After the Megamusical: Exploring the Intimate Form

by
André Kruger Gerber

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Supervisor: Prof. Petrus du Preez

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Abstract

The megamusical has become one of the most popular performance forms, with productions such as *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986) and *The Lion King* (1997) running profitably for decades. In South Africa, where productions of megamusicals are tremendously popular, the form itself is increasingly unsustainable within an economic framework where ticket prices and production costs are often at odds. This dissertation investigates another form of musical theatre – the intimate musical – as a more sustainable model for creating musical theatre in South Africa. The study defines the intimate musical within certain limited fiscal, performative and aesthetic (visual and aural) frameworks, noting the use of a limited cast and orchestra size, imaginative staging techniques and focused narrative qualities as distinguishing features. This dissertation assesses and outlines the aesthetic principles of both the megamusical and the intimate musical and subsequently proposes that the intimate musical is a more sustainable model in which to resourcefully present imaginative productions with an alternative thematic and aesthetic scope. The study concludes with the creation and discussion of a new Afrikaans intimate musical, *Fees*, (Festival) that incorporates the aesthetic features of the intimate musical.

Opsomming

Die megamusical het een van die mees gewilde *performance* vorme geword, met produksies soos *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986) en *The Lion King* (1997) wat vir jare winsgewend speel. In Suid-Afrika, waar produksies van megamusicals uiters gewild is, is die vorm self toenemend onvolhoubaar binne 'n ekonomiese raamwerk waarin kaartjiepryse en produksiekoste dikwels in stryd is. Hierdie dissertasie ondersoek 'n ander vorm van musiekteater – die intieme musical – as 'n meer volhoubare model vir musiekteaterskepping in Suid-Afrika. Die studie definieer die intieme musical binne sekere beperkte fisieke, *performative* en estetiese (visuele en ouditiewe) raamwerke en let op, onder andere, die gebruik van 'n beperkte akteur- en orkesgetal, verbeeldingryke aanbiedingstegnieke en gefokuste narratiewe kwaliteite as onderskeidende kenmerke. Die studie bepaal en omskryf die estetiese beginsels van beide die megamusical en die intieme musical en stel daarna voor dat die intieme musical 'n meer volhoubare model kan wees om verbeeldingryke produksies met 'n alternatiewe tematiese en estetiese omvang te skep. Die studie sluit af met die skepping van 'n nuwe Afrikaanse intieme musical, *Fees*, wat die verskeie estetiese eienskappe van die intieme musical inkorporeer.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Cohen and Rosenhaus (2006: 15) believe that "[m]usical drama seems to be as old as drama itself." They contend that

> "[w]e know that the plays of the ancient Greeks were not simply spoken, but were sung and danced as well. Chinese drama is at least eight hundred years old, and only in the last century has it included spoken plays. Throughout the Middle Ages, travelling performers presented combinations of theatre and music. Opera was invented in Florence shortly before 1600 by a group of writers who deliberately modelled their works on the Greek tragedies. And modern musical theatre, which is usually given a birth date of 1866, is still going strong after one hundred and fifty years" (Cohen & Rosenhaus, 2006: 15–16).

Even now, the musical as a form continues to develop and evolve from its beginnings with *The Black Cook* staged in 1866, through the golden age and on towards the grand contemporary spectacles, seeing many trends sprout from the main trunk of the form. As a broad category of entertainment that combines popular music, movement and dialogue, the musical has taken almost as many forms as there are musicals. This flexibility is a testament to its ability to be both created and experienced in a broad milieu of contexts while also encompassing almost limitless possibilities of content. It is this ability of the musical to adapt and transform that has driven me on both a personal and scholarly level to analyse and appreciate the musical theatre form.

One of the most prominent and popular forms of contemporary musical theatre is what Jessica Sternfeld defines as 'megamusicals.' These are described as extremely large-scale musicals such as *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1970), *Evita* (1978), *Cats* (1981), *Les Misérables* (1985), *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986), etc. With the exception of only a few scholars, the populist stigma attached to these megamusicals has prevented serious scholarly research within an academic domain. Sternfeld (2006: 5) comments that "[l]ike the critics who dislike megamusicals by virtue of their popularity, most musicologists and theatre scholars develop an arrogant, even disgusted tone when mentioning the megamusical, if they mention it at all."

It is little wonder that Joanne Gordon in her analysis on the state of musical theatre describes it as "escapist entertainment" (Gordon, 2009: 1). She continues that

> "in the early years of [the twentieth century], musical theatre was unsophisticated. The plot line was thin. There was little attempt to integrate song and dance, and a basic formula of delight and diversion, beautiful girls, slapstick comics, and romantic ballads prevailed. The simplistic moralism, the naïve optimism, the noble hero and simpering heroine were adopted, unaltered, from nineteenth-century melodrama. The commercial

success of these pieces encouraged their fossilisation into a predictable pattern of sensational extravaganzas" (Gordon, 2009: 1).

These 'sensational extravaganzas,' or megamusicals, are not the only musicals produced on Broadway, but they are so pervasive within the public sphere that they are now marketed and produced as pre-packaged entertainment products that have become international institutions. *The Phantom of the Opera*, for example, has as of 2011 "grossed over $4.8 billion. The box office revenues are higher than any film or stage play in history," (BroadwayWorld.com, 2011) making it the most financially successful entertainment event produced. The scale of these musicals clearly underlines their commercial appeal and their significance within popular culture.

There have been many musicals that have not subscribed to the mega-tradition of musical theatre. Stephen Sondheim, for example, is a musical theatre creator that carries much international acclaim and has enjoyed far more scholarly attention than his mega contemporary, Andrew Lloyd Webber. Mark Eden Horowitz, in his book *Sondheim on Music*, challenges Gordon's all-encompassing argument as to the populist escapist nature of the overarching musical theatre form. The musical, even as a form of popular theatre, can simultaneously be more than mere "theme park entertainment" (Adler, 2004: 91). Sondheim epitomised the idea that the musical can also be a 'legitimate' form of theatre that asks for serious scholarly attention. Horowitz elaborates that

> "[Sondheim's] work taught me about psychology, behaviour, history, language, ambivalence, and irony. It helped me understand the world, gave me a vocabulary to discuss it and provided music to accompany it and add emotional depth" (Horowitz, 2010: v).

Nonetheless, within the musical theatre, megamusicals are undoubtedly the predominant form; however, there have always been practitioners that have created work that falls outside of this popular form and have achieved a measure of popular success; Sondheim being among these. Megamusicals have been growing since the 1970s and continuously, in the margins, there has been a critical alternative development to musical theatre aesthetics – one that attempts to redefine the musical away from its immensely popular mega iteration.

On a personal level, I had frequently been interested in staging a musical myself, but I soon realised that producing a musical (mega or otherwise), would be financially problematic. Without resorting to the form of cabaret, a closely related form of musical theatre, I began exploring alternative modes of musical theatre that fall within the same framework of the

traditional book musical, albeit on a more affordable scale. Here I discovered the hitherto academically unexplored form of the intimate musical.

In a theatrical context that is almost entirely absorbed by megamusicals, the intimate musical has remained somewhat in the margins of the Broadway market. Recently, however, the Brian Yorkey and Tom Kitt six-person musical, *Next to Normal*, won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2010, focussing the critical lens on this peripheral form. *Next to Normal* is one of the first popular contemporary musicals that is expressly intimate in its subject matter: a domestic drama that focusses on a small family that struggles with a mother battling bipolar depression. *Next to Normal*, regardless of its apparent narrative scale, has undoubtedly been aesthetically influenced by megamusicals and the preceding tradition of large-scale entertainment forms.

Upon reflection, I realised that even *The Sound of Music* was a family drama musical in that it focusses on the conflict within the broken von Trapp family in the context of the Second World War. What distinguished *The Sound of Music* from *Next to Normal*, however, was that the one can at least partially be defined as an "intimate musical" (Galloway, 2010: 103) and the other cannot. Moreover, further distinctions become apparent when considering William Finn's family drama musical, *March of the Falsettos* (1981) which shares many of the aesthetic features of *Next to Normal*, yet seems decidedly more 'intimate.' The definitions surrounding the intimate musical – especially in a cultural framework dominated by the megamusical – is consequently especially nebulous and problematic to define. These classifications, nevertheless, are of particular importance when considering the economic realities of staging a new, previously unproduced musical in a restricted financial climate in a theatrical mode that has now become associated with a certain grandness of scale – a meganess.

This research proposes that in a post-megamusical theatrical context, the intimate musical might be a viable artistic alternative within a South African context of musical creation and performance. Within this overarching framework, the intimate musical with a particular focus on the family might contribute to its potential success, when considering the shifting expectations of the musical form.

1.1   Literature Review

1.1.1   The Broadway Musical Theatre Landscape

The musical theatre as a form has been analysed extensively in the past. Scholars such as Ethan Mordden (2013) whose various books on the matter have categorically outlined the historical

significance and impact of the musical theatre within a larger theatrical tradition, and further study into the general field would be redundant. Other scholars that have extensively researched the history of the musical theatre include Kenrick (2008), Jones (2004b), and Hischak (2011). Many sub-genres in the musical theatre have been identified and are widely studied, including dance musicals (Jones, 2004b: 70), concept musicals (Jones, 2004b: 71), rock musicals (Jones, 2004b: 72), sung-through musicals (Jones, 2004b: 81) or "Broadway Operas" (Frankel, 2000: 3). To a certain degree, even niche musical sub-genres have been examined, including the "documusical" (Frankel, 2000: xiii) – Flaherty and Ahrens' *Ragtime* being a notable example – and the "industrial musical" (Frankel, 2000: 75). Experimentations such as "Musical Ethnotheatre" (Saldaña, 2011: 20) have also emerged.

