



BROADWAY AT MUSIC CIRCUS

2022 SEASON
**PERFORMANCE
GUIDE**

KISS ME, KATE

WELCOME TO THE BROADWAY AT MUSIC CIRCUS 2022 SEASON

It has been two long years since we have been able to gather like today to watch musical magic unfold on the stage of the UC Davis Health Pavilion. Thank you for being here to share in this moment in our 70+ year history in Sacramento.

For those of you that are new to this place and/or this art form, here are the ingredients that go into what you're about to experience:

It begins with Broadway's most popular stories, told in spoken word, song, and dance. Each and every one of them – from the silliest to the most serious – was written to help us better understand ourselves and one another, and celebrate our common humanity.

Our storytellers are our actors and musicians, all of whom have trained for years to become the best that Broadway has to offer. Some are our neighbors, but many have traveled from far and wide to perform for you today.

Those on stage will be visually transformed thanks to the efforts of our costume, hair & makeup, and wardrobe teams. Every piece of clothing and wig worn has been skillfully sewn and styled to both compliment the player and articulate the essence of their character.

This theatre will also be transformed with scenery, properties, lights, projections, automation, and sound, all expertly designed to transport you from a hot summer's day in Midtown Sacramento to another (and hopefully cooler!) place and time.

Most importantly: All of the above elements have been carefully crafted and combined to be shared IN PERSON and TOGETHER. You – your laughter, tears, and applause - are the final ingredient that will make today's performance one I hope you remember and cherish for years to come.

SCOTT KLIER

PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR/COO

BROADWAY AT MUSIC CIRCUS THROUGH THE YEARS

- 1949** Actor St. John Terrell sets up a summer stock theatre under a giant round tent in Lambertville, New Jersey. Drawing inspiration from the layout of Greek amphitheaters and the summer fun of the circus, Terrell's idea is a success and more than 40 others pop up across the country in the next decade.
- 1951** With the support of arts patron and newspaper owner Eleanor McClatchy, producers Russell Lewis and Howard Young establish the Sacramento Music Circus by setting up a tent in the parking lot of the Sacramento Civic Repertory Theatre. It is the first professional theatre-in-the-round to the west of the Mississippi River, and the fourth in the country.
- 1953** Lewis and Young found the Sacramento Light Opera Association to continue producing shows in the area. Sacramento Music Circus continues to be a successful summer tradition, gaining a notable reputation in the theatre community.
- 1989** The Broadway Series is introduced as a winter companion to the summer shows, bringing national tours of Broadway musicals and plays to Sacramento every year.
- 2003** The Wells Fargo Pavilion opens on the site of the original Sacramento Music Circus tent, providing a state-of-the-art, permanent, fully air-conditioned facility for all future shows.
- 2018** The company name changes to Broadway Sacramento, with the respective touring and summer seasons being named Broadway On Tour and Broadway At Music Circus.
- 2020** As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, The Broadway At Music Circus stage is dark all summer long for the first time.
- 2022** Broadway At Music Circus returns to Sacramento for its 70th season in the newly named UC Davis Health Pavilion!

BEFORE THE SHOW BEGINS, A FEW QUICK REMINDERS:

- Make sure you find your seat before the show starts! Actors will enter using the aisles, so it is important to be seated when the lights go down to keep everyone safe. If you need to leave for any reason, the ushers in the hallway will let you know when it's okay to enter again.
- Please keep your cell phone silenced and put away during the show. You are welcome to use it before or after, but the bright screens and noises can be distracting for everyone else at the theatre. Using your phone to take pictures or video is also not allowed.
- Please refrain from talking during the show, as it can be a distraction to the actors and the people around you.
- Feel free to laugh, cheer and applaud! The actors love hearing that you're enjoying the show.

KISS ME, KATE

JULY 12 - 17

MUSIC & LYRICS by
Cole Porter
BOOK by
Sam and Bella Spewack

♡ THE STORY ♡

On a hot summer day in Baltimore, the cast of a musical adaptation of Shakespeare's *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW* is preparing for opening night. The show's leads, ex-lovers Lilli Vanessi and Fred Graham, are bickering constantly about elements of the production while their co-stars Lois and Bill work out their own relationship troubles. A case of mistaken identity involving Fred, Bill, and a pair of bumbling gangsters only adds to the turmoil backstage. With tensions rising as showtime approaches, the couples must quickly sort out their issues if the performance is to go off without a hitch.

