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THE BROADWAY MUSICAL: A GUIDE TO HIGH SCHOOL PRODUCTION

by

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B.M. Montana State University, 1959

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

1963

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TO

The 1959-61 Custer County High School
Concert Choir, Miles City, Montana
without whose talent and
enthusiasm this thesis would
never have been possible.

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FOREWORD

Our high schools possess a wealth of talented and eager youngsters who have the ability to rise to the occasion should they be given the opportunity to participate in the production of a Broadway musical. Can a high school successfully produce a Broadway show? The answer is obvious, for each year hundreds of schools successfully present the best that Broadway has to offer.

Many more schools could present Broadway musical productions. There are far too many music and drama teachers who hesitate to undertake a musical production because they feel that the school lacks the necessary talent or facilities. This is the wrong attitude, for if a high school has a thriving music department and the usual stage facilities found in most schools, a Broadway musical can be successfully presented.

There is a great variety of musical shows available with indigenous themes which the American public will admire for as long as the Italian public admires the works of Verdi. Most of these musicals readily lend themselves to a high school production. Great strides have been taken that make it possible, and not overly difficult, for schools to gain the educational and financial rewards that are the benefits of these stage productions. Theatrical business concerns are available to high schools in their endeavors to produce these shows. Publishers, costume rental agencies, make-up companies, theatrical equipment companies, publicity services and other agencies are willing and able to provide what is needed--all for a surprisingly nominal fee. No would-be high school director should feel that he is taking a large step into the unknown if he decides to do a musical show.

The key to the success of a high school production lies not with the innumerable aids available to the high school director; rather, success will come to the director who truly desires to produce a show. This cannot be a halfhearted desire, it must be an enthusiastic conviction. If the would-be director has the desire, and if he can inject his enthusiasm into faculty and students alike, then the production of a musical show will probably become a reality.

The question is often asked: "Of what value is a high school musical production?" The answer to this question lies particularly with the fact that the venture is an educational one. For the talented, as well as for the average youngster, a musical production offers a perfect opportunity to act, sing, and dance professional material before a live and responsive audience. No student can come out of a theatrical adventure without having had his emotional, intellectual, physical, and mental horizons broadened. Under the wise guidance of a capable faculty production staff, participation in a musical production will certainly serve to expand a student's cultural and social appreciation.

CHAPTER I

PLANNING A MUSICAL SHOW

The Yardstick

Once a school group has decided to produce a musical show, the first consideration to be faced is, of course, "What show shall we do?" This can be a perplexing problem. It is absolutely imperative that any show undertaken, regardless of budget or talent limitations, should be done well and be a joy to participants and audiences alike. Without this paramount goal in mind, a school is better off not attempting to stage a musical production.

There are five general categories to be considered in the choice of a musical--the requirements of the cast, the cost of the production, the orchestra, the difficulty of production, and the tastes of the community. The director of any show, amateur or professional, faces all of the above categories when choosing a suitable show. Let us consider each category and its relation to the final choice of a musical show for a high school production.

The Cast

The cast requirements must receive first consideration. As a director looks at a prospective show, he must ask himself these vital questions: 1) Does the show require a large or a small cast? 2) Does the show require well trained voices for the major singing roles, or can the average high school vocalist handle the part? 3) Can students successfully cope with the character roles? 4) How much choreography is necessary? and 5) Will the cast be able to rise to the occasion? If the director can

favorably answer these questions, then he is well on his way toward the choice of a show.

Production Costs

Estimating production costs is a vital aspect in the choice of a musical show. The following items should serve as the basis for the estimation of all major production expenses:

1. Performance royalties and fees for rental of dramatic, vocal, and orchestral material.
2. Construction and painting of scenery.
3. Rental or purchase of lighting equipment, sound effects, public address system, or other stage and technical equipment.
4. Publicity, advertising and the printing of tickets and programs.
5. Rental or purchase of costumes and make-up.
6. Rental or purchase of set pieces and stage properties.

With this expense guide, the director should estimate the cost of the production. The director will find that some expense items can be accurately gauged. Cost of royalty fees, rental of musical, dramatic, and orchestral materials, and costume rental can be obtained from firms dealing with these items. Estimation of other expenses must be made by consultation with local firms involved.

The show's budget, determined by cost estimation, will depend on what the school group can afford. Larger high schools with greater audience resources may be able to afford an elaborate production, while smaller schools may have to be content with much less. Both large and small schools can achieve and enjoy satisfying results from a job well done.

The Orchestra

Next, those concerned with the choice of a musical must consider the orchestral requirements. Two broad questions must be answered: 1) Does the school possess the necessary instruments and players required by the show's orchestral score? 2) If not, can the orchestration be

modified to fit the abilities of the local situation?

Technical Aspects

The director must consider the difficulty of the technical aspects of the show. He should ask these questions: 1) Does the show require difficult or expensive sets? 2) Can the school meet the requirements of the stage settings? 3) Does the show require many scene changes? 4) Can these scene changes be dealt with? 5) Does the school possess the necessary stage and lighting facilities? 6) If facility limitations exist, will these limitations seriously impair a successful production? 7) What costumes are required? 8) Can the costumes be procured locally at little or no expense, built, or must they be rented? 9) What make-up is required? 10) If difficult character make-ups are necessary, is there a person on the staff who can cope with them?

While there are many variables to all of the above areas, these ten basic questions should serve to guide the production staff in its scrutiny of the technical demands of the show.

Community Taste

Finally, the director must determine whether or not the show's music, drama, humor, and general plot will be acceptable to the local audiences. The tastes of the community will have much to do with the ultimate success of a high school musical production.

Summary

In endeavoring to determine the final choice of a show, the task of pitting professional material against high school resources is not an easy one. The production staff will no doubt be plagued by a thousand questions. However, if the majority of questions can be answered favorably,

then the choice of the show can be made.

CHAPTER II

THE PRODUCTION STAFF

During the production of any musical show, there is an endless amount of hard work which must be done so that the various components of the production arrive at completion simultaneously. For this reason, there should be a well organized and closely-knit staff which can divide the chores and work as a team. The members of this team serve as department heads, each being in charge of his own particular field.

The staff members which are discussed here, represent the nucleus of the show. Without their labors and artistic endeavors, even the brightest cast and the most talented dancers and musicians would be at a loss to put a musical show together.

The ideal school situation is one in which the following production staff members are provided for: the stage director, the musical director, the choreographer, the technical director, the stage manager, and the publicity director. These people represent the usual jobs to be found in the production of a musical. To be sure, there are other areas which may require a special person to take charge--perhaps additional duties can be assigned to one of the above staff members. The delegation of responsibility will ensure that much more will be accomplished in a shorter time and with less worry.

The staff members should be selected not only because they are capable of executing their individual assignments well, but also because they have a capacity for working well together. Each staff member has a particular contribution to make and he should be respected for his knowledge

and endeavors.

The production staff must hold regular conferences, not only before actual rehearsals begin, but throughout the entire rehearsal period. In this way, problems and differences of opinion can be viewed openly and resolved for the good of all concerned.

The production of a musical show is extremely hard work, but it also carries with it a large measure of satisfaction. Any production has a chance for success if those who are responsible for it think of the show and not of personal desires. The main thing is a will to work and a love of the theatre. With these and the proper amount of time, much can be accomplished.

The Stage Director

The stage director is usually designated the over-all director of the show. Upon his shoulders rest all major decisions. It must be clearly understood by the entire production staff and company that this man is the boss.

Since the choral department of a high school usually provides many or all members of the cast, it is not uncommon that the choral director is the stage director. Many choral directors have had musical stage experience and are well qualified to handle a high school musical production. However, the stage director could be the drama teacher (in the event that the school is a large one with a special instructor for dramatic productions), or the director might be chosen from qualified members of the faculty.

During the pre-rehearsal planning period, the director must be responsible for the delegation of authority concerning personnel, casting, scheduling, scenery, lighting, make-up, publicity, costumes, tickets, the orchestra, and any other details of the show. He must plan for all these

details with the members of his production staff , then constantly supervise and be readily accessible to advise and to arbitrate. The director heads all production staff meetings, moderates the discussions, determines the policies, sets the artistic goals, and assigns the various tasks in which he will require aid.

In all matters in which there is dispute, the stage director must stand as the "chairman of the board". His word must be accepted as law. Without this understanding on the part of the entire company, chaos might result.

Along with this dogmatic approach, a word must be said concerning the relationship between the director and the rest of the company. While the director's word is law, he must never allow himself to be dictatorial in his dealings with the production staff and the cast. He is the acknowledged leader, but along with this responsibility he must possess the ability to see the other side of the question, and he must instill in others the confidence to follow his decisions.

The prime requisite of the stage director is the ability to transplant the characters and situations of the printed page on to the stage in such a manner that the characters, situations, and dialogue come to life. Without this ability to envision and to create movements and reactions on the stage, no man can hope to bring to life that which confronts him on the printed page. The director must possess a certain stage sense gained through experience and some degree of innate talent. The ability to create a meaningful stage situation comes through the director's study of the show, his knowledge of the various characters in relation to the plot, and a knowledge of the setting in which the show is molded.

The role of the director of a musical production is a trying one. He will often be frustrated in his attempts to bring the production to life. Great problems always arise and are often made worse by the myriad number of smaller problems that beset every production--amateur or professional. The director's vitality and strength will be sapped, his nerves will become frayed, and he will no doubt be a victim of perilous thoughts as to the outcome of the production. But, with perseverance, fortitude, and a goal in mind, the stage director will receive great pleasure and satisfaction in seeing his visions come to life.

The Musical Director

Although the stage director is responsible for the tempo of the performance during the rehearsal period, it is the musical director who is responsible for the tempo of the show during its performance. In a musical show, he is the inner force which keeps the show alive. During a performance, all of the other directors are dependent on him from the point when they must become silent contributors.

As a member of the production staff, the musical director's role in the casting of the show is a vital one. He needs to comprehend the vocal capacities of the students and he must be able to evaluate their ultimate performance values. He must recommend replacements for a part if a student proves inadequate from a vocal standpoint. The musical director must often compromise with the stage director in casting a student who sings well, but cannot act (or vice-versa)--the two do not always go hand in hand. If the musical director is the school's choral director, he will be more quickly aware of casting and rehearsal problems with regard to the vocal aspects of the show.

The musical director is also responsible for the orchestra, and he must see that the orchestra is formed and rehearsed to the best possible degree. Frequently the school's band or orchestra director prepares the show orchestra, allowing the choral director to devote full time to perfecting the roles of the singers. This is by far the more ideal situation, since much more can be accomplished when the two music teachers work together on the musical demands of the show. It is, however, not uncommon for the musical director (be he band director or choral director) to be responsible for all of the show's musical aspects.

The musical director, then, plays a vital role in the production of a musical. He must himself be a good musician and teacher with the ability to put his ideas and knowledge across to the members of the cast and orchestra.

The Choreographer

The choosing of the show's choreographer is often the biggest problem confronting the production staff. Rare is the high school staff with a faculty member trained in the art of ballet and modern dance. The women's physical education teacher is often the first choice, but a plea to the community can reveal surprising talent to handle the show's choreographic problems. Many communities have dance studios run by qualified instructors and often these people are glad to help. A professional dance instructor may give his services free of charge, but the show's director must see that much publicity is given this person for his work.

With regard to his work, the choreographer must know how to integrate his material within the show and how to use the cast most effectively within the framework of his choreographic routines.

In short, the choreographer's duties rest in the following areas:

1) Creation of appropriate dances and movements for all musical numbers, and 2) The utilization of the cast in a choreographic manner to which they are best suited.

The Technical Director

To the technical director falls two major areas of responsibility in the production of a musical show--sets and lighting. First and foremost, the technical director must be a skilled carpenter who is endowed with a basic sense of artistic design and construction. The man most often used in this capacity is the shop teacher. The large scope of the technical aspects of a musical production demand that the technical director supervise the work of many people. He will need the assistance of interested students and faculty members in dealing effectively with the many technical details.

The technical director's first consideration must be toward the construction of the sets. He must supervise the work of his crew as they carry out his scenery construction orders. And, he will have to work in close alliance with the school's art department as it provides the talents for all of the art work and scene design that will bring the set to life.

Finally, the technical director is responsible for the show's lighting. Lighting plays a most important role in any stage production. With proper lighting, the sets, costumes, and make-up merge into an artistic whole; the visualization of the entire show will become more meaningful to the spectator.

The technical demands of a musical production require that the technical director be a real organization man. Not only must he supervise all the work assigned to his various committees, but he must ultimately be responsible for their success or failure.