The history of the musical theatre is indeed very well documented, but for this study, two musical forms within this historical context must be highlighted: the megamusical and its opposing intimate musical. Both types usually fall under the banner of the book musical, although Jones (Jones, 2004a) problematizes the very notion of the traditional book musical format. Regardless, the megamusical has a somewhat more substantial body of literature surrounding it than the intimate musical. Jessica Sternfeld's *Megamusical* (2006) is a seminal text that systematically examines various musicals that function within the form, ultimately constructing a definition that she likens to the earlier operatic traditions of the nineteenth century Grand Opéra. She argues that

> "first, the plots of megamusicals are big in scope: they are epic, sweeping tales of romance, war, religion, redemption, life and death, or some combination of these or other lofty sentiments. […] Just as the plot of the megamusical is big, so is the music: a megamusical has little to no spoken dialogue, but is typically sung throughout […] and the orchestra plays constantly. […] If the plot is big and the music is big, it follows that the sets and staging are big as well. Impressive, complicated and expensive sets became one of the defining characteristics of the megamusical" (Sternfeld, 2006: 2).

She concludes that "the megamusical, then, is usually sung-through and features an epic, historically situated, but timeless plot staged on a fancy set" (Sternfeld, 2006: 3). In her book, she goes on to analyse the British musicals *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Cats*, *Les Misérables*, and *The Phantom of the Opera*[1] as staple examples of the megamusical genre.

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[1] Significantly, these are productions that were all produced by Cameron Macintosh, who has been described as the "central figure [who is] the driving force behind this late twentieth-century genre. […] His success at creating the theatrical experiences can be seen in many of the shows that virtually define the megamusical" (Everett & Prece, 2008: 250).

Everett and Prece's article, *The megamusical: the creation, internationalization and impact of a genre* (2008: 268), draws further contemporary parallels by highlighting musical productions such those produced by Disney Theatricals: *Beauty and the Beast* (1994), *Aida* (2000), *Mary Poppins* (a 2004 production that was co-produced by Cameron Macintosh) and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (that was staged in 1999 under the German title, *Der Glöckner von Notre Dame*). These productions, as international commercial institutions, have had such a far-reaching effect on how musicals are created and consumed that they have inexorably influenced not only the genre of musical theatre itself, but also audience expectations.

One can argue, therefore, that the megamusical has indeed been researched to some extent, even though writing on the genre is limited to but a few scholars. What is certainly clear is that the contemporary Broadway musical theatre landscape can now be separated into two overarching categories: megamusicals and non-megamusical full-scale musicals with aesthetics similar to the megamusical (as seen in the boom of recent film-to-stage musical extravaganzas that consciously mimic the megamusical aesthetic). The megmamusical's performative conventions have immeasurably influenced the aesthetics of the non-megamusical owing to its immense popularity; both in conception and execution. Within the non-megamusical tradition, the smallest musical format, the intimate musical, has inevitably had to respond to the influence of the megamusical aesthetic. By analysing this dialectic relationship, one can hope to define and outline the effect of the megamusical on intimate musical creation, as well as unpack the aesthetic effects that the megamusical has had on the wider musical theatre.

Melodie Galloway, one of the only published scholars that have addressed this particular form of musical theatre in her article published in *Studies in Musical Theatre*, admits that "the 'intimate musical' […] is a unique and heretofore unrecognised sub-genre of the musical form" (Galloway, 2010: 103). Of course, many scholars have briefly mentioned the existence of the intimate musical within the framework of wider studies. These references, however, are limited, and the genre is only mentioned in passing.[2] Tom Jones, the lyricist and librettist of *The Fantasticks* (1960), (2004b: 84) writes that "some [theatre makers] actually welcomed the opportunity to experiment with an alternative kind of theatre, a musical form which was not just Broadway shrunk but a new approach entirely." The fact that he suggests that it is not just

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[2] Here, notable examples are Jones (2004a), Engel & Kissel (2006) and Gordon (1992). Significantly, Gordon references Sondheim's musicals under the intimate genre even though they might not conform to the exact requirements of Galloway's specifications.

another version of a Broadway show that has been scaled down suggests its evident influence. He continues:

> "It is too early to know what will happen to these "mini-musicals" in the age of *Cats* and *Miss Saigon*, but I have reason to believe that there is a real hunger for an alternative form, for unamplified sound, and for more personal interchange between performer and spectator" (Jones, 2004b: 84).

It is significant to note that Jones queries how intimate musicals (or as he calls them, mini-musicals) will function within the framework of a widely pervasive megamusical tradition. The following question that arises is *how* these megamusicals have influenced the creation of the intimate musical. This issue becomes exceedingly complicated when considering that Jones' first foray into the intimate musical with *The Fantasticks* came before the popularisation of the megamusical form. I will return to this point in a moment, but first it will be helpful to examine what is meant by the term 'intimate' within the framework of musical theatre.

Everett and Prece (2008:257) briefly discuss the existence of the intimate musical. However, they categorise musicals such as *By Jeeves* (Webber and Ayckbourn's 1975 musical), *The Woman in White* (Webber, Zippel and Jones' 2004 musical) as intimate musicals. Furthermore, if only considering cast size and scale, musicals such as *Avenue Q* (2003), *Million Dollar Quartet* (2010), and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (1998) could be regarded as intimate musicals. This notion, however, is limiting, and it appears other parameters defining the intimate musical must come into play. Indeed, Galloway's argument that the intimate musical has not yet been fully researched still holds ground, for although it has been referenced to before, little scholarly attention has been paid to the specific features of the intimate musical. Parameters regarding form and content, and how these relate to the practical production features, are especially underresearched. Galloway's preliminary definition, however, remains a helpful point of departure:

> "[T]he intimate musical is characterised by a small cast; humanistic, transparent treatment of characters; a small orchestra or combo or piano; a small production space (usually of no more than 150 seats); minimal costuming; and correspondingly modest production costs. These parameters provide a guide for a definition of the sub-genre" (Galloway, 2010: 104).

Galloway's explanation is one that provides an excellent framework for study; however, additional research must be done to define the genre in further detail, especially in the context of a post-megamusical theatrical milieu. Without discounting physical production features, this study will attempt to posit that the intimate musical will be better defined beyond only physical

parameters. Indeed, other aspects such as the particulars of form and content are underdeveloped and require further inquiry. These research queries are especially important considering the post-megamusical context of grand emotional displays and technical stage wizardry.

My studies in 2012 and 2013 have suggested that drama that concerns itself with the construct of the nuclear family unit might provide an excellent foundation for an analysis of the intimate drama owing to the sociologically small scale of the subject matter, without limiting its emotional scope. I argued that the family unit is the most important sociological group. I derived this statement from a culmination of research that is summarised by Anderson and Guernsey (1985: vii), scholars in the field of family theory:

> "[e]very human being is in some way connected to another person or persons. This is a necessary social reality […] for being connected means being human, and being human means being part of a family."

Recalling Galloway's (2010:104) claim that the intimate musical should concern itself with a "humanistic, transparent treatment of characters," one can argue that perhaps intimate musicals that focus their thematic concerns on the conflict within of the nuclear family unit, can be regarded as a significant aspect of this under-researched sub-genre.

1.1.2   The South African Musical Theatre Landscape

As a South African practitioner, one cannot but note that analysing the American musical within the context of the Broadway theatre district is an exercise in international scholarship. However, the most significant practitioners of the musical theatre are British or American, meaning that scholarly debate on the form must fundamentally comprise of analysis from these regions. This does not mean that the research is unintended for a South African audience; indeed, for a South African practitioner, this research project will highlight the complexities of both international scholarship within the field and the practise of the form within a local fiscal climate. It would be muddling for this dissertation, however, to do an entire study on the state of the mega- and intimate musical in South Africa, but by acknowledging the scholarly distance between these districts, one can briefly highlight both the similarities and the differences that these theatrical contexts share.

Marli Katzke's (2014) thesis on the history of the musical theatre in South Africa provides a useful framework for the study. Her analysis includes reference to the South African megamusicals such as *Ons Vir Jou* (2008) which evidently appropriated and, in a sense,

mimicked the British and American megamusical form. She states that *Ons vir Jou* is the biggest Afrikaans musical in the history of South African theatre, (Katzke, 2014: 98) which one cannot help but notice clearly underlines its mega status. It remains, however, a South African appropriation and does not nearly meet the scale of the almost $70 million *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* that opened in the same year on Broadway. Nevertheless, its presence underlines the notion that the megamusical aesthetic pervades even in international markets that do not necessarily share the same economic prosperity as the commercial theatrical landscape of Broadway, New York.

On this point, Katzke (2014: 107) comments that even when an international megamusical is performed in South Africa, the creators must compete with the original international megamusicals that frequently have greater capital and resources at their disposal, potentially lessening the impact of their local counterparts. When one discusses the megamusical within a South African context, it is therefore already problematized by economic restraints that, in turn, affects its meganess. Reference, therefore, can be made to local megamusicals, but the South African economic climate makes such productions challenging, to say the least.

In response to this, South Africa developed a burgeoning non-megamusical aesthetic; here the musicals of Kramer and Petersen come into play. Many of these musicals are certainly intimate in their presentation and warrant discussion within the overall framework of the study. These musicals include the Apartheid-era musicals *District Six* (1987), *Fairlyland* (1991), *Poison* (1992) and *Crooners* (1992) and the post-apartheid musicals *Kat and the Kings* (1995), *Klop Klop* (1996), *Die Ballade van Koos Sas*, (2001) and *Ghoema* (2005). Of these, *Kat and the Kings* (1995) seem to be the most consciously intimate in its presentation:

> "It was a modest musical, which could be packed into the back of a van. The set consisted of a rostrum and piano, some pictures painted by the director and props made by one of the actors" (Kramer, 2012).