♡ THE CHARACTERS ♡

LILLI VANESSI: The show's strong-willed leading lady who plays Katharine

FRED GRAHAM: The egotistical leading man and director who plays Petruchio

LOIS LANE: The flirtatious young actress who plays Bianca

BILL CALHOUN: A charming young actor who plays Lucentio

HARRY TREVOR: An actor in the ensemble who plays Baptista

PAUL: Fred's dresser and close friend

HATTIE: Lilli's dresser and confidante

FIRST MAN & SECOND MAN: Two gangsters who interrupt the show to collect a debt

HARRISON HOWELL: Lilli's fiancée, who is a disciplined Army general

MAKING THE SHOW

FROM THE BARD TO BROADWAY



Few classic musicals have histories as lengthy as that of **KISS ME, KATE**. The show premiered in 1948, but its source material is William Shakespeare's *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*, written in the early 1590s. One of Shakespeare's first comedies, the show is presented as a play-within-a-play that tells the story of several men trying to subdue strong-willed women.



Scene from *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW* by William Shakespeare

...*SHREW*'s themes of transformation and gender roles have prompted many critical discussions over the years. While some literary scholars claim that it presents a sincere argument for women to be passive and submissive, others interpret it as an empowering commentary on relationship dynamics that advocates for women. Regardless, it has remained a popular title for centuries.

The Theatre Guild's 1935-1936 Broadway and touring production of ...*SHREW* was particularly notable for starring Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, a real-life couple known for their explosive chemistry both onstage and backstage. Broadway producer Arnold Saint-Subber had worked on that notorious production, and he later recruited screenwriter Bella Spewack and composer Cole Porter to adapt *Shrew* into a musical. Through this partnership, **KISS ME, KATE** was born.

Spewack set the story backstage at a musical adaptation of ...*SHREW*, constructing a plot that combined Shakespeare's play-within-a-play structure with elements of Lunt and Fontanne's behind-the-scenes clashes. Porter's score emphasized this by using different musical "languages" to differentiate between the real-world drama and the musical performances in the show.

Although Spewack attempted to soften the more problematic elements of ...*SHREW*, most of her edits were later deleted when Porter and director John Wilson invited her husband Samuel to help with revisions. Samuel and Bella Spewack received equal credit for their contributions, as Porter claimed that a show credited solely to a woman would be less appealing to audiences.

After a tryout in Philadelphia, **KISS ME, KATE** opened on Broadway on December 30, 1948. It was a critical and commercial hit, running for 1,077 performances and winning the first-ever Tony Award for Best Musical. The show's success inspired international productions in London and Melbourne, and MGM Studios released a popular film adaptation in 1953.



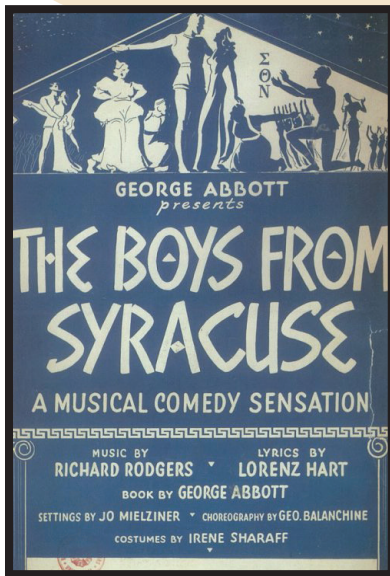
LEFT: Cole Porter and Bella Spewack in 1948, RIGHT: Carolee Carmello and Burke Moses in *KISS ME, KATE* on Broadway in 2001, photo by Joan Marcus.

The past two decades have seen a renewed interest in this classic musical. A revised 1999 Broadway production received two Tony Awards and ran for over two years before transferring to London's West End, where another acclaimed revival opened in 2013. Most recently, the show was seen on Broadway in 2019 with more contemporary updates to the script and score.

