

There's Always Tomorrow

I see by the ol' [tangents](#) homepage, that there are two blogs which have yet to see any posts. I am certain that these two very talented and resourceful individuals can come up with brilliant things to pique our curiosity. One of them has vowed to make her first posting AFTER April 1st. It is now nearing April 7th.

As for my day, I spent a few hours typing the script for a new version of [Seven Brides for Seven Brothers](#). The only things I know about the original movie musical is that it featured the original Catwoman (Julie Newmar) as one of the brides and there is a lot of dancing involved. Obviously, it deals with a group of seven brothers in search of seven brides. This version transports the action to twenty-first century Alaska and the age of laptop computers among other phenomena of the day. There is music and very little dancing (none that I could not handle, anyway) involved.

Then, I WAS looking forward to opening day. The outcome was not pleasurable at least for the Bronx Bombers and their multi-million dollar lead off pitcher, C.C. Sabathia. Four and two-thirds innings. Six runs, eight hits, five walks, two wild pitches in one inning, and no strikeouts. The Yanks' second big money hopeful, Mark Teixeira did not fare well either going 0-4 at the plate. Teixeira was also eyeballed during the off-season by the Baltimore Orioles and the Orioles faithful showed their disapproval as they booed the Maryland native unmercifully at each at bat. The pressure for any new Yankee must be immense. It was a good thing that opening day was not at the new stadium because I am sure that the reaction would not have been pretty by fans in the Bronx. Ah, well one game down. Can only go up from here. At least the Cubbies were victorious. Sorry j, I see the Tigers were unsuccessful on opening day as well.

A Brother, A Butcher, A Baker, Or Any Old Part?

I have officially decided which show I will be auditioning for this summer. While I loved my experience in the melodrama a few summers ago, I have to go with the big musical extravaganza of [Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat](#). Nothing beats a big, fun, and energetic musical. Plays are fun to do but for the past well... forever, if a musical is being done, I am all for it. Now... which role to try out for...

- the Elvis channeling Pharoah? I am an Elvis fan, but not the best Elvis channeler.
- Potiphar... never cared for the role. I can't recall but I think that he was double cast in another role in productions I have been involved with.
- The baker or butler could be fun, but limited roles... possibility.
- There are a few of the 11 brothers (good men and true) I could see myself as and if anyone knows the show and myself well enough they should be able to take a stab at at least one of my choices.
- Jacob... well, I did just finish playing Grandpa Prophater.
- Joseph, himself? I dunno... how old was Donnie Osmond when he stepped into the part in the 90s?

Well, I have a few weeks to narrow my choices unless I decide to say give my anything and sing everything from the show.

The World's Most Popular Musical

And for very good reason. Who would have thought that a high school in small, rural Northwest Ohio could stage a production of *Les Miserables* and for a lot of it make you forget that you were indeed watching a high school production in small, rural Northwest Ohio. I have previously seen two professional productions of the show and I can say with certainty that the young men and women involved in this did not miss the mark by much. I cannot even begin to state who was the best performer on stage.

At the end of Val Jean's signature piece ("Bring Him Home"), the actor was positively shaking from the emotion of the song. Megan and I were in the back of the balcony and I could see his hands trembling as he knelt beside Marius in prayer. GOOD STUFF!

Poor Eponine playing the part of the best friend who longs to be with the handsome Marius. I always thought that she got a raw deal. Her duet with Marius ("A Little Fall of Rain") always sends chills down my spine. Cosette (the character) is not all that much... kind of plain Jane and boring if you ask me.

I always find it difficult who to root for in this show. I can see and understand the frustration Inspector Javert goes through as he tries again and again over 27 years to capture Jean Val Jean and bring him to justice. Another amazing performance.

Fantine's on stage time may be brief but her role within the show as a whole is vital. One could see the anguish she felt as she struck out at her would-be "customer" and sold her locket and hair to make money for her daughter.

BUT... the real stars of the show... the reason I told Megan that I would sit through another performance... THE THENARDIER'S...WHOOO HOOOO. Forget Val Jean. Javert take a hike. Cosette, Marius, and Eponine...eh. The owners of the inn are comedic villains at their finest and the high school students who gave life to them were remarkable. "Master of the House" is bar none the best all-out, give it everything you got number in any musical I can think of. *Les Miserables* with all its high drama, teary eye moments would fall flat if these characters were not performed well. The accent of M. Thenardier was sleaze from the first line. His sneaky, weasly, movements across the stage were stupendous. The couple's waltz at the end of the show also was a highlight.

As I said, I could not put a finger on any one performance in the show. There were different levels of brilliance displayed by all of the young stars on the stage tonight. It really took the concept of a "high school musical" to a whole new dimension.