The Stage Manager

It is important that the right person be assigned the role of stage manager. First, let us look at the responsibilities of the show as they apply to the stage manager.

During the rehearsal period, the stage manager must act as the assistant to the stage director. In this capacity, he must maintain complete and comprehensive notes on all orders and directions of the stage director. Without the stage manager's knowledge, the director, musical director, or choreographer may not make a last minute change, redirect an actor, cut a line, or insert or delete music. The reasons for this protocol are obvious. Since the stage manager actually runs the show during a performance, he cannot be expected to do an efficient job if he is the victim of changes made without his knowledge. In short, the stage manager learns all the music for cuing, all lines, all scene change cues, all exits and entrances, all light cues, all alterations made in the lines, music and dancing. The stage manager must have a detailed knowledge of every aspect of the production.

Obviously, the stage manager must possess a high degree of intelligence and an aptitude for organization. It is possible that a student will be able to handle this assignment. The student must be an exceptional one--respected by other members of the cast and endowed with the proper interest and enthusiasm for his job. A good stage manager is not only one who is efficient and quick in the dispatch of his duties, but one who is able to command respect and gain obediance without undue temper displays.

The Publicity Director

To the publicity director and his staff fall duties in three vital areas of the production. These three areas are advertising, ticket sales,

and programs. The most logical faculty member for this position is the journalism teacher. The school paper's publishing staff can serve as his crew.

The duties of the publicity crew will keep all members busy throughout the show's rehearsal period. A constant stream of effective advertising must flow to the public, tickets must be printed and a successful sales campaign devised, and finally an attractive and functional program must be printed.

The cast and its directors are concerned with creating the show; the publicity director and his staff must sell it to the public in hopes of obtaining a financial return on the school's investment.

The "One Man" Show

Thus far in the discussion of the production staff, only the ideal situation has been considered. There are some schools in which one man is largely responsible for the entire production. It would be repetitious to discuss the qualifications necessary for this man; he must possess the necessary traits as applied to all the previously mentioned production staff members.

Since one man cannot possibly do all the work of several, he must have help in some areas--notably with the construction and painting of sets. He may need assistance with the show's choreography. Much of his assistance in all areas must come from the students in the school and cast.

If a director finds himself in the "one man" situation, he should not dismiss the possibility of the production of a musical; his show stands every chance of being successful. The director may have to spend more hours, work harder, and worry more than is sometimes necessary, but his reward upon watching the cast and musicians adhere to his every wish will be that much greater.

CHAPTER III

THE CAST

Selecting the Cast

The stage director, the musical director, and the choreographer all must have a hand in choosing the cast. However, it should be the stage director who has the final say regarding the selection of any student for a role in the show. At first glance, this may seem a rather extreme demand, and there are no doubt those who would strongly question this stipulation. However, there are good reasons for this arrangement. Much unnecessary chaos can be avoided if it is clearly understood on the part of the casting committee that although each member of the committee has a vital function to play in choosing the cast, the stage director must reign supreme in the final analysis.

The casting of a high school musical does not offer as many difficulties as might be suspected. For one thing, those responsible for choosing the cast undoubtedly have a first hand knowledge of almost every student's capabilities and talents. This is a far better situation than trying to cast a musical with those about whom nothing is known.

It would be folly to deny that some of the casting has been completed by the time the final choice of a show has been made. Naturally, this results from the knowledge the production staff has concerning the talents of the group of students who will make up the cast. Precasting is an impossible situation to avoid unless the high school is a very large one. This is not to say that the entire production will be precast with the choice of the show, but it does mean that the stage director and the

musical director will have a good idea of who can do a good job in the leading roles. Those responsible for the casting must realize that it would be grossly unfair to the students to let them know that precasting exists.

Generally speaking, it is the students in the school's choral groups who will make up the cast. It is to these choral students that the first attentions of the casting committee should be directed. The directors should realize that it is wise to use as many of these students as possible. Therefore, the directors must generate much interest among the chorus members. Perhaps the best way to begin to build the excitement over the show is to play the original cast recording for the chorus. However, just to play it will not suffice. The director must be prepared to give a sketch of the plot of the show, and he must also be ready to give a description of each character and his relation to the musical. The director must give as colorful a description as is possible. In this way, he can interest and excite the students. He should also include as much of the show's background as can be obtained. Such things as the length of the Broadway run, the reviews the show received, and the professional players who make up the cast can add much to interest the high school student.

The next step is to let the students hear a reading of the entire show. This is easy to accomplish simply by choosing a cast at random from the chorus and letting them use the scripts and speaking sides to read the show. This experience is a good deal of fun for both readers and listeners. From this reading, the students will become aware of the show's continuity, and they will further formulate ideas about parts they might like to play. If time allows, several of these reading sessions might be in order. Reading sessions will give many of the chorus a chance to read a part, and it will give

the director some ideas as to who are good prospects for parts. The director can do no better than to use the recording during these reading sessions. Almost the entire show will then have been presented to the future cast.

All of the above may seem like a waste of valuable time, yet nothing could be further from the truth, for the more time the directors take in presenting the show, the better will be student interest. In reality, presentation of the show need not take more than three or four periods, and it is time well spent.

When casting is about to begin, the director and his committee must bear several points in mind concerning student qualifications. These points must be used as a basis for elimination. The points to be considered are: 1) The general physical appearance of the student, 2) The quality of his singing and speaking voice, 3) His sense of rhythm and timing, and 4) his sense of the theatre. The director cannot fail to keep all of the points in mind when he is considering a student for a role in the show. But, the director must also realize that not many students will be able to meet all those standards in relation to the part he or she is trying for. The director will have to compromise with some of the above points.

If the students have had ample time to read the show and hear the music, then the actual auditions must include three things: 1) Reading a scene, 2) Singing (with the help of the musical director) one of the songs, and 3) Executing a basic rhythmic movement as devised by the choreographer. The movement must be quite simple, but it must be enough to let the director know that the student has a sense of rhythm and timing.

Some students will hesitate to audition. The reasons are many and

varied and often stem from shyness or from feelings that they "couldn't possibly do it". The director must use tact and patience to encourage the ones who might be reluctant to audition. However, if tact and patience do not succeed, then the next best thing is literally to "drag" the student into the audition session. There is nothing wrong in using a little force; some students need it to bring out any talent they possess.

It is wise for the director to realize that while a student may not be suited for one part, he might be able to do a spendid job in another role.

Most musicals require a chorus of singers and dancers. Those responsible for the selection of this group must choose them with the interest of the show at heart. Perhaps the easiest way to cast this group is to get all the candidates on the stage. Then the director, the musical director, and the choreographer should listen to small groups of them sing--mentally eliminating those who do not meet the physical and vocal standards of the show. The choreographer should devise a short and simple routine. Students unable to perform this, but who sing well, cannot be overlooked as show chorus members. The need for singers is often greater than the need for dancers.

It is always difficult to tell a student that he has not been chosen for the cast. This must be done with the utmost courtesy and tact. If the director handles a refusal in the proper manner, no sensible student need be overly offended or hurt. However, the director should try to use these students in some capacity; perhaps they can serve as walk-ons or members of crowd scenes. Some may prefer to assist with the make-up or to help as a member of the technical crews.

Cast Discipline, On or Off Stage

No discussion of cast selection can be complete without some mention concerning the discipline necessary for any stage production. As any secondary school teacher knows, high school students may present disciplinary difficulties if they are allowed to do so. When much has to be accomplished in a short time, it is imperative that no disciplinary problems be allowed to get started. Once the cast is chosen and rehearsals are about to begin, the cast must be aware of their responsibilities as individuals and as a team.

Perhaps one of the best ways to make the cast aware of their responsibilities is to introduce them to a set of ten questions which might well be called the actor's "Ten Commandments". These ten questions are a personal guide to the conduct of every cast member, and they are one of the keys to smooth running rehearsals and the successful outcome of the production.

These questions are:

1. Am I on time for rehearsals?
2. Do I pay close attention to directions that pertain to me in any situation--on or off stage?
3. Am I quiet and orderly at all times, realizing that there is much work to be done and little enough time to do it?
4. Do I do my best to play my character while onstage?
5. Am I guilty of impertinent remarks and actions that blatantly detract from the business at hand?
6. Do I gripe?
7. Do I miss my cues and entrances because of my own foolish actions?
8. Am I responsible for the upsetting of a scene by extraneous noise and just plain fooling around?
9. Is my attitude toward the show one of pride and constant achievement, or am I a glory seeker sliding by just to see my name on the program?
10. Am I striving to be an actor, or am I guilty of "put on" embarrassment or "prima donna-ism"?

If disciplinary demands are carried through all of the earlier rehearsals, then the director will not have to anticipate chaos and slackening interest as performance time draws near. If a cast member persists in being

a disciplinary burden to the director and to the show's company, he should be immediately removed and replaced. No cast member should be so indispensable that through his childish actions a strain is put on the entire company. If the director makes all of this clear at the outset, little trouble will have to be anticipated.

At the first cast meeting, all of the production staff should be present in order that the rehearsal schedules and other general show information can be outlined for the cast. This meeting offers a fine opportunity (probably the only one) for each member of the production staff to say a few words about actual and projected plans concerning the workings of his particular committee or crew. The cast must know what is being done for them by the many other people who are making the production possible. The cast must know that while they will ultimately stand in the spotlight, they are not solely responsible for the success of the show--a little humility (if necessary) has never hurt anyone.

A discussion concerning cast discipline strikes the chord of another vital subject--the director/student relationships. If the director hopes to be a good leader, then his discipline must stem from a respect on the part of the student toward the director's work and personality. However, this respect can never be gained if the director is tyrranical and resorts to bellowing and hysterics to gain his demands. Neither can the director expect good cast conduct if he is the "buddy" type. Students are quick to recognize this attitude, and will, sooner or later, take advantage of it. Impartiality and a sense of fair play is the quickest (and most lasting) way to gain the respect and admiration of the students.

During a rehearsal, the director must be quick to offer criticism

of a student's performance, but he must also be just as quick in praising a student's worthy efforts. No one likes to be the target of constant criticism without an occasional word of praise. The director must never forget that he is a teacher.

The director must realize that he will probably have to spend much time with many individuals, leading and helping them to form the characters necessary to their roles. He must exercise great tact, patience, and persistence in a friendly manner in order to draw out the best in his cast. And, he must be ever available to any student who comes to him for assistance in any aspect of the show. In fact, the director should encourage this student attitude, and nurture it when his encouragements are successful.

CHAPTER IV

THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT AND THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

The Vocal Requirements of a Musical Show

Even after the choice of a show has been made, and even after it has been cast, the musical director and the stage director may have silent or spoken fears as to whether certain individuals in the cast will be able to sing their roles adequately. The most careful initial planning may still leave a vocal question or two in the minds of the directors. Actually, it would be a unique high school situation which found itself with a perfect cast. Vocal problems are bound to arise and must be solved.

High school voices pose problems with regard to vocal limitations. Three areas can be defined and commented upon. The first area is the limited range of the average high school vocalist. While some students (by virtue of training or innate talent) may possess a wide vocal range, the ordinary student has just what nature has provided up to this point. The director and musical director must keep this in mind when casting the show. Each member of the cast must be able to cope with the vocal range of his singing role.

The musical director may not be able to increase the range of the average student's voice during the relatively short time given to rehearsals, but he should help his singers to learn to cope with certain notes in their numbers. Proper breathing and placement will have to enter into the picture, and the musical director must constantly seek new ways to instill these basics of singing into a student as he endeavors to build his role in a vocal sense.

The next area of limitation has to do with vocal quality. While high school students cannot match professional standards, the vocal qualities that students do possess can be used to the fullest advantage. The musical director must never be suddenly disappointed that some of his leads do not meet recording standards as far as the quality of their voices is concerned. It must be remembered that a student is cast in a role because it is felt that he will be able to do it. Again, the director will have little luck in trying to develop, in such a short time, a quality foreign to what the student naturally possesses, but he can work with the student and bring vocal potential to the best possible degree. There will be some room for development of quality by virtue of the type of character the student is portraying. High school students are great imitators and with tact and patience, the musical director can achieve surprising results merely by having the student imitate the musical director's own vocal ideas.

This brings to light the problem of students being able to create a definite character voice relative to the role they are playing. For instance, many roles in musical comedy productions call for a straight, brassy tone. For many high school students, this type of voice is not difficult to produce, and the musical director will often be surprised at how well students can accomplish it. The best way to help students achieve a style of singing is to demonstrate it for them over and over again. Through repetition and practice, they will be able to imitate what the director has in mind.

