

Musical Theater Notes

Adding music to a show can:

- Can reinforce emotion
- Can heighten action
- Can generate dance
- Reinforce overall mood
- Can be a transition device

Important Musical Theater Terms:

- Book = the script (spoke words or lines)
- Score = the music (the actual musical notes)
- Lyrics = the words of the songs
- Libretto = the text of a musical

The First Truly American Musical:

Showboat

- First to have music help tell story
- Dealt with a serious theme of the time called miscegenation which meant marrying outside your own race.

Most Famous Music Theater Writing Team:

Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein who wrote such classics as *Oklahoma*, *South Pacific*, *Cinderella*, *State Fair* and *The Sound of Music*

Stephen Sondheim:

- Considered by many to be the greatest living music theater composer!
- First work was *West Side Story*
- Also wrote *Into the Woods*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Sunday in the Park with George* and *Company*

Andrew Lloyd Webber:

- Though he is a British composer his work has been a huge influence on the American Musical
- The top two longest running shows on Broadway are his – *Cats* and *The Phantom of the Opera*
- Wrote *Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*

Important Choreographers:

Jerome Robbins

Famous for *West Side Story* (musical of *Romeo & Juliet*)

Bob Fosse

Because of his physical limitations his choreography used rounded shoulders, turned in feet and often utilized hats (he was balding)

Agnes DeMille

Famous for the key plot piece of the dream ballet in *Oklahoma!*