Showing Signs Of Life

I just received an email from a former castmate who is in her high school production of *Grease* in the next few weeks. She informed me that this is the first musical their school has done in **20 YEARS!!!** I was shocked and amazed by this admission. If there is one thing I frown upon it is the decrease in the amount of arts related activities in schools (large or small). However, it sounds as if this school is at least making an attempt to reestablish an artistic presence. As our biggest rivals in what seems everything (at least in my day), I well remember the fun competitiveness between the schools. I knew the music director from the school reasonably

well who has since retired from the position. Not sure who inherited the reins, but hopefully they can reinvigorate the program.

I remember assisting Emily direct several musicals after I graduated from EHS. I remember *The Wizard of Oz* (basically the 1939 movie with a few added sequences), *The Sound of Music* (which I helped from BGSU and on weekends I was able to make the trip home), *Bye, Bye Birdie*, and *South Pacific*. There was talk of doing *Annie* again. I emphatically offered my two cents on this. Not only had it been done (at that point) only 3 years previously, but at the time, it seemed that every high school were taking turns performing it. I remember watching a larger school's production a year after ours. I was not trying to be biased but their Rooster did not even crow. He simply said "Cock-a-Doodle-Do." However, musicals at my alma mater have also not seen the light of day for some time.

I Enjoyed His Second Childhood Immensely

They say a hat makes the man. Grandpa probably would say that a hat (as well as a suit) is like a man and likes to step out once in a while (pretty girl or no pretty girl). One of my favorite parts of Meet Me in St. Louis was the enormous array of wonderful hats I got to wear as Grandpa Prophater. I pick out most of them from the costume room at the Huber and one was brought by the producer. Grandpa went from a genuine Shriner's fez with tassel and all kinds of bells and whistles to a Holmesian deerstalker cap on Halloween to a huge Admiral's hat and one more that I will expound upon in a moment. There were a few plain, ordinary hats that were just

not wild enough. There were only two scenes in which Grandpa was not seen wearing one: a dinner scene with the family and the Christmas Ball (although I thought the old Civil War vet would have looked smashing in a top hat with his old tuxedo he had gotten out of mothballs).

The Admiral's hat presented a few problems as I began to learn how to wear it. I thought it should be worn "sideways" with the ends at the sides. Then, I had it on backwards with the tailfeather hanging over my face. Finally, I got it right amidst thunderous applause. The first time I rehearsed with it, the entire cast had to stop the scene from laughing. I was told that I looked like Cap'n Crunch which was where I got the inspiration to wear the cap sideways. I also had to be careful entering during the very serious scene as the audience roared as I snuck in through the kitchen door after performing Grandpa's favorite pastime: eavesdropping.

The deerstalker was my idea. It added a nice touch to the Halloween excitement of egging on "Agnes" and "Tootie" in their quest to throw flour into the faces of evil cat poisoners and other monsters. It also helped in discovering the truth behind the mysterious injury to Tootie's lip.

I had discovered a fez in my combing of the costume department. However, a much better one was found complete with medallion to wear around my neck and handy pouch to store them in. I felt like I should be in the Shriner's Convention scene in *Bye, Bye Birdie* or the Grand Poobah of the Loyal Order of Waterbuffalo.

My next to final costume was by far the most challenging, but one of the most entertaining. The family is awakened EARLY by Mr. Smith on Christmas morning. I KNEW Grandpa had to have a memorable outfit for sleeping. I knew exactly what I wanted. The turquoise robe was already there. The costume mistress took my measurements for a long nightshirt and the *piece de resistance*: a wonderful multi-colored, tassled nightcap. I

loved it. After the scene, not so much. I had to make the fastest change I have ever made into my summer outfit for the World's Fair. The hardest part of the role. At one of the dress rehearsals, I came out clutching the night shirt and made everyone think I was Linus from the Peanuts comic strip. Thankfully, I was able to devise a scheme to change quicker.

I think this will be my final post for *Meet Me in St. Louis*. Each production I have ever been in has been different than the last. Each performance of every production I have been in has been different than the last (for better or worse) but that is the beauty of live theatre. Everyone involved has to be on their toes and at their best. That is one of the many things I will always cherish about it.

To those who made a trip to St. Louis, I hope you had a great ride. To those who could not, my apologies. I hope that one was surely watching from above saw me continue to grow. There are better shows out there but I think big, happy, family-friendly shows need to be done if not only as an escape from today's troubling reality.

Were We Off To See The Wizard Or To St. Louis?

I'm not entirely sure but after the final curtain fell, I began to wonder. While we were striking the set, the tornado siren sounded not once... not twice... but three times (a lady). We all piled into the catacombs of the Huber and enjoyed pizza, cake, cookies, and other goodies. I'm so glad the warning did not sound until AFTER the show was over. But everything the theatre took in I believe today at least if not

part of last night's take was all profit. Good for the joint venture of the Village Players and Huber Opera House. I just cannot express enough how great it was to be involved in this production in the beautiful theatre. There are stories I have heard about the building only a short 20 years ago that would not be appropriate for this blog.