Imitation is, (in the writer's opinion), the key to teaching a student to sing a role. The prime requisite however, is that the musical director definitely have in mind just what he wants for each role in the show. If he is undecided as to what he wants, how can he hope to teach the student?

A recording of the show can give the musical director a basis for helping the student adapt a role to his own personal talents. However, the director can never expect the student to copy completely the techniques used in the recording. The recording must be used as an aid and not as a means to a copied end.

Certain shows do not readily lend themselves to high school production because of obvious vocal difficulities. While some larger schools can successfully produce the Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals Carousel, Oklahoma, and South Pacific, most schools do not possess the necessary vocal talent required by these shows. Few high school singers can convincingly sing the leads in Carousel or South Pacific. The leading roles in these musicals require mature voices capable of dealing with extreme range and high tessitura. This does not mean that no high schools should attempt to produce these musicals. The Rodgers and Hammerstein repertory offers fine, artistic material, but the fact is that too many students will do a poor job of singing the leading roles simply because they do not have enough voice.

If the staff feels that the school does not have enough "voice" for the production of the heavier type of musical, then the logical choice falls on the lighter type of show.

Whatever the choice of show, the important thing to remember is that high school students, if they are cast correctly, can do a marvelous job of recreating the songs of a character in a musical show. Students must be given the chance and the help to realize what they can do. The musical director will have to spend a great deal of time with his students, teaching them, advising them, and helping them to do their best.

High School Choreography

The production of a high school musical is the source of a great deal of fun and pleasure. Because of this pleasure, the problems of teaching choreographic routines are not as grave as they might at first appear to be. Rhythm and synchronized body movements seem to be an innate part of most high school students. With this in mind, the show's choreographer can proceed with his duties confident that though his task will at times be trying, the end result will be a source of great satisfaction.

Perhaps the most frequently asked question regarding high school choreography is the most basic question of all. Can high school students successfully learn and perform a choreographic routine? The answer is an emphatic yes! While few high school students have the training and ability of professional dancers, they do possess a keen interest in choreography and its relation to the total production. Moreover, they are capable of learning seemingly difficult material with relative ease.

The choreographer and the musical director must carefully study the musical material and begin to formulate plans for the choreography needed to keep the spirit of the show alive. Almost every current musical has at least one big dance number. On Broadway, the big dance numbers are given lavish preparation for what generally turns out to be "show stopping" scenes. The choreographer must study the scenes requiring dances or other choreographic movements, and decide what can be done and what must be cut. Frequently, the show's biggest dance number requires choreography that will prove too difficult for the talent at hand. If this is the case, the scene must be cut from the production. However, if something can be worked out for this number, the choreographer must do all he can to bring the dance to an

effective high school level. The choreography of a school musical production need not be a replica of what was done on Broadway. The creations of the school choreographer may serve the purpose equally well. A confident and optimistic approach is the first step to success.

The choreographer will find that girls usually learn more quickly. Girls' activities with cheer-leading, twirling, pepclub, and their own particular physical and mental traits make them very receptive to choreographic material, but the boys certainly should not be discounted. While most boys lack the natural grace and agility possessed by girls, their limitations are often caused by feelings of embarrassment rather than lack of talent. Once the choreographer makes the boys feel that the show's choreography is not "sissy stuff", surprising results can come from them.

Since students do love to dance, the problems of associating rhythmic movements with a song become less difficult to teach and learn. The highly stylized movements of the current teen-age dance fad can be the basis for some of the choreographic movements. However, these dance fads can be a source of trouble for the choreographer. Most often, the jitterbug, the "bop", and the twist movements are so deeply ingrained in students that the choreographer can expect a certain amount of difficulty in trying to break the students of these stylized and repetitious movements. The choreographer must remember that it is <u>because</u> of the students' ability to synchronize rhythm and movement that he will be able to work effectively with teenagers.

If the choreographer is himself a good dancer, and if he has the ability to picture and create movements in accord with the music and the theme of the number, then the next step is to determine just how far to go

in the creation of the choreographic material. The choreographer should not be afraid to "vent his artistic and creative spleen". He must give the cast plenty to do. They will be challenged by the demands, and they will strive to bring to life anything asked of them.

There are some definite suggestions which can be made regarding the creation and teaching of choreographic material. The first and most basic is this: all dance movements must be simple and direct. This is particularly in regard to foot movements. Fancy steps and intricate tap dancing routines are usually above the abilities of the average high school student. In watching professional dancers perform on the stage, screen, and in television productions, one will note that the majority of dance routines are based on relatively simple foot movements. The trick of creating interesting choreography lies with what is done with the rest of the dancer's body. The simplest, most basic step is enhanced in a variety of ways by proper use of the hips, shoulders, arms, hands, and head. It is from these vital areas that the flavor of the routine stems. Therefore, it behooves the choreographer to keep the routines as simple as possible, and work for character of movement with the hips, shoulders, arms, hands, and head. Just what to do with these areas will be determined by the stylistic requirements of the number itself.

Another very important aspect of the choreographer's work lies with the word "strength". Movements not displaying strength and vitality are of little value to the production. The choreographer must work for smooth but definite actions which leave no doubt as to the intention of the dance. This matter of strength is particularly true with regard to the boys. No boy wants to feel that he is being made a fool by having

to perform effeminate movements and actions. Boys require strength with their movements, or they will appear ridiculous to themselves and to the audience. This is also true for the girls.

As has been mentioned before, the choreographer must be firm in his demands for detail. He has to expect much. If his ideas and teaching abilities leave no doubt as to the successful outcome, he then can get much from the students in the cast. He must be equally firm in quelling any pseudo-embarrassment on the part of any boy or girl. Success stems from mutual respect and admiration.

CHAPTER V

THE PROBLEM OF A PIT ORCHESTRA

Choosing a Show With The Orchestra in Mind

No discussion of a musical production would be complete without examining the problem of the pit orchestra.

There are few Broadway musicals that do not require an orchestra to provide the overture, accompaniment for the singers, and incidental music for dances, scene changes, etc. Therefore, the stage director, the music director, and the choreographer must be concerned with the formation and performance of this group.

In choosing a show, the directors must consider the orchestral requirements of the show in relation to the available talent. Leasing agencies will send a list of the instrumentation necessary for any show. This list may have a formidable appearance when first studied. However, the situation may not be as difficult as it first appears. When perusal copies of the dialogue and musical aspects of a show are sent to a school by a rental agent, included in this material will be a conductor's score. This score includes all the music necessary for the production. The musical director must study the score carefully, note the over-all difficulty of the music, and pay heed to the instrumentation involved. He must constantly think of the score in relation to what is available at the local level. Generally, the musical director will note that the most difficult orchestral portions of a show include the overture, dance music, and the closing music. The accompaniment for the singers and the incidental music is not too difficult.

It is a good idea to obtain a recording of the show, for with this, the musical director will be able to hear much of the show's music. It is best to try to obtain the original cast recording, since movie sound track recordings often present a somewhat different orchestration of the music. Also, sound track recordings frequently do not present all of the music as it was heard on Broadway. When, through the study of the problems involved, the musical director feels that the local instrumentalists can successfully cope with the show's orchestra, then it is time to consider seriously the formation of the pit orchestra.

It is up to the musical director of the show to comprehend the musical capacities of the instrumentalists necessary for the orchestra. If the school's music department is a thriving one, then the musical director need not fear that the orchestra's music will be too difficult for his players. He must begin the formation of the orchestra by choosing the best possible players from each of the school band or orchestra sections. Most school bands or orchestras possess a complete instrumentation, and have at least one good player in each section.

For many schools, the real problem of the pit orchestra lies not with the wind instruments, but with the string section. Naturally if the high school has a string orchestra, the problem is solved. However, the schools with no string program far out-number those that do. What to do? The first thing to be done is to venture into the community and make it known that the show's pit orchestra is in need of string players. The musical director will often be amazed at how many adults in a community play string instruments. If a community has a civic symphony, then there is little problem in locating string players. In the community without an

orchestra, there is usually string talent available. The musical director should not be too worried if he cannot get a full quartet of strings. He can manage, and for that matter, get along quite nicely with only two violins or a violin and a viola. For instance, if only two violins are available, the orchestra will still have the basic melodic lead which the violins provide, and when the two violins play in harmony, it is surprising just how much is gained with just these two instruments. Just one viola will greatly add to the harmonic structure. If no cello is available, perhaps the baritone saxophone or the bass clarinet can play its transposed parts. If the orchestra has to do without a string bass, then it is a simple matter for the musical director to transpose the part for a bass clarinet which most high schools would have.

In forming the orchestra, the musical director should realize that it is perfectly legitimate to bolster the group with additional players. For instance, if the instrumentation of a show calls for just one trombone, the director would be wise to put two players on the part--if only for the sake of safety. If the instrumentation calls for only one clarinet or saxophone, again it might be a good idea to add another person to play the part. It will be noted that most of the scoring for woodwind players requires that the musician double on another instrument which is used to a lesser degree in some parts of the score. While some high school woodwind players are capable of doubling on another woodwind instrument, the majority cannot. Therefore, the musical director will have to add additional players to play these parts.

It is not uncommon that some of the instrumentation is left out entirely. The reasons will vary with each situation. But, as long as the

orchestra has been successfully composed of the basic orchestration, then little need be feared regarding the end result. Few high school pit orchestras will be able to approach the level of musical proficiency as set by a professional Broadway show orchestra, but the musical director will soon realize that very satisfying results can come from a high school group.

In considering the orchestra, one very important person must not be forgotten. This person is the rehearsal pianist, who can also play with the orchestra during the performances. If a high school can muster a good pit orchestra, then without doubt, there is a pianist available in the school who can handle the role of rehearsal pianist. The accompanist for the school's choral organizations may very well be capable of handling this assignment. The accompanist must play the piano well enough to assist all the singers in learning their music, and he must learn his parts of the orchestral score. The piano is indeed a valuable instrument in the pit orchestra, for it can provide many of the lines which might otherwise have to be left out for one reason or another. The rehearsal accompanist must be a dependable student willing to spend a great deal of time assisting the musical director with his work.

With regard to preparing the orchestra for its role in the show, the first consideration must be toward the time element. It is sometimes the practice of a show rental agency to ship the orchestration at a later date than the scripts, vocal music, and speaking sides. If the musical director finds this to be true, he should immediately write the rental agency and request that the orchestration arrive with the other show material. It has been the experience of the writer that these companies will comply with

the above request. In other words, the orchestra will need all the rehearsal time it can get, for it is as much an integral part of the show as is the cast. Ten to twelve two hour rehearsals should be enough time to prepare the orchestra, but then again, who can say just what is enough rehearsal time? The local situation will determine what has to be done.

In rehearsing the orchestra, the director must not only see that every player learns his part, but he must also see that the student correctly interprets the over-all style of the production. The director cannot be satisfied with just the mere playing of notes. Rather, he must call on all of his talents to produce a truly musical entity that will add to the production. Members of the orchestra must be made to feel that their contribution is vital. Too often, the production staff is guilty of overlooking the contributions of the orchestra in favor of the cast.

CHAPTER VI

SCHOOL THEATRE AND THE COMMUNITY

When a high school presents a Broadway musical show, it very often risks individual and group condemnation simply because professional materials are involved. Ministers, church groups, ladies organizations, and certain other individuals often jump to the conclusion that when professional shows are involved in the high school program, the imagined vulgarity and over-sophistocation of the music and dialogue will serve to distort (if not debauch) the young minds and tastes of the students. Most often, it is pure and simple ignorance on the part of these people that causes them to voice their complaints. However, there are times when their complaints are justified. Therefore, as has been previously pointed out, the director and the production staff must evaluate the tastes of the community and apply these tastes to the choice of the show.

Most musicals do contain something which might be objectionable. Chances are however, that the director and the production staff can successfully cut, rewrite, or revise to suit the demands of the high school stage.

As an example, consider the Adler and Ross musical Damn Yankees. This show is a wonderful vehicle for high school production, but it does contain problems. First of all, the title itself might be enough to send someone to the school principal loudly proclaiming that the community youths are being subjected to corrupting circumstances, or that they are being made victims of a geographic prejudice. Nothing could be further from the

truth, but community ignorance sometimes runs as rampant. Secondly, the central theme of Damn Yankees figures about the devil (in mortal disguise) and his endeavors to capture a man's soul by transforming him into a mighty major league baseball player. To some fundamental church groups or ministers, this situation carries grave overtones in conflict with the teachings of their particular faiths. Even though the director may patiently point out that the "Faust" theme is an age-old classic, and that "good" ultimately triumphs over "evil", some may vociferously protest high school students being associated with this moral (if not theological) situation.