In South Africa, though, musicals may be intimate by necessity and not only by artistic aesthetic decision. From a South African practitioner's perspective, this financial necessity makes research within this field even more relevant. However, by focussing on the Broadway intimate aesthetic, analysis can commence on the virtues, possibilities and limitations of the form, disconnected from financial restrictions. In other words, analysis can include various

other factors and is not limited to discussing merely the finances of the production and how this influenced the production itself (although it can also include these).[3]

1.2   Research Question and Focus

Owing to the limited research within the intimate musical genre, the most efficient way to assess the intimate musical would be to place it against its opposite, the megamusical, and examine the dialectic relationship that arises through this comparison. The research question for this study can, therefore, be formulated in the following manner:

> Within the milieu of the influential contemporary American 'megamusical', how can the burgeoning form of the 'intimate musical' (and especially the sub-genre of the family drama intimate musical) be located, defined, analysed and created from the perspective of a South African practitioner?

This question will be addressed in three tiers. Firstly, a theoretical analysis of the megamusical must be done. This cannot be limited to study only the contemporary megamusicals, but also by examining the megamusical in relation to the history of large-scale performance forms in musical theatre. The second tier of the question relates to the intimate musical; therefore, an analysis of the intimate musical must also be done in relation to its large-scale and megamusical counterpart. By contextualising this research within a South African perspective, the final tier of the study will manifest in a practical exploration of the inquiry. A new musical that encapsulates the research question and demonstrates the aesthetic possibilities of the intimate form, will be created. This new musical will further explore the theoretical underpinnings, thereby becoming a "textual [representation] of research data" (Leavy, 2008: 143). In other words, an attempt will be made to construct an outline for an intimate musical that exemplifies the data of the study.

1.3   Research Design

The research design that will be utilised in this dissertation is that of "Research-led practice," as defined by Smith and Dean (2009: 7). They argue that "[r]esearch-led practice is a terminology which we use to complement practice-led research, and which suggests more clearly than practice-led research that scholarly research can lead to creative work." This research design (or method as part of arts-based research methodology) is ideal for research

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[3] Kramer and Pietersen's format, or 'style,' as it manifested throughout the years, falls aesthetically within the broad spectrum of small-scale performances, but without the crucial intimate aesthetic (as discussed in chapter six).

that can "feed into creative writing" (Smith & Dean, 2009: 8). This research method has been chosen to help make concrete the findings of the theoretical study by creating a post-megamusical intimate musical that solidifies and exemplifies the results of the study.

1.3.1 Research Model

Smith and Dean's Iterative Cyclic Web (2009: 19), as illustrated in Figure 1.1, is the research model that will be utilised for this study. Smith and Dean explain the research model thus:

> "The structure of the model combines a cycle and several sub-cycles (demonstrated by the larger circle and smaller ovoids) with a web (the criss-cross, branching lined across the circle) created by many points of entry and transition within the cycle. One intention of Figure 1.1 is to suggest how a creative or research process may start at any point on the large cycle illustrated and move, spider-like, to any other."
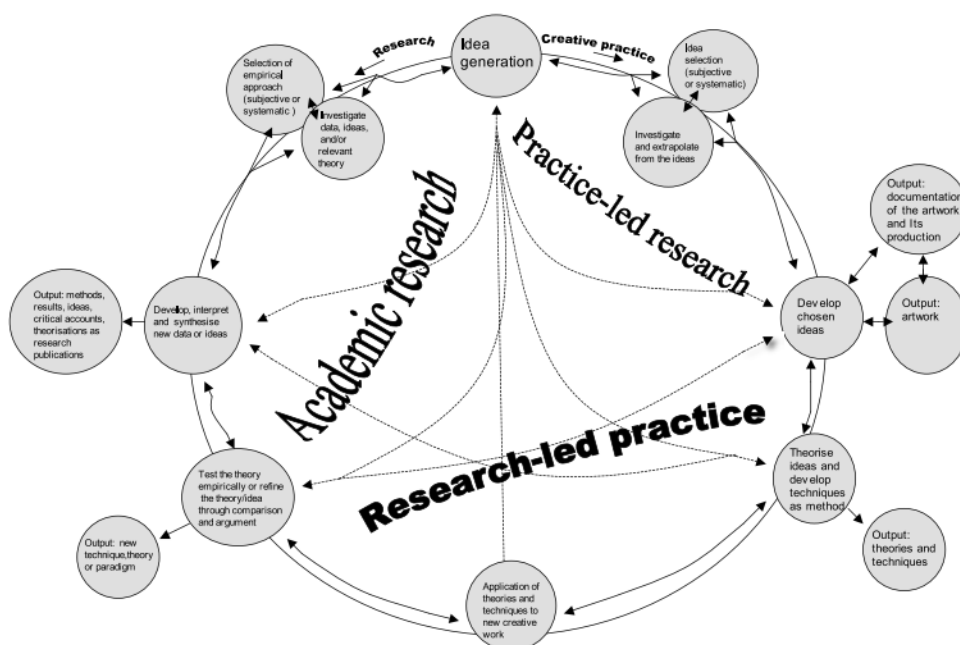
Figure 1.1

They add that "very important to the model, with regard to the sub-cycles, is the concept of iteration, which is fundamental to both creative and research processes" (Smith & Dean, 2009: 19). They explain that "to iterate a process is to repeat it several times (though probably with some variation) before proceeding, setting up a cycle: start-end-start." The specific customised format that this research will take (in the steps outlined by the Iterative Cyclic Web research model) is

1) Academic Research
   a. Idea generation

      b.   Selection of empirical data (subjective or systematic)

      c.   Investigate data, ideas and/or relevant theory

      d.   Develop, interpret and synthesise new data or ideas

          i.   Output: methods, results, ideas, critical accounts, theorisations as research publications

      e.   Test the theory empirically or refine the theory/ideas through comparison and argument

          i.   Output: new technique, theory or paradigm

  2) Research-lead practice

      a.   Application of theories and techniques to new creative work

In practice, this model allows academic research and practical exploration to directly and continually influence one another. While exploring particular aesthetics, therefore, exploration thereof can be done in praxis, and, upon analysis, these discoveries can affect the academic and theoretical research. By working cyclically, the research remains malleable and in flux. This approach is most appropriate to this particular method of research where the research and praxis are in continual dialogue.

1.4   Chapter Layout

1.4.2   Chapter 2: The Mega Musical Form: Large Scale Entertainment from 1800 – 1970

Before one can examine the intimate musical as a form, it is necessary first to understand the critical climate within which the form itself developed. The wider artistic framework, therefore, must be examined by unpacking the key components of the hegemonic mode of musical theatre. Within this introductory chapter, I will initially refer to these performance instances as "mega musicals"; thus, musicals that utilise large-scale visual and aural stimulus as a means supplanting narrative function. I will argue that this type of musical theatre developed an aesthetic that is still prevalent within the wider framework of contemporary musical theatre creation.

I will begin my analysis by investigating the Ziegfeld's *Follies* performances of the 1910s. I will unpack some of the salient features of the *Follies* and investigate the notion of critical concept of the 'aggregate tradition.' I will thereafter retrace the early history of superabundance by analysing the very first proto-musical, *The Black Crook* (1866) and develop the notion of

the aggregate tradition to what is referred to as 'superabundance.' I will conclude by noting other examples of superabundant musical performance forms and argue that within this critical tool lies the central aesthetic principles that underpin the megamusical.

1.4.3   Chapter 3: The Contemporary Megamusical: 1970 – Present

Owing to the centrality of the megamusical in contemporary musical theatre, there is a definite necessity to reread and reapply Sternfeld's *Megamusical* to additional examples as her text, by necessity, is limited in scope. Moreover, I will place further emphasis on the idea of the 'performance of scale' where the facts of its economic parameters form part of the performativity of the event. The conventions of the megamusical will be (re)outlined, and contextualised within this idea, borrowing the term the "aesthetic of monumentality" (Huebner, 2003: 298) to assess the current popularity and dominance of the form. For this section, Sternfeld's (2006) model of megamusical analysis will be transposed for application to various other productions. This entails

- a study of the theatrical and artistic context of the musical,

- the narration of the creative process involved in its conception,

- an analysis of its staging, including design, concept and production decisions (here, data sources include reviews, comments, post-production interviews and multimedia, when available),

- a discussion on relevant textual themes and motifs,

- an analysis of its music and lyrics as it relates to the previously discussed themes and motifs.

Beginning with what Sternfeld believes to be the first true megamusical, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1970), I will outline how technology influenced and forever altered the musical theatre itself. Advances such as amplification, computerised stage mechanics and rock-infused musical aesthetics permeated and changed the musical stage. I will develop this argument by exploring Disney's entrance into the musical theatre industry. I will examine the film-to-stage adaptations of two of their most popular musicals, *Beauty and the Beast* (1994) and Julie Taymor's staging of *The Lion King* (1997). Continuing on this trajectory, I will examine Taymor's subsequent foray into the megamusical, namely *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011).

Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark, the most expensive contemporary megamusical, according to Wollman and Sternfeld (2011), sparked significant interest in contemporary smaller musicals. In their article, they discuss both the history of the "troubled $70 million" (Wollman &

Sternfeld, 2011: 3) production – including its economic aspects and consequently place it in relation to the contemporary economic theatrical landscape on Broadway. This article will serve as a theoretical foundation for this subsection of the study. Further information on the production will be gleaned from *The Song of Spider-Man* (2013) wherein the bookwriter of the musical, Glen Berger, explicates the creative process and the various decisions that went into the production's enormous scale. Reviews and articles from the *New York Post* and *The New York Times* will also be included for analysis.

Additional data will be gleaned from volume 5, issue 1 of *Studies in Musical Theatre* (2010) which specifically discusses the practical (and financial) implications of the megamusical sub-genre. Readings of attendance data, reviews and Adler's (2004) seminal study of the economics of Broadway and the shaping of audience's taste, *Art and Commerce on the Great White Way*.

1.4.4   Chapter 4: The South African Musical Theatre Landscape

A study by Garrett Eisler (2011:133) discusses the movement towards an interest in smaller musicals wherein he argues that "[c]urrent economic conditions on Broadway have rendered many of the great musicals of the past prohibitively expensive to produce as originally envisioned." In South Africa, specifically, economic realities are an especially potent force against which practitioners attempt to create work. By contextualising the megamusical tradition in South Africa, I hope to argue why the intimate form is especially pertinent to the local theatrical economy.

