of the Western world, can we still embrace the themes of *The King and I*? Are there still some racial stereotypes that need to be addressed? How is *South Pacific* still relevant today when we know so much more about the brutality of war now and the world has come so far along with acceptance of interracial

relationships? These are all complicated questions before us.

The Exhibition: How do we reconcile the nostalgia, history and significance of these musicals with the present day, every changing world that we live in? *Rodgers and Hammerstein: Then and Now*, will examine this question by looking closely at the most recent Rodgers and Hammerstein revivals of *Oklahoma!* (2019), *Carousel* (2018), *The King and I* (2015), and *South Pacific* (2007) and their original Broadway productions.

This exhibition will use a variety of multi-media to give the audience enough information to compare and contrast the original production of these pieces and their subsequent revival. Production stills, footage, and cast recordings will be used to showcase the artistic attributes of each piece. Interviews from creatives involved in these productions will be used to show artistic perspective. Finally, reviews and other articles will be used to take a closer look at these productions through a critical lens. All throughout the exhibition, the audience will have the opportunity to compare and contrast these musicals as they were originally produced and received to how they most recently have been received. We will see how these musicals have or have not aged as the world around them evolves over time. At the end, the audience will be able to determine for themselves, if these musicals are as truly timeless, as we romanticize them to be.

Artist Biographies

Oscar Hammerstein

Hammerstein's talents as a lyricist and librettist are undeniable. Countless productions of Hammerstein musicals on Broadway, on tour, and in professional, amateur, and academic theaters around the world testify to the remarkable quality of his work. Hammerstein's influence on the next generation of lyricists and librettists was also direct and observable. Most notable was his influence on Stephen Sondheim, lyricist for such shows as "West Side Story," "Sweeney Todd," and "Sunday in the Park with George." Sondheim was a close friend of the Hammerstein family from childhood and attributed his success in theater directly to Hammerstein's influence and guidance. <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/broadway/stars/oscar-hammerstein-ii/>

Richard Rodgers

In 1943, Rodgers teamed up with another Columbia friend, Oscar Hammerstein II, forming one of the best known songwriting teams in the history of the American musical. Their first collaboration was the Pulitzer Prize winning play, “Oklahoma!” This innovative play was the first ever to fully integrate music and dance into the plot. Critics praised the songs for their appropriateness to the mood and character of the play. Several of the songs became popular hits, especially, “Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin’” and “People Will Say We’re in Love.”

Rodgers and Hammerstein proceeded to produce a continuous stream of Broadway hits until Hammerstein’s death in 1960. Many of the plays were adapted as motion pictures, the most profitable being THE SOUND OF MUSIC. Some of their best-loved songs included: “June Is Bustin’ Out All Over” and “If I Loved You” from “Carousel”; “I Enjoy Being a Girl” from “Flower Drum Song”; “Getting to Know You” from “The King and I”; “Some Enchanted Evening” and “I’m Gonna Wash that Man Right Outta My Hair” from “South Pacific”; and “My Favorite Things” and “Edelweiss” from “The Sound of Music.”

<https://www.pbs.org/wnet/broadway/stars/richard-rodgers/>

Curated Items

- Cast recordings from the original productions and subsequent revivals.
- Librettos and sheet music of each productions.
- Production stills.
- Production footage.
- Critical reviews from circulated publications.
- Interviews from Rodgers and Hammerstein and creatives involved in these productions.
- Composer and creative biographies.
- Commentary from experts regarding the history of these productions, their historical significance and the context in which we view them today.

Selected Rodgers and Hammerstein’s collaborations

Oklahoma!

- 1943: Directed Rouben Mamoulian and Choreographed by Agnes de Mille.
- 2019: Daniel Fish (Director), John Heginbotham (choreography), Daniel Kluger (new musical arrangements)

Carousel

- 1945: Directed Rouben Mamoulian and Choreographed by Agnes de Mille
- 2018: Directed by Jack O'Brien and Choreographed by Justin Peck.

The King and I

- 1951: Directed by John Van Druten; Choreographed by Jerome Robbins
- 2015: Directed by Bartlett Sher; Choreographed by Christopher Gattelli

South Pacific

- 1954: Direction and Musical Staging by Joshua Logan
- 2007 Directed by Bartlett Sher; Musical Staging by Christopher Gattelli

Reviews

Oklahoma!

- 1943 New York Times Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/1943/04/01/archives/the-play-oklahoma-a-musical-hailed-as-delightful-based-on-green.html>
- 2019 Revival New York Times Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/07/theater/oklahoma-review.html>

South Pacific

- 1949 New York Times Review https://static01.nyt.com/packages/pdf/theater/South_Pacific.pdf
- 2008 Review New York Times Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/04/theater/reviews/04paci.html>

Carousel

- 1945 New York Times review <https://www.nytimes.com/1945/04/20/archives/the-play-in-review.html>
- 2018 Revival New York Times Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/12/theater/carousel-review-broadway.html>

The King and I

- 2015 Revival <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/17/theater/review-the-king-and-i-back-on-broadway.html>

Recordings

Oklahoma!