I just find it amazing every time a set is taken down. All the time and hard work that went into the creation of such a beautiful picture and down in less than half that time. This was even harder because this was ONLY a three day event as opposed to the seven show run of the [WCCT](#). However, no matter the outcome, there is always something memorable to take away from every show... yes, even Grease had a few fantastic things come out of it and anyone who reads my blog KNOWS what that is.

But, once again, thank you to all involved in *Meet Me in St. Louis* to the Village Players and to the Huber Opera House. Hicksville Ohio has a wonderful venue that harkens back to an era long ago. I look forward to auditioning again.

Web-Swinging On Broadway?

If I recall, I posted on the POSSIBILITY of the world's favorite web-slinging superhero making his Broadway debut. The creative genius behind The Lion King's transformation from screen to stage is teaming with the creative genius of U2 to bring us [Spider-Man: Turn Off The Dark](#). I'm sorry, but this seems destined for failure. Julie Taymor took a well established Disney animated feature and brilliantly brought it to the stage. Bono and the Edge have had multiple hits for probably 2 decades. I know that the Last Son of Krypton made

the leap to Broadway in the 60s in [It's a Bird... It's a Plane... It's Superman](#) but I'm just not sure that I would want a return to pure camp which I see this ending up becoming. If not, I will happily beg for a retraction. But for now, I'm not feeling greatly optimistic about this one.

How Do You Solve A Problem Like...

While looking over my Firestats, I came across an interesting [link](#). I have known for years that a common misconception surrounding the song "Edelweiss" from *The Sound of Music* is that it is an Austrian folksong. This is false. It was the final lyric written by Oscar Hammerstein II and had nothing to do with Austria aside from the flower that the title comes from. The misconception seems to have arisen during the emotional reprise of the song by Captain Von Trapp during the festival near the end of the musical. In the movie, the overwhelmingly Austrian audience is moved to tears and join in song before bursting in thunderous applause. This could give the impression that the song is of great importance to Austrian people.

Also of note is the fact that the musical is not widely known in Austria. Although Salzburg makes quite a haul by giving tours of the city and surrounding countryside to fans of the show, very few of the tourists are Austrian.

Below is a German translation of Hammerstein's original by an unknown translator:

DEUTSCH		
Musik: Richard Rodgers		
Text: Oscar Hammerstein		
Deutsch: Unbekannt		
Edelweiß, Edelweiß,		
Du grüßt mich jeden Morgen,		
Sehe ich dich,		
Freue ich mich,		
Und vergess' meine Sorgen.		
Schmücke das Heimatland,		
Schön und weiß,		
Blühest wie die Sterne.		
Edelweiß, Edelweiß,		
Ach, ich hab dich so gerne.		

Something (Truly) Evil's Lurking In The Dark

So... what is a has been, reclusive, much ridiculed performer to do with any shred of dignity he has left to him? Revisit his heyday and make a Broadway musical of it, of course. For the first time in a few years, Michael Jackson has reemerged (or at least given a statement) that he will be working with the prestigious [Nederlander Organization](#) on a fully realized musical adaptation of the iconic tune and music video Thriller (Oh, help). The tale of boy meets girl, boy and girl go to a scary movie, and boy has a big, dark, hairy secret. Wacko Jacko will be involved in the entire production in what capacity has yet to be released. This will probably depend upon the performers willingness to come out of his plastic bubble (oops... that was another story). Is it just me or does it seem that even Broadway is going back to the 80s along with

all other forms of entertainment? The British stage show, [Thriller Live](#), (a musical based on the life of Jackson... HELP, AGAIN!) has been playing to audiences across the pond since 2006. Let the bashing (or support... I do not wish to alienate any legitimate readers) begin. I wonder how far into the story the British extravaganza goes. I wonder if Thriller will come up with a clever way to resurrect Vincent Price (not only his voice)... that would be a thrill.

The Stars of High School Musical 10

Before [High School Musical 3](#) comes to the big screen on October 24, why not take a gander at the movie that inspired the whole thing. Grease began as an homage to the teenage greasers and bobby soxers of the 1950s. It started in 1971 at the Kingston Mines Theatre in Old Town Chicago and quickly found its way to the Great White Way. From there it made the transformation to the big-screen in 1978. Since then it has been revived in high schools, community theatres (yes, WCCT had its own interesting production). Broadway audiences have seen two revivals of which one is currently playing. Stars of television and movies have played the roles. Brooke Shields, Maureen McCormick (Marcia, Marcia, Marcia), and Rosie O'Donnell have all played Rizzo. '80s teen idol Debbie (or is it Deborah) Gibson and Olivia Newton-John (of course) have all played Sandy. Richard Gere, Patrick Swayze, and John Travolta all slicked their hair back to play Danny.

Now... comes the latest group to step into the roles. This video may even make Zac Efron and the rest of the cast of High School Musical take a second look

<https://members.shaw.ca/anabw/grease.htm>

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