All schools will not have this particular problem with Damn Yankees, but the director must be prepared for it. What can be done? The director must personally meet with any dissidents and endeavor to dissuade them by thoroughly reviewing the plot of the show, pointing out the humor and the innocence of means by which good triumphs over evil. Once objectors understand the plot, their attitudes will most often change to approval. If they do not, the director should remember that one cannot please all of the people all of the time.

Damn Yankees also contains one musical number that is definitely not suited for high school presentation. This number, "The Game", is a zesty, ribald song done by the baseball players as they mentally prepare themselves for the game of the season. When it is performed by a professional troupe, it is a delight to almost any audience. But when it is done by a high school cast, few people will enjoy it simply because it is being done by high school boys. If the director and his staff can devise rewritten lyrics for this number, so much the better, for it is an integral part of

the show. Unless the director can match the spirit of the number with rewritten lyrics, then it is best to delete it.

This is true of all doubtful songs in any show--if a song cannot be rewritten well, then it must be cut to avoid the risk of performing a very mediocre number.

Another scene in Damn Yankees which might be the source of trouble is the pseudo-strip tease done by Lola, the Devil's female accomplice. When Gwen Verdon did the scene on Broadway, it was a smash hit, but when it is performed by a high school girl (no matter how talented), it will fail and be the source of much dissension. The only thing that can be done is to delete the "stripping" aspect and make the dance "cute" rather than sensuous. This is not difficult to do, and it means that the scene will be enjoyed by all who view it.

Damn Yankees does not contain much profanity, but what there is should be cut. Naturally, less objectionable words may be used. The high school director must remember that a high school actor, no matter how vile his own language may be, rarely possesses the ability to carry stage profanity successfully. The swear word is generally shouted or whispered--both are equally ineffective. It is always best to delete profanity entirely.

Many musicals contain love scenes of one type or another. Some scenes are heavy, while others are very light and innocent. High school actors can play successfuly love scenes providing they are of the light nature. A single kiss, holding hands, and hugs are not difficult for a high school cast to carry. Much trouble, however, will result if the director insists on a heavy scene. High school students simply do not have the acting capacity and knowledge to do this type of thing convincingly. The director's

own good judgement and taste must of necessity enter strongly here in order that a love scene be played to high school perfection.

Stage drinking, too, is a source of trouble in a school production. Whenever possible, drinking scenes should be deleted. Too many in the audience will object to a casual attitude toward liquor. To be sure, some situations might require drinking, but these must be toned down and handled discreetly without destroying the scene. Once again, it is a matter of the student's inability to handle these situations successfully--no matter what his experience.

All of the foregoing might seem to imply that the use of professional materials will pose somewhat insurmountable social and moral problems. On the contrary! The use of professional material will pose some problems, but these problems can be overcome. The prime requisite is that the director use good taste and judgement in all questionable areas. He will not be able to satisfy everyone, but this is to be expected. The director must be readily accessible to all who would question his methods and ideas. This may be professionally painful and seemingly unnecessary, but in the final analysis, he will be rewarded for his patience and tact.

The old adage, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" should stand as a model in dealing with a musical and its relation to the community. The director must carefully lay ground work well in advance of the rehearsal period in order that there be no question regarding his integrity. Trouble often stems from a lack of knowledge on the part of some important people.

First of all, it is absolutely imperative that the administration of the school know exactly what the choice of a musical is, and why it was

chosen. The director must carefully outline for the administrator the plot of the show. He should specifically point out any areas where trouble might be expected and explain what will be done to correct the situation. Too often, objectors carry their complaints to the high school administrator, who, if not "in the know" regarding the show, can do little or nothing in appeasing the complainers.

The music and drama departments are usually the best source of advertising for any school. Most administrators realize this, and will do all they can to prove that community objections are unfounded. Indeed, it is a poor administrator who does not support the integrity of his music and drama teachers and their work. But, he cannot do this unless he has knowledge concerning the activities of these two departments.

Complaints from the community often stem from the students in the school and cast. Misinformed students are sometimes prone to distort the truth about a school musical production. If any facet of the show is objectionable, the director must explain why cuts or revisions will be made, and how it will be done. The director must be adamant in his demands that no student go out into the community and playfully brag about all the "dirty" things that will have to be cut or revised before the show can be produced by the high school. Of course, not all high school students are this unintelligent, but the few that delight in conduct of this nature must be made fully aware of the consequences resulting from their actions. Students appreciate frankness on the part of the director and staff. When the students understand just how serious loose talk about the show can be, they are a valuable asset in seeing that the public is not misinformed.

It is imperative that the director and his staff heed all of this

discussion. While being demanding and explicit might seem to be an unnecessary bother, the results of careful initial presentation will manifest itself in community approval.

CHAPTER VII

PUTTING THE SHOW TOGETHER

Rehearsal Scheduling

Before discussing some rehearsal techniques, the problems of rehearsal scheduling become of paramount importance. The average school day is filled with classes and other curricular and extra-curricular activities. Very often, the problems of trying to schedule adequate rehearsal time are perplexing.

Before beginning rehearsals, the production staff should make a complete rehearsal schedule for all aspects of the show. Stage, vocal, orchestral, choreographic, and technical rehearsals must all be accounted for in a comprehensive manner. This master plan will be subject to alteration as time goes on, but it is important that the over-all rehearsal outlook be as complete as possible. Only in this way, can the production staff and the cast accurately gauge the production processes.

Ten weeks of rehearsal should allow adequate time for the total production. Some schools can get by on less while some may need more time, but in the main, ten weeks should suffice. Once the master rehearsal plan is completed, copies of it should be made available to every member of the cast and production crews. In addition to this master copy, the stage director should provide every member of the cast with a weekly rehearsal schedule. This should contain the following information: 1) The acts and scenes being rehearsed for that week, 2) A list of the characters necessary for the rehearsal of the required acts and scenes, and 3) Any other

information relative to the rehearsal procedures.

Stage Rehearsals

Stage rehearsals will probably have to be held at night. It is virtually impossible to schedule adequate stage rehearsal time during the school day. Since many of the boys in the cast will undoubtedly be concerned with after-school athletic practice, the director would be wise to set the rehearsal hour for 7:30 p.m. This will allow time for the students to participate in the athletic programs and eat a good dinner at home. It is important that high school students get enough rest. Therefore, these evening stage rehearsals should last no longer than two and a half hours. As performance time draws near, it may be necessary to extend the length of rehearsals but the director will find that a rehearsal lasting longer than two and a half hours tends to tire even the most enthusiastic and hard-working cast. This amount of time may not seem like much, but a great deal can be accomplished if the rehearsal begins at the appointed hour.

While ten weeks is a good deal of rehearsal time when viewed on a calendar, in reality, it may seem inadequate. Therefore, the director must plan a rehearsal for every available day of the week. The director should strive for five rehearsal periods. This will often be difficult to realize, particularly when many members of the cast have outside activities. But, the five rehearsals should stand as the rule of thumb. Monday through Friday nights offer the best opportunity for these stage rehearsals. However, Sunday night through Thursday night is another possibility, providing of course, that not too many students are involved in Sunday night church activities.

The director must make it clear that while the production is in

progress, it should receive first priority, except for schoolwork, from every cast member. This does not mean that the cast must cease all church activities and home responsibilities, but it does mean that students be willing to forego some of their minor activities in favor of the production. This is a difficult thing to convey. The local situation will determine what should be said.

In preparing the weekly rehearsal schedule, the director must realize that not all of the cast will be required at every rehearsal. Some small parts can be overlooked until later in the rehearsal schedule. To a cast member with a small part, nothing is more irritating than to have to spend an entire evening sitting through a rehearsal and not actually taking part in it. Much grief can be spared many cast members if the director pays heed to "whom is needed, when".

Vocal Rehearsals

The regular chorus period can serve as the rehearsal time for the show's chorus and ensembles. The soloists, however, will create more of a problem. One of the best times for this work is the noon hour. The music director should set up a rotating schedule for soloists to meet with the director at least once a week during the noon hour. Much can be accomplished in this time.

The cast must learn the music quickly. Therefore, the music director will have to exert pressure on the cast in order that the music be "set" in time for putting stage actions and music together. During the noon hour coaching session, the rehearsal pianist will have to be present. Once the students have a working idea of their musical numbers, it is generally not difficult for them to learn their material. Many of them will be able to

play their own melody lines on the piano, and others can learn their songs with the aid of recordings.

Orchestral Rehearsals

Since the pit orchestra is a musical unit especially selected for the brief period of the production, it will often be difficult to rehearse the organization during the school day. The addition of any community adults in this group will probably make scheduling doubly difficult. The only alternative is to rehearse the orchestra at night or sometime during the weekend.

It is important that the orchestra receives its own rehearsal schedule. The musical director should outline what music will be rehearsed at each session, giving the players opportunity for individual practice outside the regular orchestra rehearsal session. A little encouragement from the musical director should be enough to get the students to do this.

Attendance at these sessions must be of vital concern to every member of the orchestra. The orchestra cannot hope to do a good job if it has to suffer from the lack of responsibility on the part of a few people.

Choreography Rehearsals

There are two types of choreographic situations: that which deals with one or two individuals, and that which concerns an ensemble or a large group of students. The musical numbers which require a large group or an ensemble of students are perhaps the easiest with which to deal, since rehearsal time can be scheduled during the day. Once the chorus knows its music, the regular school period devoted to the choir is an ideal time for teaching the chorus and ensemble routines. Since a school choir often meets every day, the choreographer will find ample time during this hour to

prepare the choreography along with the music of these groups.

The other situation, that which concerns just one or two people, is a little more difficult to schedule. However, there is no reason why the noon rehearsal hour cannot serve as choreographic rehearsal time for these students. Again, once these individuals know their music, the choreographic material can be inserted into the learning process. Learning music and then adding the choreography during the later learning process greatly enhances the chance for success.

In the event that there are unusual or more complicated dances, it will probably be necessary for the students involved in this to meet during the weekend.

Technical Rehearsals

As performance time draws near, the technical director and crew must rehearse the various technical aspects of the show.

If the production requires numerous scene changes, the crews responsible for the changes must know exactly what they have to do, and how they are going to accomplish it. Once the sets are complete, the technical director should immediately begin to instruct his crew in the handling of the scene changes. How many rehearsals will be necessary for the efficient handling of scene changes will be determined by the complexity of the sets and the demands of the show. Full run-throughs of these actions can easily be accomplished with Saturday rehearsals, but whatever time the technical director can set aside must be utilized.

Much of the show's lighting can be incorporated into the later stage rehearsals. If the lighting scheme is planned and tested well in advance of the later rehearsals, little will be left to guess work.

In regard to all rehearsal scheduling, the people responsible for determining rehearsal time should remember that no hard and fast rules can be made. The schedules will result from the situations at hand.

The First Readings

Once the show has been cast, the director should allow for a day or two in which the cast can become familiar with their individual lines as contained in the speaking sides. While the student may not be able to gain a full concept of his lines in relation to another's, the two days spent in familiarizing himself with his role are indeed valuable.

The first rehearsal session with the entire cast should consist of nothing more than two complete readings of the script. It is a good idea to use the show recording to play the songs and dance music as they occur during the reading. Allow the cast to read through the show once without any word from the director concerning character portrayal. During the second reading, the director should begin to point out some of the character traits he wants from the students. Encourage the students to be completely free in their interpretation, but stop anyone if something is definitely out of character. In this way, the cast will begin to see and to feel the plot of the show take shape in relation to the characters.

At first, the director may be dismayed to find that very few of the students seem to have any concept of their character roles. The director must not be alarmed. He will find that as the cast becomes more familiar with the characters and situations, they will relax and begin gain the right line inflection. However, the director must be quick to point out any obvious mistakes. Often one of the leads who immediately begins to "throw" himself into his part will serve as the spark in forcing the rest of the

cast to project character into their roles.

As the first evening's reading rehearsal ends, the director must take the opportunity to impress upon the cast the necessity for memorizing their lines as quickly as possible. Every member of the cast must know that memorization is his first personal obligation to the show.

The second evening's rehearsal can be much like the first. The cast again reads through the show, but this time, the opportunity is perfect for the director to begin to give blocking instructions for each character. Every member of the cast must have a pencil with which he writes into his speaking side, any movement or cross indicated by the director. The reader will note that these early blocking instructions are given without the stage actually being involved. Some authorities would disagree with this method of initial blocking instruction, preferring to do this with the cast moving about on the stage. However, the writer feels that the high school cast will gain an added advantage over the first few awkward stage blockings if they have an initial picture of their movements on the stage. At the close of the rehearsal, every member of the cast will have written in his speaking side, all of his basic crosses and movements and their relation to his cues and spoken lines. The period of time between the close of this rehearsal and the opening of the next one affords a good opportunity for the student not only to become increasingly familiar with his lines, but also to think of the lines in respect to the stage movements. Much valuable time can be saved with this method, since the student will know before going on stage, just where and at what time he has to move.