- 1943: Original Cast Album (Decca Broadway)
- 2019: 2019 Broadway Cast Recording (Decca Broadway)

Carousel

- 1945: Carousel: Selections from the Theatre Guild Musical Play: A Decca Broadway Original Cast Album (Original 1945 Broadway Cast)
- 2018: Rodgers & Hammerstein's Carousel, 2018 Broadway Cast Recording

The King and I

- 1951: The King and I (Original Broadway Cast) (MCA Gold)
- 2015: The King and I (2015 Revival) Decca Broadway

South Pacific

- 1949: South Pacific (Original 1949 Broadway Cast)
- 2008: South Pacific (The New Broadway Cast Recording)

Video Footage

Oklahoma!

1943

- University of North Carolina School of the Arts Restoration of 1943 Production:
ACT ONE <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syM0JtapQ4Q>
ACT TWO <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JS4NuHtiiPE>
- *Oklahoma!* Through time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEva9HkPUfw>

2019

- Tony Awards Performance <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxFS8okUqKk>
- “People Will Say We’re In Love” Music Video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2I3YiKi4usc>
- Production Footage <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0ejW5XurPs>
- Daniel Fish interview <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zc5QNX0Kuo0>
- Opening Night interviews <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=832fgsTw26Y>

Carousel

1945

- Ballet Sequence <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MP7oatLydC0>
- “If I Loved You” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfCyUugiWm8>

2018

- Production Footage <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfCyUugiWm8>
- Tony Awards Performance <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JspmndiE6Sw>
- Opening Night interviews <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QsfUbkF-yPU>
- Tony Nominee Interviews <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bwuxMs3PzQ>

The King and I

1951

- *The King and I* through time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wk-TkfFSsCQ>
2015
- Tony Award performance <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AkjsVjKEeM>
- Production footage <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfOdTQ-GIzQ>
- Keli O’Hara Character Study https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5oJA_FLYsA
- Bartlet Sher Interview <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlNQNauFv34>

South Pacific

- 1952 London “Wonderful Guy” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJHj-h68EOK>
- 1952” “Wash that Man Right Outta My Hair”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5DiQsKpEkc>

- South Pacific through time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QW6biCmGg7o>

2008

- Tony Award Performance <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpj832F2VQk>
- “Bloody Mary” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5D-r5WfXOc>
- “Carefully Taught to Hate” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nihxGp6mZw>
- “Wash that Man Right Outta My Hair” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-kSYiQzZ8A>

Production Photography

Oklahoma!

- 1943: <https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-production/oklahoma-1285>
- 2019: <https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-production/oklahoma-520829>

Carousel

- 1945 <https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-show/carousel-2419>
- 2018: <https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-production/carousel-515791>

The King and I

- 1954: <https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-production/the-king-and-i-1935>
- 2015: <https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-production/the-king-and-i-497593>

South Pacific

- 1949: <https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-production/south-pacific-1831>
- 2008: <https://www.lct.org/shows/rodgers-hammersteins-south-pacific/>

Timeline

May 4, 2020	Announcement of exhibition and concert performance made on behalf of the institution. Exhibition opening date set for September 17, 2020, closing January 3, 2021. Concert on November 14, 2020.
May 15, 2020	Begin corporate and private sponsorship solicitations.
June 1, 2020	Research and contact potential moderators and lecturers for corollary events
July 15, 2020	Finalize dates, moderators and lecturers for corollary events. Send contracts.
August 1, 2020	Hire and send contracts to musical director and performers for musical concert performance. Corporate and private sponsorship solicitations end.
August 18, 2020	Installation begins.

September 1, 2020	Director and Music Director begin discussions on repertoire for concert performance
September 14, 2020	Installation complete. Exhibition catalogue goes to print.
September 16, 2020	Private Opening Reception for board, donors, and staff
September 17, 2020	Exhibition open to the public
September 19, 2020	Curator Lecture
September 20, 2020	Director and Music director finalize repertoire for concert. Acquire rights and licenses from Rodgers and Hammerstein estate. Contracts are sent to performers.
September 28, 2020	Exhibition catalogue available for sale.
October 3, 2020	Social Issues Moderated Discussions
October 4, 2020	Revivals Moderate Discussion
October 24, 2020	Ted Chapin Lecture
October 26, 2020	Rehearsals begin for concert performance
November 2, 2020	Second concert rehearsal
November 11, 2020	Third concert rehearsal
November 14, 2020	Concert tech/dress rehearsal at 1:00pm. Performance at 7:30pm.
January 3, 2020	Exhibition closing date
January 4, 2020	Exhibition strike begins
January 8, 2020	Exhibition strike concludes.

