

Something Was Missing

Adaptations from original sources always leave things on the “cutting room floor.” I just read a very fascinating article about the transformation of [South Pacific](#) (click the link to the article) from a James Michener novel to the original Broadway production to the classic movie to the current revival on the Great White Way and touring around the country.

More historical background from the first performances of the ground-breaking, Pulitzer prize winning classic came to light.

- On April 17, 1949, ten days after the show’s opening, a boat carrying 120 American casualties of war arrived in Honolulu. Casualties of the Theatre in the Pacific.
- There was a lot more that Rodgers and Hammerstein wanted in the show dealing with race relations. “You’ve Got to be Carefully Taught” was just the tip of the iceberg. The central story of Emille de Becque somehow made it into the show. But there was a lot more.
- Like many musicals turned movies, many things were dramatically altered from the original. The director of the 7 Tony Award winning revival, Bartlett Sher, called the 1958 cinematic effort “no use” when developing the return to the stage. Which just adds to my belief that most of the time, somethings are better left ON stage. Beautiful to look at, perhaps, but with a loss to its central meaning.

How fitting that I came across the article as we stop to reflect on the millions who have made the ultimate sacrifice in preserving the freedoms we all sometimes take for granted.

Hopefully, one day, the revival of this musical masterpiece makes it way to our neck of the woods. Or... better yet... just another great show with a scene-stealing character role or a central male lead I wouldn’t mind tackling.