

Notes from the Director

When *Oklahoma!* opened out of town the critics were not impressed. The headlines read, "No Girls, No Gags, No Chance." However, after the show opened in New York in March 1943 to a standing ovation, the headlines read, "No Girls, No Gags, No Tickets." The first musical collaboration of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein became the longest running musical of its day. It ran on Broadway for five years, nine months. A national company then toured the Untied States for ten years. Companies also performed in Europe, South American, Australia, and for the armed services during the last years of World War II. *Oklahoma!* opened in London in April 1947, and was the first post-war musical to be performed there. It then had the longest run in the history of the Drury Lane Theatre.

Based on Lynn Riggs' play "Green Grow the Lilacs", *Oklahoma!* is considered by many to be the first musical where lyrics, music and dance were necessary to advance the plot (Oscar Hammerstein had begun to explore this technique in "Showboat," on which he collaborated with Jerome Kern.). The collaboration of Rodgers, Hammerstein and choreographer Agnes de Mille produced a production involving vitality and magic. It was not the common musical comedy or operetta, but a musical play where the conversational style of the songs told the story. Against all odds, Rodgers and Hammerstein chose actors who could sing to fill the lead roles. There were no "Broadway stars" in the original production, but some become stars soon afterwards.

In addition to the 1955 Academy Award winning film adaptation, *Oklahoma!* has been revived numerous times both on Broadway and in Europe, the last in 2002. Productions have won many awards, one of the earliest being the Pulitzer Prize which was awarded to Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein for the original in 1944. The highly successful 1998 London revival was slated to come to America, but could not because the Actors Equity insisted that the cast be composed of only American actors. It eventually arrived on Broadway in 2002. *Oklahoma!* is one of the most performed musicals by community theaters and high schools.

Oklahoma! remains one of the director's favorite musicals. She directed Fun and Fancy's 1981 production, and two years ago she did the musical direction for Springbrook High School's production. The joy and beauty of *Oklahoma!* have not diminished since the first production 64 year ago.

This Fun and Fancy cast has worked hours and hours to mount this production. The many new members of the cast have blended with more seasoned group members to produce an excellent production. As with any production at Leisure World, we ask that our audience use a little imagination and enjoy the show.

My special thanks go to Betty-Printz Sims, my wonderful music director, and pianist Ray Williams for his music during rehearsals and playing piano for the show; Gerry Kaufman and Eva Katz, our choreographers; assistant director Faye A. Freedman and her helper Vivian Demperio; stage manager Beryl Markwood, and her staff which includes Aileen Feldman, Judy Schwartz, Anita Nacht and Dorothy Hughes; Joan Bowar and Clydis Kellough and their helpers for coordination of the costumes and make-up; Skip Ey and Kevin Wright and their set crew; Elaine Apter for her sound; Judy Casey for her lighting; and Allan Okin's efforts as producer.

Carol Hillmann

Fun and Fancy Theatre Group presents

Rodgers and Hammerstein's Musical Classic

OKLAHOMA!

BASED ON THE PLAY "Green Grow the Lilacs" by Lynn Riggs

Music by Richard Rodgers

Book and Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

**Produced with special permission by
The Rodgers & Hammerstein Theatre Library, New York, New York**

Carol Hillmann, Director

Betty-Printz Sims, Musical Director

Ray Williams, Accompanist

Allan Okin, Producer

**Clubhouse II Auditorium, Leisure World of Maryland, Silver
Spring, MD on November 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, & 16, 2008**

Production Staff for OKLAHOMA!

Assistant to Ms. Hillmann:	Faye A. Freedman
Assisting Ms. Freedman:	Vivian Demperio
Choreographer:	Gerry Kaufman
Assisting Ms. Kaufman:	Eva Katz
Stage Manager:	Beryl Markwood
Assisting Ms. Markwood:	Aileen Feldman, Dorothy Hughes, Anita Nacht, Judy Schwartz
Set Construction/Design:	Skip Ey & Kevin Wright
Set Drawing:	Jenny Sutherland
Assisting Mr. Ey & Mr. Wright:	Judith Casey, Linda Essenmacher Eugene Evans, Dotty McCarthy, Jack Melnick, C.K. Tenenbaum
Costume/Make-up Coordination:	Joan Bowar & Clydis Kellough
Assisting Ms. Bowar & Ms. Kellough:	Ruth Arens, Nancy Durham, Fran Fleisher, Julia Fisher, Sally Tash, Eleanor Zuraski
Lighting:	Judith Casey
Sound:	Elaine Apter
Box Office Managers:	Carol Jason & Larry Jason
Usher Managers:	Joan Okin & Anita Van Grack
Photographer:	Marge Mathieu
Publicity:	Larry Jason, Michael Schwartz, Morris Nierman, Skip Ey, et al
Program:	Allan Okin, Joan Okin, Skip Ey

Fun & Fancy thanks the many volunteers who helped with ticket sales and ushering for this production of *Oklahoma!* We are also greatly indebted to the E & R Department of Leisure World, Olney Theatre, and Montgomery College Theatre Department for their valuable assistance.