It is imperative that the director be fully prepared for this second rehearsal. He cannot rely on "spur of the moment" inspiration for the

initial blocking instructions. Since every member of the cast (except--at this point--large groups of show chorus members) is involved, the director must know what he wants in regard to the basic movements and crosses. The director will have had to meet with the technical director in order to plan the sets necessary for each scene or act. The result of this meeting will be a sketch of every set needed. Armed with this, the stage director can accurately plan the entrances, crosses, and movements. In presenting the blocking to the cast, the director should draw a sketch of each set on the blackboard, thus enabling the cast to visualize their movements through the aid of the drawing. Each individual blocking instruction will then become more meaningful to the cast member.

The director must be sure that these initial blocking instructions do not become overly involved. Assign the basic movements and crosses only. The director must not confuse the cast with verbose and complicated instructions. Ramifications of the basic movements will naturally grow out of the subsequent rehearsals, and have no place in the initial presentation.

Early Blocking

The preliminary blocking instructions (as discussed in the preceding section) will do much toward eliminating extreme confusion when the cast is actually put on the stage. The director will find that because of this lessening of confusion, the early stage rehearsals will run more smoothly than they might otherwise.

In working out the previously assigned blocking instructions, the director must remember that he should move slowly and deliberately, making sure that every cast member is fully aware of the director's instructions. Katherine Anne and Pierce C. Ommanney in their book The Stage and the School

nicely sum up the director's earliest responsibilities:

> In the business rehearsals the director may have to give actual exercises in posture, walking, standing, sitting and in making exits and entrances. In order to avoid later delay he should try to eliminate tendencies toward fidgeting, shifting weight, and ineffective gesticulation. If the actors have had drama class work they should understand that every gesture and cross must be motivated, that crosses should be definite, and that the center of interest should be accentuated at all times. The director must stick to fundamental and rather general directions when dealing with inexperienced people in order to avoid confusing them with too much detail.[1]

Alexander Dean, late professor of dramatics at Yale University, and author of the book Fundamentals of Play Directing augments the above quotation:

> With the ground plan of the set made, we are ready to meet the cast and to begin actual stage movement. "What do you do with your actors when you get them on the stage?" The direct answer is, "I try to keep them from thinking that they are on a stage." They enter through the door of a room, and they do what they would do if they were coming into that room. For these early rehearsals it is expedient for the director very often to sit on the stage and work out with each one his characteristic behavior and action. The lines are read slowly and simply for an understanding of their meaning, and business is evolved in relation to them. This results in placing on the stage as nearly as possible a reproduction of actual life.[2]

These two paragraphs, without going into any technical detail, speak the essence of the director's role in creating the production through his student cast.

As the actors learn their lines and become increasingly aware of their own particular characterization, the director should correspondingly

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[1]Katherine A. and Pierce C. Ommanney, The Stage and the School (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1950) pp. 282-83.

[2]Alexander Dean, Fundamentals of Play Directing (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1941) p. 356.

allow the actors as much freedom as possible in the interpretation of their roles, but they must not be allowed to stray from their character portrayals. The director must always be on guard against unimportant or unnecessary business which students may begin to use.

Stage speech is often difficult for high school students. Most often, they are guilty of two things: 1) Speaking too rapidly, thus blurring important words, and 2) Speaking too softly, making it impossible for them to be heard past the fourth row of seats. The director must insist that every member of the cast speak slowly and distinctly. The students must also project enough voice so that the audience in the back row can hear as clearly as does the front row audience. Early attempts on the part of the cast to do these things will usually result in dry and static line delivery, but with practice on the part of the cast and perseverance on the part of the director, the well projected lines will soon gain the proper meaning.

When lines have been learned, songs set, and much of the choreographic material inserted, then the real joy (and work) of polishing rehearsals can begin. It is within these rehearsals that the full tone and character of the show is established. From the director's point of view, the polishing rehearsals should establish the tempo of the production. While the whole show may yet be a long way from being ready for a full run-through, the cast should begin to feel and see the production taking shape through their own efforts.

It is within these polishing rehearsals that property materials and their use should be inserted. The director should never wait until the last minute to get properties into the hands of the cast. With the early

use of properties, the director will discover whether any alteration of stage business will have to be made. And most important, the cast will have ample opportunity to get used to handling the property materials.

Many authoritative volumes written by equally authoritative men deal with all the stage techniques of directing and acting. It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss these many technical considerations. The director of a high school musical production will of necessity have to be familiar with some of the ways and means of acting and directing. If he is a stranger to these techniques, then it will behoove him to obtain source material dealing with them. There is much to be said for the study of directing and acting techniques, but the high school director will discover that practical experience will largely be his source of training and knowledge. Through this experience, the high school director will constantly add to his storehouse of knowledge an ever growing supply of "do's and don'ts". Just because the high school director lacks extensive training in stage picturization, composition, advanced acting techniques, and other technical considerations does not mean that he cannot or will not do a fine job of directing a musical production. Most often, the high school director's own imagination, common sense, and basic artistic abilities will serve him in good stead. He may not always know exactly why he does certain things with his cast, but his good sense will most often tell him that what he does is right.

Cast Self Criticism

When the cast begins to crystallize lines, songs, dances, and stage business into a coherent whole, they are then ready for a very effective critical technique. This technique consists of each principal in the show

being constructively criticized by the remainder of the cast. The purpose and advantage of allowing the cast to criticize their own work is twofold: 1) Self-criticism teaches the cast to be specifically aware of the mistakes of others, and 2) It teaches each cast member to judge the merits of his own performance on the basis of what others are doing.

Though the director has to reserve for himself the role of properly guiding the cast in the creation of their characters, cast self criticism is a splendid way to emphasize all the business which the director has been working on and for during the rehearsal sessions. Cast self criticism should take up two rehearsal sessions. The first should be held soon after the cast have memorized their lines, and can attempt to create definite character portrayals. The second such session should take place about a week before the show is scheduled to open. Both sessions will require the same thing from the cast--that they constructively criticize each other and themselves in their creation of characters through lines, songs and movements.

When introducing all of this to the cast, the director must impress on them the seriousness of intent which cast self criticism demands. In other words, these sessions should serve as a learning situation, and not as a joke.

If the rehearsals up to these points have been meaningful experiences for the cast, then little trouble can be expected. Usually high school students are very receptive and appreciative of any opportunity to criticize themselves, and they will rise splendidly to the occassion.

In preparing for these sessions, the director should devise a form on which the cast can write their comments and evaluations. This is a very

easy thing to do and will require only a few moments of the director's time. A form such as the example below typed on regular typing paper and mimeographed will handsomely serve the purpose.

(Name of Production)

Name of actor_____

Role_____

Act_____Scene_____

Make critical but constructive comments concerning the following categories:

DICTION:

PROJECTION:

POSTURE:

MOVEMENTS:

CHARACTER PORTRAYAL:

OTHER COMMENTS:

The director should be certain that he has an abundance of these forms.

In order that the session be effective, every member of the cast, no matter how large or small his role, must be given the opportunity to perform before the critical eye of his peers. It is vital that the director slight no one, giving all an equal chance.

Choose one of the leads to begin the session. Put him on the stage all by himself. Spread the rest of the cast throughout the auditorium, making sure that their comments will not be influenced by anyone sitting close to them. Then the director should cue the student on the stage, and allow him to perform an entire scene as though he were playing it with the rest of the cast. As he performs, his audience watches and makes critical notation on the forms provided them. The director should allow nothing to

disturb the scene being played on the stage.

After the student has finished his scene, the director moderates the discussion as presented by the rest of the cast. The director, on hearing the comments from the students, can perhaps enlarge upon or clarify the criticisms as he sees fit. One important item cannot be overlooked. The cast must know that not only are they to criticize weaknesses, but they are also to praise any worthy effort on the part of the person in question. The director will find that rather than offer too little criticism, the cast will be prone to say too much. Praising the good qualities of a student's performance tends to alleviate over criticism.

At the end of the evening's session, the director should sum up the evening's comments, and give his own evaluation of each student's performance. If this session has been adroitly handled by the director, and if the cast has entered into the cooperative spirit of the occasion, each member of the cast will go away from the rehearsal having gained an important insight into his own role. The director will notice that in subsequent rehearsals, this evening's session will bear fruitful reward in the performance of every student.

The second such session held during the week before the show opens will give the cast splendid opportunity to note the improvements which undoubtedly will have been made since the first session. With performance time drawing near, the cast then can be more specific in pointing out small but vital aspects of a student's performance.

It is no doubt obvious to the reader that the success of the foregoing hinges entirely upon what the cast learns and becomes aware of throughout the entire rehearsal period. Few students can be expected to criticize their

fellows intelligently if they do not know what it is for which they should look. The director must provide them with the necessary knowledge as he works toward an artistic and meaningful production.

Building a Professional Attitude

Throughout the preparation of a musical production, it is a vital necessity that the director and the entire production staff work toward impressing upon the cast and production crews a mature attitude toward the business at hand. To the director, nothing is more discouraging than to realize suddenly that all of his careful preparations and directions are going to waste simply because he has not implanted the proper attitude into his cast. Proper attitude goes hand in hand with the successful outcome of the production. The director cannot begin too soon in seeing that every member of the cast looks on the venture with pride and enthusiasm.

Just being a part of the show is not always enough to instill a strong and optimistic outlook on the entire production. It is through the attitudes of the director that the cast achieves a truly professional and loyal attitude toward the show. Therefore, it is essential that the director approach every phase of the production with an attitude that literally speaks of confidence and unmistakable optimism. Only in this way can the director hope to see these traits reflected in the attitudes and performances of his cast.

From the very first, the cast must be made to feel that it is a privilege to be associated with the production. They can fully realize this only if the director makes it immediately known that the show will never succeed unless a bright and well-rehearsed cast sends it across the footlights. The director should never feel that he talking down to his cast

when he speaks of enthusiasm, loyalty, and sincerity. These are admirable and necessary qualities which must be possessed by every member of the cast. The director must strive to make his cast realize that he is placing them in a professional situation which demands a mature outlook from everyone associated with the show. Since high school students are impressionable, well chosen words from the director are most often taken to heart and put into effect by every well-meaning student.

No one respects a man with a loud voice and a ready temper. In fact, it is the ill-tempered director who will have the most trouble getting the production into decent performance. Students will not work willingly for any man who looses control of his temper in order to criticize or discipline. Their objections to the director's methods will show up in their attitudes toward the show. The man who can take any situation in stride and rationally deal with it is respected and trusted.

The director cannot afford to forget for a minute that he is a teacher. Because he is, it is essential to remember that he is dealing with young minds and attitudes. Respect breeds repect. The wise teacher knows this, and finds that it is a perfect tool for getting the most out of high school students.

If the high school director likes what he is doing, if he respects the efforts of his cast, if he is firm but fair, if he criticizes but also praises, and if he is genuinely interested in being a leader to his cast, then a professional attitude is not a vague state of undetermined value. It is a vital reality with the cast.

The Early Run-Throughs

After two weeks spent in rehearsal, the cast should be able to

proceed through at least one-half of the entire show. This means, of course, without the musical numbers. By the end of four rehearsal weeks, the cast will have been carefully instructed and rehearsed for all acts and scenes. Once the entire production (excluding songs and dances for the moment) has been blocked and rehearsed again and again, it is time for preliminary run-throughs. A run-through after a month spent in rehearsal should include only spoken dialogue. Undoubtedly, little of the musical material will have progressed as fast as has the stage action. For the first of these run-throughs, every member of the cast must have his lines completely memorized, and each cast member must by now be exhibiting strong character traits.

The early run-through will immediately point out to the cast and director alike just where the most trouble lies. The director may find that some of his blocking and stage business must be altered or completely changed. Much grief can be spared during later rehearsals if the director schedules such a rehearsal--no matter how rough it is. These sessions will guide the director in scheduling subsequent blocking and polishing rehearsals.

For the cast, this early run-through will emphatically point to their special weaknesses and they will begin to become aware of the timing element and its importance in keeping the show alive and moving. It is important therefore, that the director not interfere with the progress of this rehearsal. He should save all of his comments until the rehearsal is completed.

