

RECYCLING BROADWAY SHOWS

Broadway, at last count there were four major shows that are based on movies. I saw two in one day. Broadway has caught the “green trend” and has gotten into the recycle game. The big difference however, is that when you recycle a can or a plastic bottle, the next item made from that material does not resemble the original product. Plastic bottles become paint brushes or door handles or any myriad of things. True, aluminum can be crushed, even without the help of critics, and turned into another can but this time instead of it being filled with soda it is now grown up and contains a beer.

Seeing Spamalot was disappointing as all of the good jokes from the movie were just being retold live. I have already heard, “I blow my nose in your general direction” from any number of friends. And yet the audience was laughing so hard you would think they never saw the original. It used to be after seeing a movie it would prompt you to read the book but here after seeing the play, I wanted to see the movie.

But now the creative minds have been side stepped because the big money learned long ago that once people spend a certain amount on their ticket, they will feel obligated to enjoy the show. I chose to stand for Spamalot and the ticket cost me 21 bucks. There was a seat available for 300 dollars and had I spent that I would have been royally pissed off. After all there was a King on stage.

There is more money in the world than talent and nowhere does it seem more prevalent than Broadway. Spamalot won a Tony for Best Musical and I don't know what the competition was but giving an award for a show that is making fun of itself and other musicals can't be 'seriously' funny. I got to see gags which made references to Fiddler, Phantom, Wicked, and Game shows. So instead of creating something anew, let's make fun of stuff we have already seen. It will only appear funny if you were a savvy theater buff and had already seen and remembered the other shows or just dropped 200 dollars on tickets.

The Industry, which is what this business that is filled with artists has become, is taking old TV shows that people remember and remaking them as movies while movies are being made into musicals. The fact that people remember them, no matter how bad they were, is worth more and a safer bet than doing something new. Take the Brady Bunch Musical, please.

If the industry is going to go to the extreme of dumbing the content down, because then neither they, or you will to have think about it,

why not go all the way. Why doesn't somebody try to do what Max Bialostok did, and con the NY public in coming to see something that is so bad, so inane but so incredibly marketed that the producers can giggle like teen age girls about how they pulled and "Enron" on the public. Bad taste has never gotten anybody thrown in jail. Bad taste simply gets you great press, as is evident with the Paris Hilton phenomenon.

Let's see "Reality Broadway Musicals" because it is such after all it is already such a great success on TV. Why wait for the TV show to go to film before bringing it to Broadway? Go straight to stage with it. For starters people would be lining up around two blocks and small commerce would spring up along that linear grouping of people. There won't be just hotdog, pretzels, cold drinks and ice cream. There will be rolling carts being manned by photographers to take your picture which you will need to get cast. There will be publicist to write your resume, there will be make up artists and acting coaches. Working with you all the way to the front of the line and then cutting you loose once you walk through the front door, thus delivering enduring proof that P.T. Barnum was not only a great showman but a prophetic seer as well.

Once in the theater reality Broadway will cast all the parts for people coming in off the street. First, make one person the producer who will soon be wetting his pants with glee when he learns he will not have to pay for union labor. He will then choose somebody else to direct who will in turn select a casting director. That person will hand out the parts to would be ushers, ticket takers, bartenders, custodians and other front of house personnel. If you know somebody, or have a great body that the casting director, director or producer wants, you can get a part as a choreographer, stage hand, light board operator or sound man. To actually get a part on stage will remain, as it has always been done in show business, a random process. After turning in your 8x10 and resume, you will become a carefully screened individual who will be told to compete against the others who are also going for the same part. Even without a script they will have no difficulty finding plenty to say about why the other person isn't qualified without ever speaking about their own talents, which will also be non-existent.

Call it Jerry Springer meets American Idol. People will do anything for fame. People will not do anything for money, unless you have a lot of it. But in reality TV there isn't any money for talent or the writers so why should it be different on Broadway?

It doesn't matter if someone on stage can't sing because the audience will entertain themselves by talking about how bad they were and enjoy that experience. It won't matter if you can't act because nobody in the audience would be able recognize your ability, even if you could.

Reality Broadway will run longer than anything out there because as long as there are people who want to be in the limelight, they will line up outside the theatre to be a part of the show. But the real genius behind all this is people will pay for the privilege to be taken advantage of, so long as you spell their name right.

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