I will examine the various ways in which South African practitioners attempt to circumvent the aforementioned economic restrictions. Through a discussion on the aesthetics and popularity of 'miniature musicals', or 'bonsai' musicals, I will attempt to pave the way towards the significance of finding alternative modes of musical creation.

1.4.5   Chapter 5: The Development of the Intimate Form (1919 – 1969)

After contextualising the need for intimate musicals in a local economy, I will revert to Broadway district and trace the history of the early intimate musicals in conjunction with its corresponding large-scale siblings. Looking at the 'accidental intimate musicals' before 1960, I will construct a narrative pertaining to the need for smaller performance forms. Through brief analysis and dissection of the various artistic impulses that drove the initial urge of intimacy in musical theatre, an attempt will be made to lay the groundwork for the critical developments of the 1960s.

I will analyse certain musicals by Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt, and argue that these are premiere examples of early intimate musicals. Through analysis, I will systematically outline the early aspects of the intimate musical aesthetic, looking at elements such as form, content, narrative and presentation.

1.4.6   Chapter 6: The Contemporary Intimate Musical (1970 – present)

In the subsequent chapter, the new sub-genre of musical – the post-megamusical intimate musical – will be isolated and examined within this historical context as both a reaction against the megamusical and a by-product thereof. My point of departure will be the research outline in the previous chapter, as well as entertainment lawyer Mark Breglio's statement in the *New York Times*:

> "It started with *'Cats'* - the British influence, the megamusical - and continued with *'Starlight,'* and *'Phantom*,' and perhaps *'Les Misérables.*' The public is demanding so much more in terms of production value, and giving them that kind of spectacle has added a whole new level of costs" (Rothstein, 1989).

This statement reiterates the point that the megamusical invariably shaped the expectations of what a musical must be. I will, therefore, continue to propose that an intimate musical must necessarily function within this context as it has shaped the way in which audience demands on Broadway have shifted certain aspects of intimate musical creation. I will explore the implications thereof on the contemporary post-megamusical intimate musical by also briefly aligning post- and pre-megamusical intimate musicals and its differing expectations. I will also outline the new parameters that these aesthetic principles had on the intimate musical as a whole, including how the megamusical prompted the creation of so-called 'fragmented' forms of musical theatre. I will highlight how this crucial development augmented the very nature of intimacy using as example *Company* (1970) and *March of the Falsettos* (1981).

Finally, a detailed literature analysis of a post-megamusical intimate musical that exemplify this new genre will be conducted. The most current example of which is the Brian Yorkey and Tom Kitt musical *Next to Normal* (2010). I will transpose Sternfeld's model of musical analysis to this musical and compare it to the circumstances around both the creation, performance and reception of *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark*.

The chapter will conclude with a complete explication as to a tentative long-form definition of the intimate musical, including not only production aspects but also encompassing features relating to content and form.

1.4.7 Chapter 7: The Creation of a New Intimate Musical

Following the examination and explication of the intimate musical, a new musical will be created that exemplifies these artistic and aesthetic preoccupation. I will attempt to propose that the most successful expression of this sub-genre is indeed the intimate musical that focusses on the nuclear family unit, keeping the assumption that an intimate musical must engage consciously with the megamusical form by either refuting its style, absorbing its style, or combining both aesthetics in some way. The results of my previous research, *Towards the Family's Salvation* (2014) will be utilised to construct a proposal for the family drama intimate musical as a viable method of producing a post-megamusical intimate musical within the South African context.

Referring to Smith and Dean's Iterative Cyclic Web (2009:19), this portion of the research will form part of section 2a, which is the "[a]pplication of theories and techniques to new creative work" (Smith & Dean, 2009: 20).

1.5 A Note on Musical Analysis

Owing to the historical and textual nature of this study, the attention given to the music aspects of the research will be limited. Of course, within this framework, as much attention will be granted to the *music* of a musical as is possible. However, the focus will reside mostly with the text (book and lyrics) of the musical. Owing to the integrated nature of the musical, analysis of selected musical aspects cannot be ignored. This results in a multidisciplinary research design, however, the focus of the research remains on the *dramatic impact* of the musicality of the text.

Jon Bell and Steven Chicurel's (2008) study provides a solid theoretical framework within which to assess certain musical aspects of the text wherein analyses of various musical songs will be utilised as a template for similar analyses within the scope of this study. Therefore, only when it becomes pertinently necessary to analyse a musical phrase, idea or theme wherein it might be helpful to highlight a character, situation, conflict or a dramatic idea, musical analysis will be included.

Chapter 2: Historicising and Contextualising the Megamusical

A report, written in 1799 (Charlton, 2003: 7) relating the danger of the then-upcoming genre of grand opera, warns:

> "On "*Scenic*" Plays [*pièces à decorations*]': Our theatres seem to compete in spending the most money on sets and costumes: if it continues, this abuse will hasten the decline of dramatic art still further […]. Heaven, hell, settings apt for all genres, costumes apt for all climates, blazing buildings, shipwrecks, people snatched into the air, tournaments, hand-to-hand combat, mounted combat, etc.: we have seen everything."

One cannot help but notice an exceedingly comparable aesthetic to such megamusicals as *Miss Saigon* (1989) with its descending helicopter or *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986) and the crashing chandelier. Even more contemporary megamusicals such the $70 million *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011) includes extravagant effects of stage flight, complete with forced-perspective skyscrapers that elaborately shift angle during the performance. Musical theatre critic, Clive Barnes, in a similarly dire warning to the caution above, proclaims that megamusicals "are not musicals. They have chandeliers, helicopters landing. As I said, and I was the first person to write it, you come out humming the scenery" (Sternfeld, 2006: 80).

That is not to say that this trait – the art of the display of grand spectacle – undermines the enjoyment or the artistic integrity of the large-scale performance forms such as the megamusical, as critics such as Barnes suggests. Moreover, spectacle, as an aspect of performance, has always been part of the popular musical theatre, from the elaborate scene changes in *The Black Crook* (1866) to the rock-and-roll aesthetics of *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971). Nevertheless, much of the derision aimed at the megamusical stems from critics' irritation that the megamusical is such a popular and commercial success despite its apparent lack of artistic significance within a wider musical theatre discourse. Critics of the megamusical categorise it as mass entertainment without consideration of the form's wider impact within both an artistic and social context, disapproving of its superabundant visual and aural aesthetics. Speaking of arguably the most commercially successful megamusical creator in the contemporary musical theatre, Frank Rich (1987) in *The New York Times* maintained that

> "[s]uccessful as Mr. Lloyd Webber is, his work can't yet be compared seriously with Broadway's best of any period. He's primarily a canny, melodic pastiche artist, and his music has declined sharply since he lost the lyrics of his original collaborator Tim Rice (who parted ways after *Evita*) and T. S. Eliot (the unwitting lyricist of *Cats*)."

He continues to grudgingly admit that Andrew Lloyd Webber "has cornered the international marketplace where the middle-of-the-road majority resides between those two camps" (Rich, 1987), suggesting a distinct disdain for the composer's appeal which hinges on popularity instead of a nobler artistic integrity.

Described by many critical journalists as 'theme park musicals,' the megamusical is admittedly a gargantuan entertainment machine that, similarly to the previously mentioned Grand Opéra, utilises spectacle (visual and aural) as its focal performative mode. The helicopter and chandelier have become symbols of grotesque capitalism within the musical theatre, allegedly depriving the musical of its artistic integrity. The underlying insinuation is that the musical theatre has been adversely influenced by audience's seemingly sudden taste for grandiosity, which has had a marked effect on ticket prices and the potential audiences to which these musicals cater. Indeed, as Adler (2004: 28) contends in *Art and Commerce on the Great White Way*,

> "Broadway can survive economically on a diet of mostly populist fare, whereas its chances for financial solvency are minimal if it were to present only artistically challenging but inaccessible shows. As William Goldman pointed out, there is room for only one or two snob hits a year. But Broadway's economic survival would be a Pyrrhic victory of sorts if artistic invention is slowly leached out in an attempt to make the Great White Way a New York outpost of the theme parking of America. […] *The dismaying subtext is that if the production values are unimpeachable, content matters little*." [Emphasis mine.]

Only recently have academics attempted to discuss this unique quandary in musical theatre, most notably Jessica Sternfeld (2006). The lack of academic research done on this form, in comparison to more 'proper' forms such as the book-driven musicals of the golden age, belies the concealed (perhaps unintentional) disparagement of the form itself. Despite its status, the megamusical *is* the most popular form of musical theatre and, owing to its popularity, has pervaded and affected the way in which audiences (and critics) view musicals that, at first glance, do not subscribe to the mega tradition. The aesthetics of the megamusical, therefore, has affected contemporary musical aesthetics in such prominent ways that its pervasive nature nonetheless influences many musicals that do not ostensibly subscribe to the traditional megamusical aesthetics. Even (and especially) the intimate musical, presumably the opposite of the megamusical, has been affected in both content and the presentation of the content.

By highlighting the megamusical's history and ubiquity, one can sketch a nuanced view of its effects on its smaller theatrical siblings. In other words, owing to its pervasive nature, any research on the intimate musical would be redundant without appreciating the megamusical

which has, indeed, become the artistic and ideological frame within which many other musical forms must function, wittingly or not.

With this chapter, therefore, my hope is to briefly navigate through the musical's initial history of 'meganess', arguing that the form has been central to the construction of musical theatre for longer than contemporary critics, such as Clive Barnes, suggest. I wish to propose that embedded in the form of the musical is an almost inescapable notion of spectacle-driven entertainment that any practitioner of the intimate musical must be aware of; if only to understand the extent of the historical background of musical spectacle. I will focus on the moments of the inception of the musical form – the various elements that influenced its initial creation – to hopefully illuminate that the beginnings of the notion of 'mega' in megamusical lie firmly in the roots of musical theatre itself.

