

Oklahoma!

Rodgers and Hammerstein classic takes stage Tuesday

By Jennifer Gressett

THE BATTALION

Saddle up your horses and hang on to your hats, because Oklahoma! is coming to town.

First produced by the Theatre Guild in 1943, Oklahoma! owes its success to the collaboration of two men. Freeing themselves from the traditional route, Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein altered the process of creating a Broadway musical.

Rather than first writing the music and then creating the lyrics, the partners reversed the process for Oklahoma!. This allowed Hammerstein to create characters more in touch with their personalities and circumstances — free from existing constraints.

This alteration was also seen in the choreography of the musical. Whereas common Broadway dance was an entertaining break in the storyline, Oklahoma! used dance in an effort to further the plot.

What accounts for the musi-

cal's success and enduring popularity half a century later?

"It's a very comfortable show, both for the cast and the Middle American audience," said Steven Sondheim, the premier contemporary creator of Broadway's musicals.

However, Max Wilk, who published the first complete story of Oklahoma!, had a more emotional explanation.

Oklahoma! arrived toward the end of the darkest winter ever — literally as well as figuratively, since there was a wartime brownout in New York City, Wilk said. Lights were partially eliminated throughout the city to prevent enemy air raiders in the darker hours.

"At a time when boys were being shipped out overseas every day and you didn't know if you were ever coming back, (Oklahoma!) told you that there was something to come back to. It assured you that there would be a life, and that it would be a good one," he said.

Oklahoma! will be playing Tuesday, Feb. 15, in Rudder Auditorium at 8 p.m. For ticket information, call the MSC Box Office at 845-1234.



Oklahoma!'s classic characters "Ado Annie" and "Will Parker" can be seen in Rudder Auditorium Tuesday night.

Academy announces Oscar nominations

The Associated Press

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — Realism got the head table, escapism wasn't on the A-list, and the host — Hollywood — barely got invited to its own party.

Steven Spielberg will either get his Oscar (thanks to Schindler) or run the risk of becoming the Buffalo Bills of directors.

Academy Award voters this year honored seemingly uncommercial storylines and the largest beneficiary was Steven Spielberg's Holocaust drama "Schindler's List," which received a leading 12 Oscar nominations Wednesday. Its nominations include best picture and best director.

Other films receiving multiple nominations include the New Zealand drama "The Piano" and the IRA story "In the Name of the Father," both among the five best picture nominees.

Just one traditional Hollywood studio release, the stylish thriller "The Fugitive," earned nominations in more than one top category.

"This is a very special moment for all of us who have dedicated ourselves to this subject," Spielberg said of "Schindler's List." "The news of 12 nominations was overwhelming."

"Schindler's List" chronicles businessman Oskar Schindler's efforts to rescue and employ concentration camp prisoners in a factory making intentionally unusable Nazi munitions.

At a running time of three hours and filmed mostly in black and white, the movie was never expected to be a commercial hit.

In addition to best picture and director, "Schindler's List" was nominated for best actor for Liam Neeson (who played Schindler) and supporting actor for Ralph Fiennes (who played sadistic Nazi commandant Amon Goeth).

Spielberg's "Jurassic Park," the highest-grossing release in movie history collected three nominations in technical categories.

"Philadelphia," the first big studio film about AIDS, got five nominations, including best actor for Tom Hanks and best original screenplay. "In the Name of the Father," a little-seen account of a falsely convicted Irish rebel Gerry Conlon, received seven nominations, including best picture and best actor for Daniel Day-Lewis.

Robin Williams' cross-dressing performance in the hugely successful "Mrs. Doubtfire" was overlooked. "Sleepless in Seattle" received just two nominations.

In the best picture category, the nominees were "Schindler's List," "The Fugitive," "In the Name of the Father," "The Piano" and "The Remains of the Day."

For best director, Spielberg will face "The Piano" maker Jane Campion, only the second woman to be nominated in the category (Lina Wertmuller lost for 1976's "Seven Beauties"). Also nominated for director were Jim Sheridan for "In the Name of the Father," James Ivory

for "The Remains of the Day" and Robert Altman for "Short Cuts."

Spielberg was blanked in his previous three directorial nominations for "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "E.T. — the Extra-Terrestrial."

Also nominated for best actor were Anthony Hopkins for his role as the butler Stevens in "The Remains of the Day" and Laurence Fishburne for playing the abusive Ike Turner in "What's Love Got to Do With It."

"I'm just delighted," Fishburne said. "I'm happy, not only for myself but for (co-star) Angela Bassett."

The best actress selections were Miss Bassett for singer Tina Turner in "What's Love Got to Do With It"; Stockard Channing as society wife Ouisa Kittredge from "Six Degrees of Separation"; Holly Hunter as the mute mail-order bride Ada in "The Piano"; Emma Thompson for housekeeper Miss Kenton in "The Remains of the Day," and Debra Winger as dying writer Joy Gresham in "Shadowlands."

Miss Hunter ("The Firm") and Miss Thompson ("In the Name of the Father") were also nominated for supporting actress, the first time two performers received dual nominations in the same year.



Carrey

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The well-polished set, good film color quality and the appearances of a number of the Miami Dolphins including Dan Marino again reiterates that Warner Brothers did not cut too many corners while making this film.

This is indeed a definite factor in its appeal.

The musical choices along with Carrey's rhythmically comical body motions keep the humor flowing, allowing breathing room without losing the laughs. Usually, writers scared of losing the comical flow will choke the audience with bad jokes, hokey extras or too much clumsiness.

Yet another of Ace Ventura's laughable attributes are the props and wardrobe. I have

never seen such an assorted collection of Hawaiian shirts. Carrey's beat-up blue muscle car also builds the character.

Indeed, with all of the industry's recent goof-ups, trying to convert TV shows and characters to the big screen (i.e. Coneheads), I understand why this movie has been met with much criticism. But this is one TV personality who survives and even flourishes in the move to movies.

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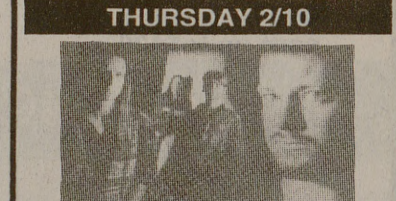
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