

COLLEGE SEMINAR PROPOSAL

INSTRUCTOR

1. Name: SYLVIA FINE KAYE
2. Title: Composer, Lyricist, Producer, Writer
3. Birthdate: August 29th.
4. Address: P.O. Box 750, Beverly Hills, CA 90213
Telephone: 213-275-5531
5. Sex: Female
Marital St: Married to Danny Kaye
Children: Daughter: Dena Kaye
6. Country of Citizenship: U.S. A.
7. Education: BA, Brooklyn College, New York

Supporting Information:

- A. not applicable
- B. not applicable
- C. For a candidate not a member of the Yale Univ. Faculty, attach:
Supporting letters and recommendation:
 1. required: being forwarded separately by Dr. Walter Anderson, National Endowment for the Arts and Dean Beglarian of U.S.C.
 2. Optional: being forwarded by Mr. Edward Lasker.
- D. Further attachments necessary for non-Yale Faculty:
Vita; career, publications: see attachment D

Course Information

SYLVIA FINE KAYE

HISTORY AND ANALYSIS OF MUSICAL COMEDY

Attachment 1

The multiple arts and crafts of creating and producing American Musical Comedy -- (there is no other) -- can no longer be empirically learned. The kind of theatre in which it flourished for about forty years has been outpriced on both sides of the footlights and is almost extinct. What remains are occasional personal triumphs, some tribal or folk rock festivals and opportunistic campy nostalgia, -- all with relentless super decibel sound.

The verve, the pace, the fun, -- that very fine and fragile art of blending all the performing arts into one shining bubble, -- in a word, the magic that was musical comedy at its best, is gone.

Nothing, of course, can take the place of going to the theatre for several years to see it, hear it and feel it in your bones.

But given a qualified teacher, i.e., one who has actually worked in the creative and production ends of musical comedy, with adequate tools (tapes, records, libretti, knowledgeable books of commentary), enough can be recreated to come alive in a classroom. At the very least, standards born of knowledge can be set. Then, hopefully, with the crafts taught, some beginnings of art will emerge.

A course outline is attached.

Course Outline

HISTORY AND ANALYSIS OF MUSICAL COMEDY

I

Musical Theatre - from opera - thru operetta - to American Musical Theatre from "The Black Crook" thru Burlesque, Harrigan and Hart (spectacle) - to American operetta ("The Merry Widow") real god-parents - Gilbert and Sullivan - "Trial By Jury."

II

Anatomy of a Musical Comedy - how it differed from all before. Illustration: opera - operetta - musical comedy. Film clips - YANKEE DOODLE DANDY and MIKADO. How to write and/or listen to lyrics. What music does for a lyric and vice versa.

III

1915-1922: Irving Berlin - introduction of ragtime. Princess Theatre Shows - Kern, Wodehouse, Balton. The Intimate Revue - The Music Box Shows - Irving Berlin. The beginnings of Gershwin (George and Ira). Vincent Youmans. Rodgers and Hart.

IV

1922-1928: The Topical Trivial Musicals of the heavy-weight composers and lyricists. DeSylva, Brown and Henderson/Youmans/Gershwin/Rodgers and Hart.

V

The functions and problems of the "Book" - and the construction thereof. The collaboration of composer and lyricist.

VI

The Landmark Musicals: "Show Boat"
"Strike Up The Band"
"Of Thee I Sing"

VII

The Great Scores and Weak Books.

Cole Porter - "Anything Goes", "Jubilee", "Leave It To Me", "Panama Hattie", "DuBarry Was A Lady."

Rodgers and Hart.

VIII

The forties and fifties: The beginning of the Golden Age.

"Lady In The Dark"

"Pal Joey"

"Finian's Rainbow"

"Oklahoma"

"South Pacific"

"Kiss Me Kate"

Rodgers and Hammerstein.

IX

The function of the choreographer.

Lerner and Loewe - Frank Loesser.

X

The Fifties: Function of the Director.

Boch and Harnack - Ross and Adler - Lerner and Loewe

"Pajama Game"

"Damn Yankees"

"Fiorello"

"Guys and Dolls"

XI

The Sixties and Seventies: Function of the producer today.

"Fiddler On The Roof"

"Applause"

"Your Own Thing"

"Hair"

"Jesus Christ Superstar"

Question and answer - summary, etc.