I will then turn my attention toward the contemporary megamusical and argue that while there are shared aesthetics (a predilection for largeness, for example), there are essential differences to the post-1970s megamusical; differences that are firmly rooted in an increasingly mediatised popular culture. I will argue that technological advancements have inherently transformed the manner in which musicals are conceived and executed. I will then return to and explore Siropoulos's (2011: 13) hypothesis that the megamusical is a postdramatic form (driven by technological and economic impulses) to outline how the postdramatic aesthetic of monumentality is presented in the contemporary musical wherein there has been a "historical shift out of a textual culture and into a mediatized image and sound culture" (Lehmann, 2006: 1). I will utilise a combination of theatre reviews, critical analyses of the musicals and extracts from the productions themselves to navigate the history and development of this pervasive form.

2.1   Before the word Megamusical: The Early Mega Musical(s)

Lloyd Webber and his contemporaries have, since the 1970s, wittingly or not, driven the renaissance of large-scale spectacle-driven musicals. These musicals, perhaps less concerned with the nuance of plot or content, instead present the audience with mechanical and technical effects that give these musicals their distinct rock-concert feel. They are accompanied by publicity campaigns that market the musicals "like any other product, complete with logos, theme songs and advertisements saturating newspapers, radio and television" (Sternfeld, 2006: 3).

The publicity campaigns that surround and precede the megamusical has definitive effects on the perceived *productisation* of both the event and the performance itself; an effect that invited derision from many critics of the musical. The megamusical *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986), for example, earned more than $16 million in pre-sales (Sternfeld, 2006: 233), breaking the record held previously by another megamusical, *Les Misérables* (1985), by more than $4 million. This is the consequence of enormous publicity campaigns headed by its producer, Cameron Mackintosh. Sternfeld (2006: 233) adds that

> "*Phantom* landed on the covers of *Time* and *New York* and gained a great deal of television time. The show broke first-day ticket sales records, and by opening night not a seat was available for almost a year."

The advertising that accompanied the production was not simply selling the production, but also the *idea* of the production itself; one attends not only the production of *Phantom of the Opera*, but the experience is framed with the aura of visiting an attraction of cultural significance, such as a theme park or museum. After attending the event, the attendee is encouraged to purchase additional memorabilia, which includes programs, cast recordings, coffee table books, poster prints, and sheet music.

This notion of selling a musical as both a product and a cultural institution has, contrary to what many scholars claim, reared itself before. Always infused with the musical are the trappings of capitalist economy – ticket sales correspond directly to the apparent success of the production, colloquially termed a "hit" – but the public's increased appetite for spectacle has placed enormous strain on the price and sustainability of the sale of the production. By increasing the cost and size of the production, the ticket costs increase accordingly. Roy Somlyo, president of the American Theatre Wing, adds that "it's regrettably become a special event to go to the theatre […]. People want to go to the hit show, or the show that appears to be a hit because it is so expensive" (Adler, 2004: 11). In many ways, the megamusical exemplifies what Pountney (2003: 135) has branded "spectacles of conspicuous consumption."

The shock that critics display towards the grandiosity of both the performance and its surrounding cultural and economic context seems surprising when considering that the seeds of the contemporary musical, the *Ziegfeld Follies*, were engineered as a grandiose event. Regarding the early development of the *Ziegfeld Follies*, Anna Held, wife to Florenz Ziegfeld,

> "[…] knew what drew audiences and she knew the sort of dazzling, mindless spectacle at which her husband excelled. So she suggested an American version of Paris's popular Folies-Bergere: part girlie show, part fashion show, with some comedy thrown in" (Golden, 2000: 111).

The mega musical (written as two words – not as a formalised product, but as an aesthetic idea), therefore, can be found from the very outset of musical theatre, even if not expressly registered as such by contemporary critics of the megamusical.

That said, there are certain crucial aesthetic differences between the large-scale spectacles of the early 20th century and the current manifestation of the megamusical. These differences reside in the cultural, economic and technological context within which contemporary megamusicals are created. Indeed, a combination of technological advancement in the theatre, along with an increasing capitalist sense of conspicuous consumption might illuminate why these musicals appeared and continued to appear with greater scale and increasingly rapid succession, and became "the dominant force on Broadway today" (Sternfeld, 2006: 1).

2.1.1   Beginnings from Barnum and Ziegfeld and the origin of *superabundance*

On initial inspection, the current manifestation of the megamusical seems almost inevitable. In fact, examining the complex historical web of the American musical, there has always centrally been the notion of large-scale spectacle. As Rubin (1993: 14) notes,

> "[t]he spectacle-orientated mode of the musical (and, on a broader level, the entire musical genre) owes its genesis not only to the evolution of early musical forms such as ballad opera and comic opera but also to more general trends in nineteenth-century American popular culture."

Rubin subsequently attempts to construct linkage between these "trends" and label them not only within a distinct aesthetic category but also to historicise it by casting it within a particular discourse (or tradition) in the timeline of American entertainment. He utilises the umbrella term of the "aggregate tradition" (Rubin, 1993: 16) that, he argues, has certain distant aesthetic features that would evolve towards a predilection of spectacle-orientated entertainment. The aggregate tradition, Rubin theorises, is an almost inevitable cultural manifestation of capitalist economic structures. On a wider social scale, the theory rests on the notion that to sell as many iterations of a single product, the product itself must 'aggregate' as many functions and features so as, among other purposes, to appeal to as wide an audience as possible.

Rubin's phraseology of the "aggregate tradition" can consequently be defined as a primordial melting pot of various elements (performative or otherwise) that are systematically combined to create a cumulative effect; an effect that, in the case of the mega musical, is engineered to induce a sense of awe at the sheer number of aggregated ingredients. The entertainment value of the event is consequently tied directly to the quantity of entertainments that are engineered

into a single event. These assortments make the event both more alluring as a commercial entity and in effect, potentially more profitable; the economy of the event – of the aggregate entertainment form, or aggregate tradition – is therefore firmly capitalist in its foundation.

The economy of the tradition of aggregation, fundamentally, is centred on the promotion of the abundance of various (sometimes unrelated) elements; amassing seemingly disparate elements into a marketable and potentially profitable whole. [4] Concealed within this theory is the additional notion of 'abundance' which is particularly relevant to the mega musical theatre; the proposition of which is that to aggregate various elements, the *quantity* of elements that can be aggregated becomes a central marketable point.

The most obvious iteration of the aggregate tradition as relevant to the musical, are to be found in the *Ziegfeld Follies* that, as many critics argue, are the aesthetic forerunner to the contemporary musical theatre. As Ethan Mordden (1983: 34) notes, Ziegfeld "had a style, no question. And its elements influenced the repertory so fully that reverberations are still being felt." Ziegfeld's high regard for spectacle as a performative mode (and its accompanying success) meant that much of his aesthetics of grandiosity remained intact in later forms of musical theatre (and even musical movies, as one can clearly see the Ziegfeld aesthetic in Bugsy Berkeley's choreographic extravaganzas). Ziegfeld held reportedly no regard for either the music or the dramatic arc of his productions. Indeed, "[t]o Ziegfeld the musical was staging, decor, and performers, whether comic opera, musical comedy, or revue" (Mordden, 1983: 36).

Ziegfeld's *Follies* have been documented to have been spectacles of such gargantuan proportions that, by contemporary economic standards, they would be considered 'mega' without hesitation. As Reublin and Beil (2004) illustrate, "the first *Follies* cost $13,000 to stage. By 1919 the extravagant Ziegfeld's efforts to provide dazzling sets and shows had pushed the cost to well over $100,000 plus weekly salaries [sic]." Ziegfeld's *Follies* were culturally so pervasive that, according to Ommen van der Merwe (2009: 39), he positioned himself unyieldingly as a "Broadway brand;" one wherein his name became synonymous with enormous performances – a trait he shares with contemporary producer, Cameron Macintosh. Ommen van der Merwe comments that "[i]t was the mode of performance that Ziegfeld marketed;" a mode that "prioritised style over content or structure." The performance of scale,

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[4] The musical theatre as a form has always contained vestiges of this aggregation – combining various performative elements in a singular entertainment event and through integration of the elements themselves. Mid-20th century critics have alluded to the art of integrated musical theatre that, in some way, conceals its aggregate roots by seamlessly integrating the various performance modes – visual, musical, textual, and so forth.

however, when ostensibly enhanced or upgraded upon, only grows ever larger in its aesthetic ideals. Reublin and Beil (2004) remark that

> "[a]s Ziegfeld continued to expand the show and each year tried to outdo the last, the shows became more and more grandiose and Ziegfeld's extravagance for lavish sets and production in the most expansive fashion became legendary."

In an anecdote that illustrates Ziegfeld's disregard for cost, Ziegfeld paid an actress $650 and dressed her in a gown that cost more than $1,500 "just to walk across the stage in a single scene" (Reublin & Beil, 2004). In another case he once ordered a stage set for $25,000 "and once it was finished, he discarded it for being too garish" (Reublin & Beil, 2004). The expenses at which these extravaganzas were produced, was enormous. Remarkably, critics at the time held high regard for Ziegfeld's *Follies* in stark contrast to the musicals of similar proportions that are produced by Cameron Mackintosh today – the perceived pioneer of the contemporary megamusical.

This is illustrated by one of the most eccentric *Follies*, titled *The Follies of 1921*, which opened June 21 of that year at The Globe Theatre. This production, by many accounts, was the "most lavish edition yet, it cost more than $270,000 to produce" (Kenrick, n.d.). The *New York Times* review proclaims that "Mr Ziegfeld [is] as a producer of lavish revue." The nameless reviewer elaborates on the bounteous content of the performance:

> "Mr. Ziegfeld has managed to crowd nearly everything that makes for popular revue – riots of colour in settings and costumes, luxurious silks and satins, the best-looking chorus of this or any other year, some remarkable dancing, a dash of fair-to-middling singing, considerable comedy and an undefinable something that must simply be set down as tone" ("'Follies Of 1921' Best of Them All", 1921: 18).