Please look forward to Fun and Fancy's Spring Comedy on May 1, 2, 3, 8, and 9, 2009 and The Community Show on June 27 & 28, 2009. Also, check out our first Wednesday of the month shows on www.funandfancytheatre.org.

OKLAHOMA!

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Time: Just after the turn of the century.
Place: Indian Territory (now Oklahoma)

ACT I

Scene 1: The Front of Laurey's Farmhouse
Scene 2: The Smoke House
Scene 3: A Grove on Laurey's Farm

ACT II

Scene 1: The Skidmore Ranch
Scene 2: Skidmore's Kitchen Porch
Scene 3: The Back of Laurey's Farmhouse

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Overture

Act I

Oh, What A Beautiful Mornin'.....Curly
The Surry With The Fringe On Top.....Curly, Laurey, Aunt Eller
Kansas City.....Will, Aunt Eller *and the Boys*
I Can't Say No.....Ado Annie
I Can't Say No.....Ado Annie, *reprise*
Many A New Day.....Laurey *and the Girls*
It's A Scandal! It's A Outrage!.....Ali Hakim, *Boys and Girls*
People Will Say We're In Love.....Curly and Laurey
Pore Jud is Daid.....Curly and Jud
Lonely Room.....Jud
Out of my Dreams &
Dream Ballet Sequence.....Laurey, *Girls, Dream Figures*

Entr' Acte

Act II

The Farmer and the Cowman.....Carnes, Aunt Eller, Curly, Will,
Ado Annie, *Ensemble*
All Er Nothin'.....Ado Annie, Will *and*
Dancing Girls
Oklahoma!.....Curly, Laurey, Aunt Eller, Ike,
Ensemble
FinaleCompany

CAST (In order of appearance)

Aunt Eller	JEAN RAESLY
Curly	RALPH DURBIN
Laurey	ANGELA BUFALO
Ike Skidmore	LEON FRIEDMAN
Will Parker	GAYLE WILSON
Jud Fry	JACK MELNICK
Ado Annie Carnes	JULIE REPETA
Ali Hakim	MICHAEL SCHWARTZ
Gertie Cummings	DIANA MELNICK
Andrew Carnes	DAVE WEISS
Cord Elam	TERRY JOHNSON
Specialty Ballet Dancers	PHYLLIS LOVETT & SHIRLEY CARTY

ENSEMBLE: Jo Ann Atchison, Sol Bass, Jo Bianchi, Barbara Braswell, Jean Deverne-Rosansky, Fran Fleisher, Barbara Hawkins, Bernie Hurwitz, Betty Jones, Courtney Jones, Gerry Kaufman, Marge Mathieu, Frank Nacht (*Curly in dream ballet, Understudy for Will*), Millie Pflieger (*understudy for Ado Annie*), Evie Riley-Ey, Bobbie Seidel, Carol Smith, Bob Stromberg, Ken Tash (*Jud in dream ballet, Understudy for Jud*), Sally Tash, Poppy Traunfeld, Miriam Weintraub, Paul Weintraub, Chris Wright

[Understudies perform only when a specific announcement is made at the time of performance). Cast listings cited as of October 29, 2008.]

FOR OUR AUDIENCES: TRY ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING TRIVIA QUESTIONS POSTED ON FUN & FANCY'S WEBSITE - funandfancytheatregroup.org – AND CHECK THIS WEBSITE FOR ANSWERS TO THESE 10 QUESTIONS AFTER NOVEMBER 16, 2008.

NOVEMBER OKLAHOMA! TRIVIA

1. How does the opening musical number in OKLAHOMA! differ from that in other musicals of the day?
2. True or False: Jan Clayton was the original Laurie when OKLAHOMA! opened on Broadway in 1943.
3. What is the American image Rodgers & Hammerstein projected in OKLAHOMA!
4. 16 years prior to the opening of OKLAHOMA! and 15 shows later, Oscar Hammerstein II had his last hit musical. What was this musical, and who was Hammerstein's collaborator?
5. Prior to teaming with Oscar Hammerstein II on OKLAHOMA!, who was Richard Rodgers' last collaborator?
6. True or False: The movie musical biography, "Words and Music," was about the early career of Rodgers and Hammerstein.
7. "People Will Say We're in Love" is known in songwriting lingo as what kind of song?
8. What kind of sequences became commonplace in Broadway musicals after OKLAHOMA! ?
9. What Broadway musical director/choreographer was 16 years old when he danced in OKLAHOMA! ?
10. When you get down to OKLAHOMA's plot, what is the crucial concern?