After this first run through, the next two weeks should be spent in reworking and readjusting all aspects of the stage business. At the end of these two weeks another dialogue and stage business run-through is in order. By now, the director should begin to be satisfied with the results of his work. This leaves four weeks remaining before the show opens (utilizing

a ten week rehearsal period). During the first two of these remaining weeks the musical numbers should be added and carefully adjusted to fit naturally into the total production. All this while, the director is keeping all of the stage business alive and vital. The period of inserting the musical numbers will tend to slow the rehearsal processes, since there will be many undefined problems with which to deal. If the musical numbers have been carefully prepared, the difficulties of inserting them into the stage rehearsals will not be too great. If the choreographic material is ready to be put on the stage at this point, so much the better. If it is not ready, then it should be utilized during the final two weeks of preparation.

The last two weeks of the rehearsal period will certainly be the most hectic. The incorporation of music, dancing, and dialogue onto the stage and its sets will create moments of chaos, disappointment, and utter despair for the director. Therefore, it is essential that the show be broken up into small scene segments for the first of the two remaining weeks. It may be necessary to lengthen the rehearsal hours in order to accomplish all that must be done.

This will be a time of great strain on all concerned with the show, and it is important that every detail be met with logic and reasoning--not uncertainty and anger. Patience and fine attention to every demand will insure that the show will be ready for opening night. If the work of this week has successfully accomplished getting music, dancing, and dialogue into a smooth working whole, then the final week can be spent in complete run-throughs to test the technical aspects of lighting, scene changes, and the like.

The first two rehearsals of the last week will bring in the orchestra to accompany the entire rehearsal. These rehearsals will of necessity have to be "stop" rehearsals, since the addition of the orchestra will again create problems in regard to tempos, cues for entrance and exit, cues for curtains, etc. The first night with the orchestra is likely to be a long one as problem after problem is dealt with. The second night's rehearsal with the orchestra should run quite smoothly, although here again, this rehearsal will have to be stopped to adjust to any matter--even the smallest.

The director will probably find that even the most careful planning will still leave unexpected problems with which to deal. The few rehearsals immediately prior to the full dress rehearsals should reveal any such surprises in time for adjustment to be made.

Dress Rehearsals

The plural form of this section's title suggests that there should be more than one dress rehearsal. One dress rehearsal will hardly suffice to bring the entire production into performance readiness. Three is the general rule, and with each one, a particular aim is accomplished.

The first dress rehearsal should be an often interrupted technical rehearsal with piano accompaniment only. It is during this rehearsal that lights, curtains, and scene changes are given full consideration--over and above the stage doings of the cast. The cast should wear their costumes, but not make-up--primarily to determine if any costume alterations will have to be made before opening night, but also to check on the effect of the pre-determined lighting plans and their relation to the costumes. Since this rehearsal is usually a long one, the cast need only

lightly sketch their songs and dialogue, allowing practically all of the attentions of the production staff to be directed toward the technical aspects of the show. The director and the cast should be prepared to repeat scenes or sections of the show in order that all the technical considerations be rehearsed to the finest detail. Since this rehearsal is devoted entirely to the technical director and his crew, the technical director must take full advantage of the situation and see to it that his aspects of the show run as smoothly as possible.

The second dress rehearsal should be a full run-through, complete with costumes and orchestra. The show should be played once with as little stopping as possible. During this rehearsal, final little details will have to be discovered and dealt with quickly and thoroughly. One vital consideration of this rehearsal will be to test whether the cast has adequate time for all costume changes. Therefore, little attempt at stopping the rehearsal should be made. This rehearsal will also give the director a good idea of just how long the show will run. Smoothness of performance is necessary, however, the director must allow room for minor adjustments during the second dress rehearsal.

Contrary to popular belief, a bad final dress rehearsal does not insure that the opening night performance will be a smashing success. The final dress rehearsal must beas smooth running as it can possibly be.

It is a good idea to set the dress rehearsal curtain time in accord with the curtain time of the performance nights. This means that the cast will have to be present for their make-up and costume calls in plenty of time for the prompt raising of the curtain. An hour and a half before curtain time is usually adequate.

It is a good idea to invite a select and private audience to the final dress rehearsal. These people may be other school faculty members, the school's administration and people who might not (for one reason or another) be able to see the actual performances. This, of course, will give the cast a fine opportunity to play before a live and responsive audience, thereby discovering just how effective their long hours of preparation have been. The most important use of this audience will be to time laughter and applause and their relation to the smoothness of the entire production.

This rehearsal is completely in the hands of the musical director and the stage manager and his crew. The stage director and the technical director should merely act as members of the audience, noting carefully any specific minor points with which to deal before the next night's opening.

Next to giving a good performance, orderliness, punctuality, and efficiency on the part of all cast and crew members will determine whether the show is ready to open.

Opening Night and the Show's Run

The long weeks of planning and rehearsal are terminated by the arrival of opening night. If preparation of the show has been accomplished with good results, then no doubt the opening night performance will be a joy to the participants and audience alike.

There are however, some things yet to be considered: 1) The cast must be carefully instructed as to what time they are to arrive for their make-up and costume calls, and the stage manager must check to see that everyone is accounted for. 2) The stage manager and his crew must not allow anyone other than the cast into the back stage area prior to curtain

time. The normal pandemonium of an opening night can do without the added confusion of friends and well-wishers. 3) The orchestra should arrive a half hour before curtain time in order to tune their instruments.

At about fifteen minutes before curtain time, the director should call the entire cast together to give them last minute encouragement and to wish them luck. The orchestra should take their places about ten minutes before the curtain goes up. On the signal from the stage manager, the members of the cast take their places, the houselights are dimmed, the orchestra launches into the overture, and the show is underway.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS

The Problem of Sets

In drawing up preliminary plans for the production sets, the technical director will have to base his major decisions on the limitations of the stage on which the show will be presented. Is the stage large or rather small? Is ample wing space available for storing parts of the set? Is the stage equipped with cyclorama curtains and tormentor curtains? Does the stage possess an adequate apron? Is there an adequate fly loft and functional grid system? All of these questions will have much to do with determining the sets of the show.

A Broadway musical will generally require several or perhaps numerous scene changes for each act. Therefore, in making plans for the show's sets, the technical director must concern himself with designing simple (but effective) and mobile sets. The reason for this is obvious. Because of the required scene changes, the sets and set pieces must be so constructed that they are easily moved and stored in accessible places.

Sometimes the leasing agency handling the show will have available the Broadway plans and sketches of the show's sets. If this is the case, then the technical director will be greatly aided if he takes advantage of these professional plans. While he may not be able to copy the plans and fit them exactly into the local situation, they will be a fine source of ideas. However, these plans are not always available, since the leasing agency gets only what the original production has to offer after the pro-

fessional run is completed. A letter of inquiry to the leasing agency will disclose whether such plans are available.

If no professional assistance is to be had, then the technical director must call upon his artistic and creative resources to devise suitable sets for the show. The first thing which must be done is to read the show script thoroughly, paying particular attention to the over-all style of the show (modern American, Western, folksy, etc.), any particular set pieces or actual allusions to specific sets mentioned in the stage directions, and any other information which might indicate what is needed. The synopsis of scenes contained in the director's script may give accurate indications to the type and locality of the sets involved. Once this preliminary information has been secured, the technical director can begin to plan the sets.

No two shows are alike. Therefore, it is difficult to lay down hard and fast rules concerning just how to go about planning the stage settings. Perhaps the easiest way to discuss this matter will be to examine a popular musical and indicate what can be done to provide interesting sets for it. Let us, again, look at the Adler and Ross musical comedy Damn Yankees, and briefly consider how it might be staged in the typical high school auditorium.

In the scene synopsis of Damn Yankees, the technical director will note that it contains twenty-one scenes in two acts--eleven scenes in the first act and ten in the second. Upon closer scrutiny, he will also note that the scenes can be broken down into two basic units: 1) Major scenes obviously involving the use of rather extensive settings, and 2) Minor scenes requiring little or no set pieces. In regard to the former, five different sets will be needed. These are: 1) The living room and front porch of a typical suburban house, 2) The dugout and a section of bleachers

of the Washington Senator's baseball park, 3) The office of the baseball commissioner, 4) The Washington Senator's locker room, and 5) Mr. Applegate's apartment.

The minor scenes involve a corridor under the baseball stands, a park bench scene, and a scene played in front of a billboard. The technical director will notice that most of these scenes are recurring.

These scenes and the various changes necessary may seem to be a formidable deterrant in the eyes of the technical director. This is not so. First of all, all of the three minor scenes can be played in front of the show curtain. For the corridor scenes, the actors merely enter from behind the show curtain onto the stage apron, and play the scene before the footlights and spotlights, making it completely unnecessary (except to indicate the location in the program) to worry about devising a replica of a corridor. For the park bench scenes, a momentary blackout allows time for a small park bench to be placed in front of the curtain. The actor's quickly take their places, and the show resumes with the lone park bench adequately supplying the illusion to all the scenery. In regard to the billboard scene, an oil cloth billboard is attached to the show curtain. All action utilizing this scene takes place in the immediate area surrounding the billboard.

The scenes played in front of the curtain are not only vital for the continuity of the show's plot, but they serve another function as well. The technical director will notice that these footlight scenes alternate with the five other major show scenes. While a scene is being played in front of the curtain, the stage crew is busy preparing the area behind the curtain for the next major scene of the show. This requires split second timing and very portable sets, but it can be accomplished.

Consider the living room and front porch scene. One portion of the stage can be utilized for the living room, while an adjacent portion will contain the porch. On the living room side, a sectional couch, end tables, a coffee table, a television set, a small rug, and an occasional chair, plus the usual small appointments to be found in a home will more than adequately serve the purpose. In reference to this and on the other side of the stage, a platform fitted with removable railings, screen door, and steps will complete the porch. The whole scene will be illuminated by spotlights. When the stage action switches from the living room to the porch, the spots bathing the living room section dim out while the lights centered on the porch come up. This alteration in lighting will adequately convey the proper localities to the audience, and they will hardly notice that no attempt has been made to construct a realistic living room and front porch. Lighting does the major portion of the work. Moreover, every one of these set pieces is easily moved by the stage crew.

The dugout and section of the stands at the ball park is no real problem. The stage draperies are parted, revealing a section of the grandstand (as seen from in front of the dugout) painted on the up stage wall. Immediately in front of this painted scene, the dugout is placed. This is built out of plywood and so constructed that the two side walls are hinged and can be folded against the back wall. The set piece takes on the realistic look of a baseball dugout when a plywood roof is set in position. The entire dugout can easily be stored behind the stage draperies when not needed simply because the roof is detachable and the sides of the structure fold against the dugout's back wall. The dimensions of the dugout are twelve feet long, four feet deep, and six feet high. A railing, benches, hooks

for jackets and caps, baseball gloves and bats complete the dugout picture. For the section of bleachers, the platform which formed the basis for the porch is once again brought into use. This large platform is placed against the upstage wall, and on top of it rest two more platforms which diminish in width to form a three-tiered structure. Benches are placed on each of these tiers, a railing is added to the front of the largest section, and the bleachers are ready to be used by as many howling baseball fans as can be accommodated on the structure. The painted scene, the dugout, and the bleacher section take on a real baseball park atmosphere with the addition of the baseball uniforms of the team cast and a colorful crowd in the stands.

The baseball commissioner's office is very easy. Grouped in center stage is a rather small but expensive looking desk, a handsome settee, several tasteful occasional chairs, and some of the usual office properties such as a telephone, wastebasket, pen and pencil desk set, and an upright coat and hat rack. With the proper furniture, the scene will easily take on the appearance of a rather elegant office. The entire scene is lit with spotlights which illuminate only the immediate office area.

The locker room is accomplished with several benches and an easily constructed section of lockers. The addition of baseball uniforms and equipment, towels, and the players' street clothes complete the picture. If the stage is rather small, the set may take up the whole area. If the stage is a large one, only a portion of it need be used and the area confined through the use of spotlights.

Mr. Applegate's apartment needs to be quite elegant looking. This can be accomplished by obtaining a couch and two occasional chairs, all three of which must be colorful but complimentary to each other. Danish

modern furniture (if it can be obtained) is most desirable. A coffee table, two end tables, and a couple of expensive looking table lamps, plus some small, tasteful appointments will produce a fine scene. Mr. Applegate's demeanor, his usual natty clothes, and the expensive furniture will provide an excellent illusion of taste and diabolical refinement. Once again, the stage area is confined and illuminated by spotlights.

The discussion of these five scenes has not included any mention of color--primarily because of the wide divergence of possibilities along these lines. The colors and styles of the furniture involved must be considered with regard to the characters and the situations in the show. Since all of these scenes are illuminated by spotlights, the stage itself is done in a neutral color such as pale blue. Pale blue curtains are hung over the cyclorama curtains, and two or three flats of the same color are extended diagonally onto the stage from the wings. These form a mask for the wing area, and provide entrances for the cast into any scene.