The abundance of entertainment, coupled with the grandiosity of the performance, prompts one to draw further comparisons to Mackintosh, who garnered fame by producing work of similar aesthetic proportions. Both producers utilised this particular mode of aggregation to display the abundance of their events. As critic John Lahr comments (Kantor, 2004), "Ziegfeld made a myth of the American extravaganza. It was [an] abundance of talent, [an] abundance of design. […] Everything was absolutely the best that money could buy. And that's what he sold."

However, even Ziegfeld himself, as an artistic precursor to Macintosh, was influenced by contemporary trends in the wider popular cultural landscape which created a precedent for this type of entertainment. Rubin (1993: 14) proposes that it can be traced to the entertainment sites managed by P. T. Barnum – "a key figure in the history of American popular culture." There

is of course not necessarily evidence that Barnum directly influenced Ziegfeld as a theatre producer, but there seems to be a distinct shared aesthetic that might be tied to the popular culture of the time.

Rubin (1993: 14) notes that Barnum, "a key figure in the history of American popular culture [was] [o]ne of the pioneers in the evolution of nineteenth-century aggregate forms." In 1841, Barnum acquired the Scudder's American Museum in New York. At the time, it was a collection of natural history exhibits, scientific displays, and assorted curiosities. He subsequently renamed it Barnum's American Museum, conglomerating it under his name, while converting it into a tremendously popular attraction by adding to the existing catalogue diverse elements of the "freak show, the circus, and the variety show" (Barnum, 1927: 183). Its physical location is of some historical significance within the musical theatre; its proximity to New York's theatrical division placed its values of aggregation firmly within the consciousness of the practitioners (including Ziegfeld) of the day.

For this reason, Barnum's American Museum can be seen as an earlier example of an aggregate entertainment form within the region. Barnum himself proudly appropriated this particular view of his entertainment centre and proclaimed this to be part of the strength of the entertainment itself. It was a place where heterogeneity ruled, where as much diversity as possible was included under one roof. Consequently, Barnum would not curate his Museum to only include select exhibitions centred a unified idea or theme, but "operated on the principle of simply overwhelming his customers by including everything" (Rubin, 1993: 14).

In addition to the exhibits themselves, the museum also included a theatre, "which presented continuous performances of variety acts (singers, acrobats, animal acts, and so forth.), popular plays, and melodramas" (Rubin, 1993: 15). In sum, a patron of Barnum's American Museum could expect to receive an astonishingly plenteous and varied range of entertainment for the single admission price of 25 cents. In his autobiography, Barnum (1927: 195) reflexively notes some of the bounty offered to his customers:

> "The transient attractions of the Museum were constantly diversified, and educated dogs, industrious fleas, automatons, jugglers, ventriloquists, living statuary, tableaux, gipsies, albinos, fat boys, giants, dwarfs, rope-dancers, live "Yankees", pantomime, instrumental music, singing and dancing in great variety, dioramas, panoramas, models of Niagra, Dublin, Paris, and Jerusalem; Hannington's dioramas of the Creation, the Deluge, Fairy Grotto, Storm at Sea; the first English Punch and Judy in this country, Italian fantoccini, mechanical figures, fancy glass-blowing, knitting machines and other triumphs of the mechanical arts; dissolving views, American Indians, who enacted their

warlike and religious ceremonies on the stage – these, among others, were all exceedingly successful."

After his Museum had burned down between 1865 and 1868, he became associated with the circus and transformed the idea of circus performance from its previous mode. Previously, the circus had essentially comprised of highly specialised single performances displaying their acts in succession to each other, "much like in a variety show" (Rubin, 1993: 15). Rubin then observes that Barnum subsequently turned the circus toward "spectacle, extravagance, and opulence […] with the idea of presenting the audience with a *superabundance*, much more than could possibly be absorbed by any single spectator."

It is this concept of superabundance which links Barnum to the large-scale American entertainment forms that would follow – from Ziegfeld's *Follies* up to the contemporary megamusical. The notion of superabundance is the result of the aggregate tradition taken to its aesthetic extremes. Consequently, within the American popular culture, an audience's appreciation of the artefact itself is directly linked to both its uniqueness *and* to the amount thereof conglomerated in a single space or event. In fact, probing Barnum's biography, we can draw many parallels between his initial vision and business prowess that seem to drive much contemporary mega musical theatre (and their producers). Barnum writes of his Museum:

> "[n]o one could go through the halls, as they were when they came under my proprietorship, and see one-half there was worth seeing in a single day; and then, as I always justly boasted afterwards, no one could visit my Museum and go away without feeling that he had received the full worth of his money […]
>
> From the first, it was my study to give my patrons a superfluity of novelties, and for this I make no special claim to generosity, for it was strictly a business transaction. To send away my visitors more than doubly satisfied, was to induce them to come again and to bring their friends. I meant to make people talk about my Museum; to exclaim over its wonders" (Barnum, 1927: 197–198).

Simultaneously, the aggregate culture of superabundance found footing in another form of popular entertainment that many scholars hold as a central precursor to the musical form: the minstrel show, which proved extensively popular between 1840 and 1880. Mordden (2013: 10) characterised the minstrel shows of this era as "variety shows, made of songs, dances, and jokes united by subject matter – black life and love in the Southland – and performed not only by whites but (until the 1870s) by men only."

Consisting initially of only three or four performers – "the central emcee (known as the Interlocutor) and the two disruptive end men (known as Tambo and Bones)" (Rubin, 1993: 16) – the form became increasingly grander as it was influenced by practitioners who wished to

expand (and enlarge) the form. This stems from the surrounding cultural shift to more spectacle-driven entertainment forms to match the widespread "aesthetic of monumentality" (Huebner, 2003: 298). This seems to reflect the impulse for creating ostentatious and spectacular entertainments during this era, which may be linked to the same business impulse that drove Barnum's successful enterprise. Mordden (2013: 10–11) explains that it was only after 1843, in a performance billed as *The Virginia Minstrels* that

> "[t]he quartet expanded, and the 'burnt cork' makeup and outlandish costuming of colourful 'finery' or tailcoats with shirt collars hitting the ears became essential. From a single act, the minstrel grew to three. The First part, as it was called, remained the key event: a semi-circle of men backing up, at centre stage, the Interlocutor and, at the sides, the two end-men."

The first act was usually followed by "the olio (a series of variety acts) and the afterpiece (a one-act skit, usually a type of parody or burlesque common to the theatrical practice of the period)" (Rubin, 1993: 16). The minstrel shows, in a sense, defined spectacle as something that may, indeed, be large-scale, but may also include anything that sets itself apart from the dominant narrative flow and calls attention to itself as an object of display.

Under this consideration, the minstrel show seems very much in the aggregate vein: a conglomeration of diverse parts in which "each act was presented as a self-contained unit designed to stop the show" (Toll, 1977: 86). Although initially a rather intimate affair, the minstrel show would eventually evolve into a 'mega' iteration of itself. As Mordden (2013: 12) explains, the minstrel show was an "entertainment machine" and

> "as time went on, rival companies outdid one another, particularly in size. John H. Haverly, the manager who dominated the minstrel scene in the 1880s with over a dozen different troupes touring the nation, introduced the monster minstrel show that first disseminated ragtime."

Gerald Bordman (2001: 12) draws parallels between the minstrel show and contemporary musical theatre. He explains that

> "[t]he show was held together by an external framework – what today's jargon would call a format – rather than by any internal cohesion or organically dictated form. Its devil-may-care indifference to even the vaguest dramatic unities helped establish a not altogether healthy slapdash tradition in the American Musical Theatre."[5]

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[5] Of course, there were other theatrical aggregate forms, including the medicine show (a small-scale vaudeville performance), the Wild West show (combining elements of the western, the circus, and vaudeville, and most famously represented by Buffalo Bill Cody's *Wild West Show*), the Tom Show (in which touring companies used the story of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as an elastic format allowing for the casual inclusion of novelty, specialty, and song-and-dance acts), and burlesque (which aggregated music, dance, comedy and display of the female body).

Thus, there certainly was an aggregate underpinning, but what the seed lacked were two essential elements: the combination of narrative and visual spectacle which, according to Rubin (1993:16), "were supplied by the seminal 1866 show *The Black Crook*." Within *The Black Crook*, its narrative structure moved the medium closer to the contemporary musical and the notion of *spectacle* aggregated with musical entertainment becomes increasingly apparent. I will examine *The Black Crook* in greater detail in the following section how, even from its beginnings, the musical was interlocked with an almost amatory display of spectacle.

2.1.2   Superabundance, *The Black Crook* (1866) and Spectacle Forms

Several key elements of the musical – "music, comedy, song-and-dance, and vernacular music and performance styles" (Rubin, 1993: 19) – were already inherent in such aggregate forms as the minstrel show and vaudeville. Of the remaining elements contributing to the evolution of the musical, the most crucial were *narrative* and *spectacle*. Both elements were supplied abundantly – even over-abundantly – by the 1866 production of *The Black Crook*.

The production was staged at the 3,200-seat Niblo's Garden which, very much in the vein of P. T. Barnum's attractions, "wasn't merely a theatre but an entertainment park of mid-19th-century fancies" (Young & Meyers, 2007). They continue by asserting that its founder,

> "William Niblo, an upper-class P. T. Barnum of sorts, opened his version of a showy Las Vegas hotel in 1828, with elaborate gardens, gaslight illumination shows, vivid dioramas, travelling circuses, firework displays, and plenty of open saloons to keep his patrons happy. A theatre was included in this complex, for many years one of the most popular amusements in the city" (Young & Meyers, 2007).