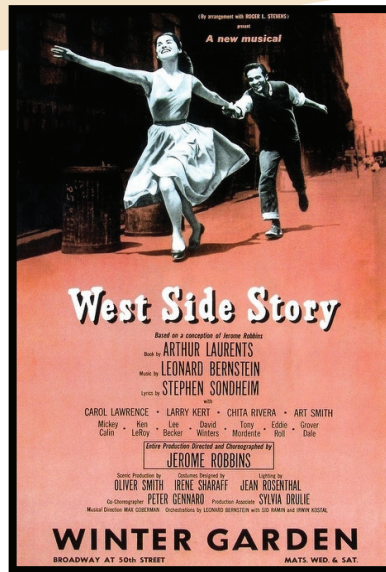
This Broadway At Music Circus production of **KISS ME, KATE** featuring costumes from the 2019 revival, marks the seventh time that the show has been performed under the tent since 1954. **KISS ME, KATE**'s enduring popularity for over seventy years highlights the show's impact as a foundational musical theatre comedy that continues to challenge and delight audiences of all ages.

BRUSH UP ON YOUR SHAKESPEARE!

OTHER MUSICALS INSPIRED BY THE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE (1938) was the first modern musical adaptation of a Shakespeare play, adapting *THE COMEDY OF ERRORS* with a swing music-inspired score.



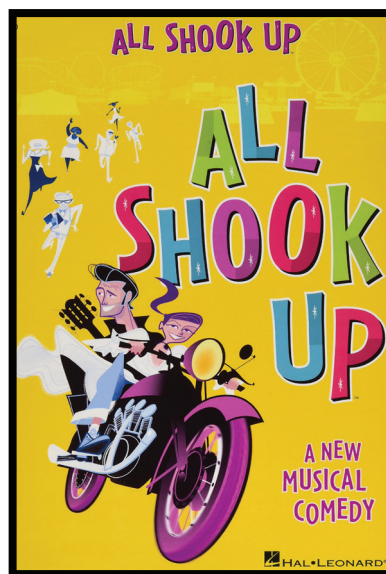
WEST SIDE STORY (1957) updates *ROMEO AND JULIET* to tell the story of young lovers caught up in a gang conflict in 1950s New York.



TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA (1971) tells the Shakespearean story of the same name, set to rock music.



THE LION KING (1997) sets *HAMLET*'s tale of betrayal and power among a family of lions ruling over the Pride Lands of Africa.



ALL SHOOK UP! (2005) updates *ROMEO AND JULIET* to tell the story of young lovers caught up in a gang conflict in 1950s New York.



& JULIET (2019) uses contemporary pop music to create an alternate ending to the story of *ROMEO AND JULIET*.



Cole Porter, 1945

COLE PORTER'S OTHER HITS

When composer Cole Porter came on board to write the score for **KISS ME, KATE** he was already a respected songwriter for both the stage and screen. Known for his jazzy rhythms and witty lyrics, Porter worked on more than 30 stage musicals and over a dozen films between 1915 and 1958. Many of Porter's songs have come to be considered standards that have been recorded by numerous stars, including Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, and Lady Gaga. Take some time to listen to some other Cole Porter songs. Have you heard any of these before?

- "Let's Do It, Let's Fall In Love" (1928)
- "Love For Sale" (1930)
- "Night and Day" (1932)
- "Anything Goes" (1934)
- "I Get a Kick Out of You" (1934)
- "Begin the Beguine" (1935)
- "It's De-Lovely" (1936)
- "I've Got You Under My Skin" (1936)
- "Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye" (1944)
- "You're Sensational" (1955)

♡ THINK ABOUT IT ♡

- The characters learn powerful lessons about working with people they don't like throughout the show. Think of a time when you had to work with someone you didn't get along with. How did you work to cooperate?
- **KISS ME, KATE** has two distinct worlds: the backstage environment and the onstage performances. How do the costumes and music help establish each location and help the audience differentiate between the two?
- The relationships in **KISS ME, KATE** all portray different understandings of love, faithfulness, and care. Which relationship appears the most realistic, and which one is the least?
- In adapting **THE TAMING OF THE SHREW** for **KISS ME, KATE**, Bella Spewack made several updates and sought to change the story's portrayal of stereotypical gender roles. What elements do you see that could be viewed as positive?
- If you were updating **KISS ME, KATE** to occur in 2022, how would you change the story to make it more modern?
- What is another classic story you would like to see updated, and how would you change it?



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SPECIAL THANKS TO



This guide was developed by Mason Diab, Caleb Larrosa-Colombo, and Jackie Vanderbeck. Special thanks to Griff Field, Matt Hessburg, Scott Klier, Gina Smith, Dejan Zivkovic, and YOU, audience members, for joining us at Broadway At Music Circus this summer!