Since none of these scenes involve having to work with flats or any equally cumbersome stage settings, the problems of rapid scene changes are not great. A rather large stage crew is needed to deal with the articles present, but with planning and coordination, a rapid scene change can be quickly and quietly effected, allowing the show to proceed without even a momentary pause--except for the short blackout necessary for the placement of the park bench.

This discussion has been aimed at a method of staging Damn Yankees on the average high school stage, which usually has poor wing area and a lack of traveler curtains other than the proscenium curtain. Schools possessing better stage facilities have the opportunity for improvements of these

staging techniques.

Whatever is devised by the technical director must be in accord with the limitations of the stage. The sets must coincide with the whole of the show. If they are merely an entity in themselves, then the technical director has failed to carry out his work effectively.

> Scenery serves a large number of different purposes, and all of these must be kept in mind by the technical director if his sets are to be satisfactory. These functions are: 1) To provide a background for the production, 2) To denote the style of the production, 3) To convey information about the people and places involved in the production, 4) To provide the proper atmosphere, and 5) To provide esthetic values to the production. None of these can be overlooked by the technical director.[1]

Lighting

There are few high schools fortunate enough to possess a completely satisfactory complement of stage lighting equipment. In fact, it seems that the average high school is fortunate if it has two border lights (overhead strip lights) and a set of footlights. While many effects can be created with just this much equipment, the technical director of a high school musical production will often bemoan the school's lack of additional equipment. The school that finds itself seriously lacking proper lighting equipment would do well to consult the planning and advisory services of a theatrical lighting company. Several of these companies are listed on page 84 of Chapter Nine. The advisory service of a theatrical lighting company can do much to aid a school in procuring its lighting needs. Upon request, an advisory service will submit a lighting equipment plan commensurate with the school's needs and budget.

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[1]Henning Nelmes, Play Production (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1950) pp. 168-169

Creating the lighting for a high school musical production can be a source of great satisfaction for the technical director. He will need to call on his inventiveness and his willingness to experiment with the equipment at hand in order to arrive at a lighting plan that is both functional and attractive. Proper lighting and its resultant effects add much to the total production in that it will not only illuminate the cast and the sets, but it will serve to define other vital areas as well. Henning Nelmes in his aforementioned handbook[2] lists the following areas of lighting function:

1. Provide the desired illumination. Normally maximum visibility is desirable. However there are cases where the lighting should hide or obscure something rather than reveal it.

2. Assist in setting the style. Stage lighting rarely succeeds in duplicating nature. The chief difference between lighting for realism and for theatricalized realism is that the former demands windows or light fixtures to provide an apparent source for the illumination which is actually supplied by the stage-lighting instruments, whereas the latter is usually content to illuminate the stage without explaining the source from which the light is supposed to come. The more extreme styles often call for arbitrary shafts of light and strong colors never seen in real life.

3. Assist in controlling the mood. Lights have a profound effect on mood. Often a mood can be shifted from somber to gay simply by bringing on more light, or by changing the tint of the light from cool to warm.

4. Contribute to the stage picture. Light has such a strong influence on the values and hues of the stage picture that an entire scene change may be effected simply by changing the lights or by special lighting effects.

5. Convey information. Lighting can indicate such things as the time of day, the weather, whether or not an offstage room is occupied, and whether or not a fire is lighted.

6. Distribute emphasis. Bright light emphasizes an object; dim light subordinates it.

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[2]Henning Nelmes, Play Production (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1950)

7. Build or conserve interest. Increasing light produces a powerful effect of build. Diminishing light may be used as a means of conservation.

The seven areas listed above neatly define the functions of stage lighting. The high school technical director is wise to remember them when he plans the lighting.

Mr. Nelmes's first statement regarding the fact that "maximum visibility is desirable" is a general characteristic of musical comedy,[3] but there are many instances where special effects are called for.

With stage lighting, the colors used determine the success or failure of the lighting scheme. This plus the intensity or the brightness of the light form the basis for the usual lighting procedures. The average high school's foot and strip lights should allow for four colors--red, blue, white, and amber, all of which are connected to the dimmer control in order that they can receive varying degrees of intensity and color mixing. All manner of effects can be created with these simple light sources. In regard to the spotlights, color gelatines provide a wide variety of hues. These are purchased from any theatrical supply house. The general principle of lighting involves the use of light mixing so that two converging light beams, one a darker color, the other a lighter color, light the actors in a resultant "white" light.[4]

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[3]Ibid., pp 244-245

[4]Ibid., pp 244

For instance, the spotlight crossing of Daylight Blue with Flesh Pink gelatine produces a white light that wonderfully illuminates the actor without bathing him in a harsh, flat light which would be produced if the gelatine colors were not used.

Source material to be found in the Bibliography section will do much in aiding the high school lighting technician to obtain a knowledge of stage lighting principles. However, the school technician may achieve fine results merely by experimenting with the equipment at hand. In this way, he will gain good experience and knowledge so valuable in devising the lighting scheme. The school technician will arrive at a successful plan if he uses his imagination and inventiveness.

Make-up

Stage make-up for high school students is a subject with which many more music and drama teachers should become familiar. Nothing is more disconcerting that to watch a well-drilled high school cast go through its stage paces wearing bright red mouths and rosy cheeks. For students playing middle or old age parts, their make-up is often topped off with a healthy head of gleaming silver hair. Though high school students, by virtue of their tender age, do present some make-up problems, far more can be accomplished than is generally realized.

In discussing make-up for high school productions, the first

consideration must go to the make-up kit. A school need not spend much in order to have a make-up kit suitable for almost any need.

Of the many companies dealing with make-up, Stein's and Max Factor[5] are by far the most popular and established firms. A high school group can do no better than to purchase all make-up supplies from either of these firms. Leroy Stahl,[6] author of several fine books dealing with theatrical matters suggests the following list of make-up colors for high school boys and girls.

For Boys

Stein's	Max Factor's
GREASE PAINT	GREASE PAINT
4 Juvenile Flesh	3 Juvenile Flesh
7 Light Sunburn	3½ Sunburn
8 Dark Sunburn	5A Olive
27 Cinema Yellow	7A Dark Sunburn
LINING COLORS	LINING COLORS
7 Dark Brown	2 Dark Brown
9 Medium Blue	16 Medium Blue
14 Vermilion	9 Maroon-Crimson
15 White	12 White
FACE POWDER	FACE POWDER
8 Tan	8 Outdoor Neutral
MOIST ROUGE	MOIST ROUGE
3 Medium	3 Medium
DRY ROUGE	DRY ROUGE
14 Twilight	18 Theatrical

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[5] See Page 84 in Chapter IX.

[6] Leroy Stahl, Simplified Make-Up (Minneapolis: Northwestern Press, 1939) p. 10.

For Girls

Stein's	Max Factor's
GREASE PAINT	GREASE PAINT
1 Pink	2 Pink
7 Light Sunburn	3½ Sunburn
13 Olive	5A Olive
LINING COLORS	LINING COLORS
7 Dark Brown	2 Dark Brown
9 Medium Blue	16 Medium Blue
14 Vermilion	9 Maroon-Crimson
15 White	12 White
FACE POWDER	FACE POWDER
4 Flesh	6 Naturelle
MOIST ROUGE	MOIST ROUGE
3 Medium	3 Medium
DRY ROUGE	DRY ROUGE
18 Rouge	12 Light Theatrical

The reader will notice that there are some duplications between the boys' and the girls' suggested lists, making the purchase of these items less expensive than might at first appear.

Other necessities for this basic make-up kit should include: a bottle of white shoe polish (for greying the hair), various colors of crepe hair, powder puffs, one or two nylon make-up brushes, black and brown eye-brow pencils, fine camel hair brushes (for use in making lines), and perhaps a tube of sallow colored paint for old-age make-ups. It will be a good idea to include a bottle each of Max Factor's 2A, 5A, and 7A liquid make-up. These juvenile, olive, and dark sunburn colors can be mixed to many desirable shades for body make-up. This is also true of grease paint. Many different shades are possible by blending the various colors. Nose putty

and spirit gum are two somewhat necessary items. A good supply of theatrical cold cream and cleansing tissues is essential. All of this will nicely round out a fine make-up kit for practically any needs. All of these make-up supplies should cost no more than $15.00 or $20.00.

Since the art and technique of stage make-up includes a vast area of information, it is not the intent here to deal with an exhaustive discussion of all the make-up techniques. However, a discussion of this subject would not be complete without reference to the "straight" make-up most often encountered in musical productions. This make-up is not difficult, and if properly applied it gives a fine appearance to any high school actor using it.

First, the face must be covered with the proper grease paint. A blend of dark sunburn and olive for the boys and a blend of light sunburn and olive for the girls makes a good base. Care must be taken that not too much grease paint is used. The important thing is to have a smooth, even foundation tint over the entire face, neck, and ears.

Next, the natural blush of the cheeks is supplied with the use of the medium color moist rouge. A proper blend must be achieved. Amateurs frequently use too much rouge and are the resultant victims of a comic image. Girls usually need a bit more than the boys, but the rouge must never appear to have been painted on. The rouge is applied rather high on the front part of the cheek bone, and carefully blended so that it merely highlights the foundation grease paint. Perhaps a little rouge can be added to the temples. This must, again, be very light and well blended. The rouge areas are not large. Roughly triangular in shape, they must conform to the general shape and size of the face, and be neither too large

nor too small.

The eyes are considered next. First, brown lining color for the boys, and medium blue for the girls is carefully applied and blended over the upper eyelid. As the color approaches the outer extremities of the eyes, it is smoothly blended into the foundation base. This eye shadow must not be overly dark--just enough to bring out the expression of the eyes. Next, the brown or black lining pencil is used to draw two thin lines on the eyelids next to the eyelashes. The upper line extends the full distance of the lid, while the lower line extends only half way along the eyelid. The two lines converge at the outer extremity of the eye and are extended for a quarter of an inch beyond. A small red dot can be placed in the inner-most corners of the eyes. This little fetish tends to brighten the eyes. Finally, the eyebrows are darkened and shaped with the use of the special pencil. The brows should be made to look quite full and uniformly shaped in accord with their natural line. Mascara can be applied to the girls' lashes. Boys however, should refrain from using mascara.

For the girls, their own suitable shade of lipstick should be employed to make-up the lips. Care must be used to avoid a red "gash". Just enough to bring out and slightly augment the natural color of the lips is usually sufficient. The boys should use nothing but dark sunburn grease paint to bring out their lips. Anything else tends to establish a rather ludicrous appearance.

Once the make-up is judged sufficient, the correct shade of powder is liberally applied to all the make-up areas, and the excess is brushed carefully off. The addition of the powder furthers the blending process, and keeps the make-up from running in the event the actor perspires heavily

under the hot lights.

Make-up is easily removed by applying theatrical cold cream to the face. It should serve to lift the make-up from the face. Any attempt on the part of the student to rub the cold cream into his face will only cause the foundation base to be rubbed into the skin, resulting in a possible skin eruption. Properly applied and removed make-up and theatrical cold cream will not cause skin disorders.

All of the preceding directions will produce an entirely satisfactory straight juvenile make-up. It is the one most often used in musical productions. From this basic straight make-up, innumerable possibilities exist for further character establishment. Increasing age calls for the use of carefully blended lines, shadows, and highlights for these lines and shadows. If the person in charge of school production make-up is not familiar with these techniques, he would be wise to obtain one of the many books dealing with the make-up problems. Several are listed in the "Suggested Reading" section.

Borrowing Set Pieces and Stage Properties

Since few high schools have an extensive supply of stage properties, the necessity of borrowing these items becomes of paramount importance.

Finding and borrowing furniture and other stage properties is not usually a difficult problem, since merchants and private individuals in the community are often willing to lend whatever is needed. But, it is absolutely essential that any borrowed article be returned to the owner immediately after the show has completed its run of performances. Moreover, any borrowed article must be returned in perfect condition. If the article is damaged in any way, then restitution must be offered and made to the individual

loaning the article.

Too often, careless students (and for that matter, production staff members) are responsible for poor public relations simply because of their lack of care when handling other people's property. Therefore, it is essential that the director of the production instruct cast members and crews in the necessity of handling borrowed materials with great care.

Costumes

With the services available from so many costume rental companies, the problems of producing a musical requiring period or other costumes not easily obtainable in the community are not great.