The origins of *The Black Crook* are such a fundamental part of musical theatre history that at least two musicals have been created that chronicle its creation. The first was *The Girl in the Pink Tights* which opened in 1954 at the Mark Hellinger Theatre (which would later be the home of *Jesus Christ Superstar* [1971]) and is written for an astonishing 115 performers and *As the Curtain Rises* (2011). As important as *The Black Crook* is, there is an irony to how the colossal production came into being. *The Black Crook* was an incidental occurrence as a visiting troupe of over one hundred ballet dancers from France had no performance venue when the Academy of Music burned down in 1866. The producers of the ballet, Henry Jarret and Harry Palmer, arranged with William Wheatley, the manager of Niblo's Garden, to "integrate both the ballet and the spectacular stage machinery" they had shipped from Europe into the Faustian melodrama by Charles M. Barras that he was about to produce (Reside, Cullman &

Cullman, 2011). The resulting hybrid, *The Black Crook*, became what many scholars believe to be the primordial ingredient of the contemporary book musical.

With music by Thomas Baker, *The Black Crook* is frequently cited as the first real precursor to the twentieth-century musical and, I believe, the superabundant seed of the megamusical. A combination of many of the forms already discussed, the five-and-a-half-hour extravaganza included elements of melodrama and fantasy (inspired in part by Carl Maria von Weber's opera *Der Freischütz* and Goethe's *Faust*), ballet (performed by the visiting French ballet dancers), enormous scenery and costumes, and transformation scenes made possible by sophisticated stage machinery. The superabundant aesthetic of the production was perfectly illuminated in Joseph Whitton's history of the play. Whitton, the financial manager of the production (1897: 10), writes that when he first read the play, he "saw what Wheatley had already seen, that here was the very piece to fit the Ballet – a clothesline, as it were, on which to hang the pretty dresses, besides affording abundant opportunities for scenic display."

The Black Crook could be considered 'mega' by most economic standards. The total cost of the production ran a reported $25 400 that, among other productions costs, were geared towards remodelling the stage of Niblo's Garden to accommodate the imported mechanical scenery. According to reports, "every board moved in grooves, and could be taken up, pushed down, or slid away" (Smith & Litton, 2013: 8). Any part of the stage, in other words, could be removed altogether. Trap doors could be introduced at any place on the stage. The cellar below the stage was expanded down vertically so that entire scenes could be sunk out of sight by the use of machinery.

The production was so expensive that, in many ways, its costs mirror that of a contemporary megamusical (as discussed in the following chapter). Smith and Litton (2013: 8) illustrate the enormous costs of the production:

> "Properties, scenery, costumes and machinery Wheatly purchased in London, for a total of $3 000. […] The newspapers estimated the aggregate production cost as sums ranging from $35 000 to $55 000. Inasmuch as this was the P. T. Barnum-era of grandiose overstatement, the $35 000 estimate is certainly closer to the fact, since even this was a far larger amount than had been spent on any previous theatrical production."

Even the costuming for the ballet dancers was an expensive undertaking. Whitton (1897: 6) writes that the costumes were made in Paris "and with no regard to cost. The most expensive satins and silks were used, provided the needed effect and gorgeousness could not be obtained without them." They were so particular that "[n]o brummagem, no cheap sheen of paper-

muslin, so long relied upon by the old-time economic manager to cheat the eyes of his patron [was allowed]." In addition, Lewis (2003: 198) adds that "[t]hey purchased three hundred of the most expensive costumes from French designers and shipped one hundred and ten tonnes of the most elaborate stage machinery from London technicians." This shipment alone cost about $500 (Smith and Litton 1987:8).

The Faustian narrative of the production would probably not have been the central reason an audience would have attended. The story centres around the aged and crook-backed magician Hertzog who makes a pact with the devil through the demon Zamiel. The pact maintains that Hertzog will gain a year of life for every soul he helps harvest for the demon. Hertzog attempts to entrap the virtuous and innocent artist Rudolphe, but a fairy queen warns the young painter and transports him to a magical land where he weds her beautiful daughter. As Whitton (1897: 10) wrote in his memoir, "there was no originality in the plot – if it had a plot at all – being a medley made up of the Naiad Queen, Undine, Lurline, and two or three other spectacular dramas."

Regardless of its originality and dramaturgical skill, the book of *The Black Crook* allowed ample room for spectacle and balletic display. According to Smith and Litton (2013: 9) "[n]early everyone felt that the first act contained too much-alleged drama and too little else." Of course, even the first act ends with an enormous stage effect when Herzog signs his soul over to the demon Zamiel:

> "(MUSIC. THUNDER & LIGHTNING. SHEETED SPECTRES rises through trap at back and appear at L&R from behind rocks. SKULDAWELPP reappears LH3, demons and skeletons appear from R & L, all pointing at Hertzog who takes the pen and dips it in the horn. The pen ignites and flames blue. He writes in the book, during which the raven croaks flaps its wings, etc. Serpents writhe and demoniacal laughter is heard outside and above. After he has signed ZAMIEL waves his sceptre, gong sounds and REDGLARE descends with book, etc., amid red fire.
>
> […]
>
> MUSIC. THUNDER & LIGHTNING and all the action as before. Red fire from behind altar and at the wings. REDGLARE REAPPEARS RH2, pointing to Herzog. Winged serpents appear above and firey dragon enters LH2." [sic.]

With the "Grand Ballet of the Gems" at the opening of the second act, however, the excitement began. Later in the act, "hurricanes of gauze" blew through the Harz Mountains, and "cascading girls poured down the wild glens" (Smith & Litton, 2013: 9). At the end of the act, in an eerie locale evidently suggested by the Wolf's Glen in *Der Freischutz*, an elaborate ritual of incantation came to a climax in the spectacular *pas de demons*. The transformation scene at the

close of the play would have been one of the most breathtaking sequences. "One by one, curtains of mist ascend and drift away," wrote a nameless reporter. "Silver couches, on which the fairies loll in negligent grace, ascend and descend amid a silver rain. From the clouds drop gilded chariots and the white forms of angels. It is a very beautiful pageant" (Smith & Litton, 2013: 9).

As the run of *The Black Crook* progressed, new features were added to the production, heightening and adding to the superabundance of the event. Audiences in 1867 saw a "Baby Ballet," in which more than a hundred children, ranging in height from twenty-five to forty-five inches, executed military marches, led by the five-year-old nephew of a member of the Revel family. In September, a new ballroom scene was introduced, with a grand carnival and masquerade.

In its first engagement, *The Black Crook* achieved a run of 474 performances in sixteen months and grossed more than a million dollars. Such was the popularity of this musical that *The Black Crook* was revived in New York eight times in the nineteenth century – in 1868, 1871, 1873, 1879, 1881, 1884, 1889, and 1892.

Few commentators or scholars have ever attributed the show's popularity to Barras's drama. In fact, the *New York Tribune* review of the opening performance commented, "The scenery is magnificent; the ballet is beautiful; the drama is – rubbish" (Hughes 1951:199). Indeed, when another producer mounted an unlicensed imitation of the play (called *The Black Rook*) in 1867, a California circuit court judge dismissed any similarities or differences in the text of the two versions as irrelevant, positing that "[a] play like this has no value except as it is appreciated by the theatre-going public. It cannot be read – it is a mere spectacle, and must be seen to be appreciated" (Reside *et al.*, 2011). Whitton (1897:32), put it more succinctly when he concluded his memoir by noting, "I have said nothing of the literary merits of the Crook, for the best of reasons – it had none." Nonetheless, Whitton (1897:32) crucially goes on to write that

> "[e]legant writing, with its daintily picked words and smooth-flowing sentences, is all well enough in its place; but that place is not in the drama of this prosy, money-grabbing age. The playgoer doesn't relish it. What he wants is something to please his eye and tickle his ear — something to strangle his cares and cut the throat of his troubles — something to make him laugh and forget he has a note to pay to-morrow, with no money to meet it. This is what he is after, and shrewd managers will show their shrewdness by accommodating him."

The Black Crook also exemplifies the evolving musical's intersection with a general trend affecting nineteenth-century stagecraft: "the prominence of pictorial spectacle in theatrical performance" (Rubin 1993:21). Jennings (*in* Rubin 1993:21) illuminates that whereas the stage of the previous eras had been based primarily on the spoken word, the physical/vocal presence of the actor and a predominantly abstract setting, the period running roughly from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century "witnessed an increasing emphasis on visual realism, spectacle, and sensationalism."

The traditional apron stage, which thrusts the actor out onto an abstract platform for declamation, was superseded by the proscenium arch, which places a literal frame around the stage "picture" and throws the action back into a more self-enclosed and concretized space. Settings became increasingly elaborate and detailed, often drawing attention away from the written/spoken text and in some cases even eliminating actors completely (as in the cases of dioramas and panoramas – "performances" that were all setting, with no actors).

One, therefore, reads particular parallels to the contemporary megamusical when Whitton (1897:3) argues that *The Black Crook* was "the pioneer of the American Spectacular Drama, and greater in tinselled gorgeousness and money-drawing power than any of its followers." Reviewers in the *New York Herald* (Whitton 1897:23-24) would say of this production much of what would be echoed with later megamusicals:

> "Nothing in any other Christian country, or in modern times, has approached the indecent and demoralising exhibition at Wheatley's Theatre in this city."

Others conceded that "of course, Wheatley is making money. It is just such a spectacle as will make an excitement and draw those crowds of loose characters and people with morbid, prurient tastes" (Whitton, 1897: 23). Most condemningly, another anonymous reviewer noted that "[n]othing […] has been witnessed in a theatre in Modern times so indecent as this spectacle. We can imagine there might have been in Sodom and Gomorrah such another place and scene, such a theatre and spectacle on the Broadway of those doomed cities just before the fire and brimstone rained down upon them and they were buried in the ruins."

Of course, there is a certain irony that when the megamusical would resurge in the 1970s with *Jesus Christ Superstar*, religious iconography would again be at odds with the capitalistic aesthetics of superabundance.

2.2   Other Superabundant Forms

The Black Crook offered audiences a first taste of true theatrical superabundance; this hunger for theatrical spectacle would develop along with the gestation of the musical theatre to culminate in the inherently exhibitionist nature of the musical. Audiences were so enamoured by the spectacles on stage that existing repertory was retooled to conform to the prevailing fashion of superabundant entertainment (as in Henry Irving's rendering of Shakespeare plays as elaborately detailed period pieces), and new forms were developed to meet it. Melodrama, perhaps the most popular new theatrical form of the nineteenth century, was a highly visualised form of drama, heavily dependent on spectacular stage effects and "the pictorial value of settings and their physical aspects" (Vardac, 2007: 65). Rubin (1993: 22) notes that "[d]uring this period, the stage was the frequent site of large-scale battle scenes, floods, fires, storms, and chariot races (with real horses), as well as the gargantuan valets and 'Amazon Marches.'"