Corollary Events

Moderated Discussion

Topic: Social Issues in Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals.

Moderated by: Ann Bogin, Guest Lecturer.

Rodgers and Hammerstein courageously confronted social issues in their musicals that

were ahead of their own time such as domestic abuse, war, racism, eastern and western civilization and beyond. Do you believe they were successful in confronting these issues? Are these issues still relevant today? How does the social progress that has been made since these musicals have been produced affect your view of this material?

Topic: Rodgers and Hammerstein revisited: A closer look at the revivals of the 2000's

Moderated by Ann Bogin, Guest Lecturer.

Daniel Fish's 2019 revival of *Oklahoma!* reinvents and reinterprets the musical, but changing everything about the original, from design, to original orchestrations and choreography, and leaving Oscar Hammerstein's book untouched. How does this revolutionary revival compare to the more traditional revivals of *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, and *Carousel*? Does making these drastic changes help the material or distract from it? Why do you feel these musicals in particular have been presented within the last few years? Could you see the drastic reinvention style Daniel Fish used for *Oklahoma!* working for other Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals? What ones would you like to see?

Lectures

Rodgers and Hammerstein: A Closer Look

Guest Lecturer: Ted Chapin; President of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization

This lecture will provide an in-depth history of the lives of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II from their humble beginnings to one of the most iconic partnerships in musical theatre history. We will discuss their individual lives, their works with other collaborators, and the legacy they left behind. We will see just how much their revolutionary writing style has influenced musical theatre as we know it today. Finally, we will examine their, sometimes complicated, relationship as collaborators, business partners, and friends.

*Then and Now: Side by Side***Presented by Matt Luminello- Exhibition Curator**

In this lecture we will discuss the differences between the original Rodgers and Hammerstein productions and their recent Broadway revivals, as showcased in the exhibition. We will discuss the rich history of these productions, and examine the brilliant artists from actors, directors, and performers, who gave birth to them, in each of their incarnations. The lecture will also examine how critics and audiences alike have received these works in their original and revival productions.

Performance*“An Enchanted Evening of Rodgers and Hammerstein” A Musical Perspective.*

This concert will present a collection of both Rodgers and Hammerstein musical selections and book scenes from their respective musicals. Selections in the concert will be performed both as originally written and in new, contemporary arrangements, bridging the gap between then and now. The book scenes will closely examine the issues conveyed in these musicals. The evening will examine the various themes Rodgers and Hammerstein have written about from romance, to despair, to the hopefully optimistic.

Budgets**Exhibition Budget Expenses**

Production Footage Copywrite	\$5,000
Production Stills Copywrite	\$3,500
Cast Recordings Copywrite	\$4,500
Media Publications (Critical Reviews, Articles, etc.)	\$800
Installation	\$5,000
Curator (Exhibition Fee)	\$7,000
Exhibition Catalogue	\$1,000

TOTAL BUDGET	\$26,800
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Income

Corporate Sponsorship	\$8,000
Private Sponsorship	\$3,000
Exhibition catalogue advertisements.	\$800
Exhibition catalogue sales	\$6,000
Museum Ticket Sales (8,000)	\$120,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$137,800

Corollary Events**Moderated Discussions and Lecture Expenses**

Moderator Fee for two discussions at 2 hour each (Social Issues and Revival Discussions)	\$400
<i>A Closer Look Lecturer</i> (One Lecturer for a two-hour presentation, Question and Answer Session)	\$500
Then and Now (Curator, two-hour presentation, Question and Answer Session)	\$300
Audio/Visual Equipment Rental (Sound, Microphones, Projectors)	\$200
TOTAL BUDGET	\$1,400

“An Enchanted Evening of Rodgers and Hammerstein” A Musical Perspective.

EXPENSE	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL
ARTISTIC EXPENSES		
Performers (Two)	\$1,200	\$1,200
Pianist/ Music Director	\$600	\$600
Director (Curator)	\$700	\$700
Music rights and licensing fees	\$800	\$1,000
Book rights and licensing fees	\$300	\$500
Lighting Technician	\$300	\$300
Sound Technician	\$300	\$300

OPERATIONAL EXPENSES		
Venue Rental (in collaboration with the institution)	\$0	\$0
Printed Programs	\$300	\$350
Security (2 Guards)	\$400	\$400
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$4,700	\$5,150
INCOME	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL
Ticket Sales (400 seats at \$25)	\$10,000 (350 seats)	\$8,750 (350 seats)
Program Advertisements	\$700	\$600
Refreshments	\$300	\$500
TOTAL INCOME	\$11,000	\$9,850