Upon request, a costume rental agency will provide sketched drawings or a scene-by-scene, character-by-character plot of all costumes relative to a show. An agency will also provide information as to the cost of the rental, and it will send the necessary measurement blanks. In measuring his cast for rented costumes, the director must see that all measurements are carefully taken.

If a costume order is sent well in advance of the show's opening night, the agency will see that all costumes arrive at least two days before the first dress rehearsal. When the costumes arrive, the director should carefully check the shipment. If anything is missing, there will be time to back order.

There are those who would disagree with the use of rented costumes, arguing that there is little choice of color and great chance of improper fit. There is some truth in these arguments. However, if measurements are carefully taken and color stipulation made, the rental agency will do all it can to comply with the order. In the writer's experience, rented costumes

have been satisfactory in all respects. The costumes have been clean and in good repair, requiring only pressing and sometimes slight alteration.

In the event that a school has the necessary resources, time, and desire to make the show's costumes, then by all means, it should do so. This can be a source of great satisfaction and pleasure to many people who might otherwise not have the opportunity to help with the production.

In a production requiring only modern dress which can be obtained in the community, it is the director's job (with the help of the staff) to decide what each character will wear.

All costumes should be chosen well in advance of the first dress rehearsal. Once the decisions have been reached, the director or the costume committee must devise a detailed costume plot for each character in the show. This should carefully explain what is needed, and provide a scene synopsis of all the costumes each character will wear. When this has been done, the entire plot should be mimeographed and handed to every member of the cast. Each character will then be explicitly aware of his costumes and necessary changes. Once the cast has the plot in hand, they can probably find their own costumes. The director should not be afraid of allowing the students to do this. Almost always, students will provide exactly what is needed. It must be understood however, that each student is required to display his costumes to the director and committee. This inspection insures that any mistakes can be corrected without last minute rush and worry.

As an example, here is a typical costume plot for one of the characters that appears in the musical Damn Yankees. It is a scene-by-scene synopsis of everything he wears:

JOE HARDY

Act I-1 Dark slacks (must be too large for you)
White shirt
Same kind of tie that Joe Boyd wears
You need to carry baseball spikes and glove

Act I-2 Cotton pants (suntan color)
Sport coat
Contrasting knit short sleeve sport shirt
White wool socks and loafers

Act I-3 Same costume, but coat comes off during batting practice
Have on sneakers which will be taken off and given to Rocky. Walk off stage without shoes.

Act I-5 Same coat and pants, but different shirt

Act I-7 Same as above

Act I-9 Baseball uniform
Shoes and jersey will be brought on before Lola makes her entrance.

Act I-11 Sport outfit again. Either of two shirts will do

Act II-2 Original shirt and sport outfit

Act II-3 Same as above.

Act II-4 Same as above.

Act II-5 Same as above. Coat comes off before you and Lola sing "Two Lost Souls."

Armed with a plot such as the above, very few high school actors will have trouble locating the proper costumes for their characters. In the case of an unusual demand, the director must be ready and able to assist a student in finding the proper costume. A plea put out to parents and other interested people will often turn up exactly what is needed

Tickets, Programs, and Publicity

Since the source of the show's finances stems from the sale of tickets, too much emphasis cannot be placed on this vital area. General admission and reserved seat tickets must be printed and ready to go on sale

at least three weeks before the production opens.

An effective sales campaign must be devised and carried out by the ticket committee. If the school's music department is to be largely responsible for the production, then the students in these organizations are the logical ones to push the advance sale of tickets. As a suggestion, each student can be given ten reserved seat and ten general admission tickets to sell. This may seem like too much for a busy student to accomplish, but actually it is not. The directors and the students will find that the tickets sell themselves.

One of the best ways to organize the ticket sales is to make each student responsible for sales in his immediate home area. The community will generally be quite well covered with this method. Any areas not covered by this method will need special consideration. The community's business district must not be forgotten. Many tickets can be sold in the downtown stores to people who might never be reached in a student community canvass. It is wise to sell tickets through the school office, promoting the fact that telephone orders will gladly be taken.

The usual rate of admission for a high school production is $1.00 for general admission and $1.50 for reserved seats. A special price for children is unnecessary, and leads to more bookkeeping problems. Accurate records of the tickets and their sales must be kept. A faculty member or a responsible student should be appointed to carry out this duty.

The distribution of complementary tickets can be a source of irritation. Complementary tickets must be given to: all people who assist with the show by loaning furniture, costumes, and properties; faculty members who have aided the show in some special way; the show's reviewers; and

other people who have been instrumental in seeing that the production is a success. The director must be the only person responsible for the distribution of these tickets.

Programs

The program should include the following: 1) A list of characters and the cast; 2) A synopsis of the acts and scenes; 3) A list of all the musical and dance numbers; 4) A page of acknowledgements--the production staff and crews, the orchestra, ushers, and people who in any way have assisted in the production. No one must be forgotten.

The publicity director must check the program copy and carefully read the printer's proof before the program is actually printed. In order to make the program as attractive as possible, the publicity director would be wise to consider the various colors of paper and ink, plus the wide assortment of type styles available at all professional print shops.

If the materials of a publicity service are utilized, the publicity director can obtain attractive advertisement mats which serve as attractive illustrations for the program cover.

A professional printing job is an excellent finishing touch to the total production. However, many schools can produce their own programs with very satisfying results.

Publicity

If the show's publicity material is obtained from a company such as Package Publicity Service, the publicity director will find that all of this material readily lends itself to press, radio, and television coverage.

Most community newspapers are willing to provide news and advertising space free of charge to the school. Since the press will be the

primary source of advertising, the director must remember that the important thing with publicity is the scheduling. The very first thing let out, once the casting is done, is a story announcing the choice of the show and cast. This must be followed with bits of week-by-week information, until it is time for five big releases to appear in the local paper. These five articles can be taken directly from the publicity package and handed to the press, complete and ready for printing. All of these articles are well written to draw the greatest attention, and allow plenty of room for the insertion of the names of the local cast. At least one of the big weekly feature stories should contain pictures of the local cast in rehearsal, the leads, part of the ensemble routines, or a picture of the technical crews in their preparations.

If the publicity director desires, a printed picture advertisement, taken from the advertisement mats, can be inserted into the paper's theatre advertising section. This insertion should be made a week before the production opens.

Radio and television spot advertisements are not expensive. Perhaps the day before the show opens five radio or television spot announcements can be made in order to draw added attention to the production. Sometimes, the local television station will provide ten or fifteen minutes of free air time. With this opportunity, the director can either go on the air himself and discuss the coming attraction, or he can bring several members of the cast with him to participate in the discussion. If this is done well, much local interest will be aroused.

Actually performing a few numbers for select segments of the community is an ideal way to attract enthusiastic interest toward the show.

This generally can be done the week before the show opens for local civic, church, or fraternal organizations which will be more than glad to be a part of a preview of what is to come. The numbers performed for these people must be done extremely well in order to insure the success of this type of publicity.

Posters advertising and announcing the show are a vital aspect of the publicity process. These can be made by the school art department, or they can be ordered from Package Publicity Service[7] as part of the publicity package. These printed posters feature imaginative art work along with the announcements of the coming show. They allow plenty of room for the school to add the time, place, and date of the production. The more posters distributed, the better; poster saturation of the community will serve as a constant reminder of the coming attraction. If there are one or two towns close by, no harm will come from placing attractive posters in conspicuous places in those communities.

Another vital aspect of good publicity lies with the students in the school--particularly those who are associated with the show. They should be encouraged to talk of the show in their homes and to friends and neighbors. This advertising is absolutely free, and in many ways is the best assurance that community interest in the production will result in full houses for the performances.

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[7]See page 83 in Chapter IX

CHAPTER IX

WHERE TO GET IT

The writer is indebted to Bernard Simon, director of Package Publicity Service and to Richard James of the Montana State University Department of Drama for the following list of theatrical services and agencies. The list is by no means an exhaustive one, but it does represent the top firms in each field. These companies and the services they offer will supply the essential trappings for any show. Each of these companies has established a regular procedure which, if correctly followed by a client, insures the precise filling of any order and the receipt of the shipment at the designated time.

The first company to be contacted will be the rental agency controlling the performing rights of the musical. Each of the following companies will supply on request, a catalogue of all the musical shows they are prepared to license. When a client indicates his choice of show, the agency will then prepare a contract dealing with the show. After receipt of a deposit or the full amount of the royalty fees, the company will ship all the music and scores necessary for the production.

Some of these companies also offer other valuable aids for musicals such as scene plots, lighting schemes, and stage guides. These may be obtained for additional cost, but are usually well worth the expense. Inquiry will determine if these things are available.

Agents Leasing Performing Rights of Musical Shows

Brandt and Brandt, 101 Park Avenue, New York, New York
Century Music Library, 234 West 44th Street, New York, New York
Chappell and Company, Inc., 1270 Sixth Avenue, New York, New York

Agents Leasing Performing Rights of Musical Shows (Cont.)

Music Theatre, Inc., 119 West 57th Street, New York, New York
Rodgers and Hammerstein, 488 Madison Avenue, New York, New York
Tams-Whitmark Music Library, Inc., 555 Madison Avenue, New York, New York

Costumes

Richard James, of the Montana State University Department of Drama has compiled the following list of costume rental agencies. The companies mentioned here can supply a theatre group with any and all costumes belonging to a show. In addition to costumes, these companies can also supply wigs, masks, armor, jewelry, and paper-mache heads. Their catalogues and costume plots will be sent on request.

Eaves Costume Company
151 West 46th Street
New York 19, New York

Brooks Costume Company
3 West 61st Street
New York 23, New York

Western Costume Company
5335 Melrose Avenue
Hollywood 38, California

Van Horn and Son
232 North 11th Street
Philadelphia 7, Pennsylvania

Manhattan Costume Company
549 West 52nd Street
New York 19, New York

Northwestern Costume House
413 Nicollet Avenue
Minneapolis 1, Minnesota

Hooker-Howe Costume Company
46-52 South Main Street
Haverhill, Massachusetts

Brocklind Costume Company
9th Avenue at Olive Way
Seattle 1, Washington

Salt Lake City Costume Company
1701 South 11th East
Salt Lake City, Utah

Publicity

Package Publicity Service, Inc.
247 West 46th Street
New York 36, New York

This firm headed by Bernard Simon, is a boon to the publicity of an amateur production. The company supplies feature stories, radio spots, press releases, slogans, background material on authors and composers,

advertisement mats, posters, heralds, numerous other advertising schemes for many musical productions. The cost is nominal, and well worth the price. Information concerning the services of this firm is supplied promptly on request.

Make-Up Supplies

Hansen Plays and Novelty Company
1707 South 11th East
Salt Lake City 5, Utah

This company carries a complete line of reputable stage make-up, and is most accessible to schools in the western half of the United States. In addition, they also supply wigs, lighting gelatine, and masks, as well as various other stage needs. They also can supply a variety of sound-effect recordings.

Lighting Equipment

Century Lighting, Inc.
521 West 43rd Street
New York 36, New York

All kinds of lighting equipment are available on a rental or lease basis. This firm offers a planning and advisory service which can be of great aid to schools with inadequate lighting facilities. Their catalogue is available on request.

Kliegl Brothers
321 West 50th Street
New York 19, New York

This firm does not rent lighting equipment but offers for sale any lighting need. A planning and advisory service is available. Catalogue sent on request.

Scenery

Theatre Production Service, Inc.
45 West 46th Street
New York 36, New York

This company is the central buying and rental agency for theatrical equipment and supplies. Services offered include all kinds of lighting equipment, ready-made scenery and flats, material for the quick assembly of scenery, fabrics, draperies, dyes, and various hardware for making and maintaining sets and scenery. Their catalogue is sent on request.

Fabrics

Dazian's Inc.
318 South Robertson Boulevard
Los Angeles 48, California

Stage Fabrics
135 West 45th Street
New York 36, New York

Maharam Fabric Corporation
130 West 46th Street
New York 36, New York

In the event that a director needs fabrics for costumes or material for show curtains and scrim, these firms offer outstanding materials and fabrics. Their catalogues are sent on request.

Package Musical Shows

Tracy Music
37 Newbury Street
Boston, Massachusets

This unique organization offers scenery and costumes for a number of Broadway shows (music and scripts usually must be obtained from copyright owners) for a cost that is surprisingly low. All reports indicate that costumes and scenery supplied by this firm are entirely satisfactory. They offer scenery and costumes for the following Broadway shows: The King and I, Brigadoon, Oklahoma, Showboat, Kiss Me Kate, Guys and Dolls, Annie Get Your Gun, and Carousel.

They also offer complete package deals on several Gilbert and Sullivan operettas as well as some other standard operetta works.

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