This hunger was so acute that "[e]ntire stage forms evolved that were largely or wholly oriented toward visual spectacle" (Rubin, 1993: 23). These included

> "hippodramas (which incorporated circuslike equestrian manoeuvres into staged drama), aquadramas (which existed mainly as opportunities to re-enact sea battles), dioramas (wherein the audience sat on a revolving platform that gradually disclosed large-scale scenic paintings enhanced with lighting effects), panoramas (similar to dioramas, but involving a stationary platform surrounded by a 360-gedree painting), and biblical spectacles" (Rubin, 1993: 23).

The extravaganza (a theatrical genre that was especially popular) bears specific significance to the megamusical. In these productions, plot elements were downplayed and often eliminated, while scenic effects became the production's main draw. Hamar (1948: 86) notes that the "[s]cenery was so elaborate […] that the actor sometimes found himself crowded entirely off the stage, the manager relying chiefly on the magic of paint and canvas to pack the house."

Besides at times being a genre of its own, this form of extravaganza began to be used as a term to describe several types of theatrical performance which "included early forms of the burlesque and revue, and also musical entertainments such as […] *The Black Crook*" (Rubin, 1993: 25). The major idea underlying these various applications of the term 'extravaganza' seems to be that a weakening of narrative dominance leads to correspondingly increased opportunity for *extravagance* – whether that extravagance is in the form of scenic/spectacular effects or the aural application of a production's musical elements (grandness in orchestration, perhaps).

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There seems, therefore, an inherent pleasure in the viewership of large-scale spectacle machines. In much the same way the megamusical functions on the contemporary stage, the mega musical of this era monetised on the inherent eroticism of viewing staged conspicuous consumption. Evoking the genre of Grand Opéra, Charlton (2003: 4) notes that "it is useful to recall the penchant of the nineteenth century for the word 'grand', whether as a sign of belief in progress and expansion or of value as inhering in size." In fact, the director of the Paris Opéra in the mid-nineteenth century articulated that "to make things bigger is a form of progress, as well as a manifestation of erudition and skill" (Huebner, 2003: 298). Much in the same way, Rubin (1993: 19) argues that

> "[t]he pleasure offered by these aggregate forms is largely directed toward creating feelings of copiousness, superabundance, variety, heterogeneity, inclusiveness, and blatant spectacle, based around a loosely organised series of self-contained units or climactic moments."

In aggregate forms, these qualities are stressed more than in integrated forms where the spectator's pleasure is more directly based on a unified, hierarchical, centred, closure-orientated experience, leading the spectator along a continuous path that organises, arranges, and absorbs the various elements of the performance. These qualities were more inherent in the so-called integrated musical of the golden age that ended, coincidentally, in the 1970s with the advent of electronically produced musical extravaganzas – the contemporary megamusical. The megamusical, therefore, can be seen as the direct descendant of this tradition, but with the added element of technological abilities and mass-market mediatization. Furthermore, both the mega musical and its contemporary technological counterpart share the promise of a form of superabundance: there is a novelty to the event that assures the spectator a hitherto unimagined theatrical experience; a promise, therefore, grounded on the size and scope of the performance event.

With the development of advanced technology, I will propose in the next chapter, the scale of these experiences not only increased exponentially but, augmented by a mediatized environment fuelled by mass-market capitalism, they offered a somewhat different aesthetic and cultural experience that the extravaganzas of the early mega musicals. Nevertheless, one can see that from the early superabundant forms, there was already ingrained into the structure of the musical the notion of courting an audience with the temptation of an almost theme park-like experience (which bears a certain irony when this label was derisively used to describe

Disney Theatrical's first foray into musical theatre, *Beauty and the Beast* (1994)).[6] Rubin (1993: 18) concludes that

> "[t]o a certain extent, all musicals bear the mark of their ancestry in nineteenth-century aggregate forms, with the musical numbers functioning as a series of self-contained highlights that work to weaken the dominance of a homogeneous, hierarchical narrative continuity. In a similar sense, all musical numbers are spectacles, by virtue of the way in which they function as semiautonomous exhibitions somewhat distinct from the discourse of the narrative."

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[6] Rubin (1993:17) notes that amusement parks in fact have a hand in the aggregate tradition of superabundance, "particularly the type of self-enclosed, spectacular, all-inclusive bazaar pioneered by the opening of Coney Island's Steeplechase Park in 1897." Rubin (1993:17) notes that Frederic Thompson and Skip Dundy, founders of the Hippodrome in New York, "had previously made their mark by building Luna Park, the most beautiful and spectacular of Coney Island's great parks, in 1903." Even Florenz Ziegfeld, the central figure in the creation of the "American spectacular revue, got his show business start in the fairground/amusement-park field, first as a talent scout for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and then as the promoter of strongman Eugene Sandow" (Rubin 1993:17).

Chapter 3: Technological Spectacle: The Landscape of the Megamusical

Following the early period of gestation, the musical matured as an art form. This time of maturation, many critics refer to as the golden age that runs roughly from *Show Boat* (1927) to *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964). The 1960s brought a transformation on the Broadway stage that pre-emptively began, in the margins, by incorporating a new sound aesthetic: that of electronic rock-and-roll exemplified by such productions as *Bye Bye Birdie* (1960), *Your Own Thing* (1968) and *Hair* (1968). Simultaneously, theatre music, which until this point was synonymous with popular music, became largely unfashionable and was marginalised by rock-and-roll acts, such as the mass popularisation of Elvis Presley which were exemplified by electronic instrumentation and amplification. Technology and electronic sounds were transforming the sound of popular music and along with rock music. Litton and Smith (2013: 292) propose, that along with this particular aesthetic, "came the extra-terrestrial scats, riffs, and fills of electronic music, high-decibel amplification, Indian ragas, the cult of the rock superstar, and worship of the 1960's Youth Culture."

3.1   Technological Breakthroughs: Commodification of the Superabundant

The Broadway musical transformed as a result of technological advancements into a commodified enterprise. This commodification is a process that inevitably fashioned a fertile landscape for the explosion of superabundance within the musical theatre. The capitalism that drove the early mega musicals has, with the aid of technology, created room for a new large-scale performance mode wherein the financial stakes have risen exponentially resulting in profit margins becoming more vital than ever. This has led to an entirely new form of spectacle that differs considerably from those seen in earlier spectacle forms. As Wollman (2006: 78) argues, "[t]he increased use of new technologies in the commercial theatre led to a redefinition of spectacle. The word had previously connoted elaborate sets, huge casts, ornate costumes, or throngs of beautiful, scantily clad, high-kicking chorus girls." This definition of spectacle is a vestige of the eras preceding the effects that cinema and other modes of spectacle-production have had on theatre.

By the end of the 1980s, this anomaly had developed into a force that critics, creators and audiences could not ignore. In an article published in January 1989 in the *New York Times*, John Breglio, an entertainment lawyer in the musical theatre, argued that audiences have

changed their expectations with regards to what a musical inherently is. Breglio (Rothstein, 1989) argues that "it started with *Cats* (1980) - the British influence, the megamusical - and continued with *Starlight [Express]* (1984)*,* and *Phantom [of the Opera]* (1986), and perhaps *Les Misérables* (1985)." He adds that "the public is demanding so much more in terms of production value, and giving them that kind of spectacle has added a whole new level of costs" (Rothstein, 1989). Breglio believes that this is a relatively new occurrence because "[u]p until the last several years, the expectation in the musical theatre was 'music, book, and lyrics.' Now it is 'music, book, lyrics, spectacle'" (Rothstein, 1989:1). Duffy (2012) describes the contemporary megamusical as a "combination of epic flash, commercial hype, singable melodies and unrestrained technical wizardry."

3.1.1 Technology and Costs

Of course, large-scale spectacles that were produced preceding the technological boom of the latter part of the twentieth century were less expensive to stage. Wollman (2006: 120) contends that "[b]etween 1980 and 1982, production costs on Broadway increased by a whopping 62 percent." The rising costs of productions, according to Wollman (2006: 120–121), can be attributed to three main causes: Firstly, the costs of the production were traditionally managed solely by the producer of the work itself. Before the rise of the megamusical and its accompanying financial risk,

> "[a] producer found a property – either brought to his attention or developed from his office – and optioned it, raised money, hired an artistic team, rented a theatre, cast the show, rehearsed it, took it out of town to work it into shape, and then 'came in' and opened on Broadway" (Adler, 2004: 32).

Thereafter, Wollman (2006: 120) elaborates, "by the early 1980s, company managers, as well as visionary directors like Michael Bennett and Hal Prince, had become so important to productions that they began, with increasing regularity, to have a say in controlling costs." Although this gave the productions an arguably greater sense of artistic unity, it was usually far less cost effective (Rosenberg & Harburg, 1993: 7). Secondly, the late 1970s and early 1980s saw the increased unionisation of Broadway, as "musicians, stagehands, carpenters, electricians, actors, directors, press agents, lighting designers, and choreographers all struggled for higher wages, better benefits, and healthier working conditions" (Wollman, 2006: 120). The result of which is that practitioners on all sides of the production added to the increase in costs.

Thirdly, and most significantly, Wollman (2006: 121) argues that "as new musicals emphasising the technologically spectacular would help uproot theatrical production from its local confines and transform it into international big business." The commodification of the musical is, of course, not a new phenomenon in and of itself, but it was the specific combination of technological prowess, scale and commodification that drove the surge of production costs.

There are now international marketing campaigns that accompany megamusicals such as *Wicked* (2003) that even have film studios (Universal Pictures) as producing bodies, indicating the cinematic scope of the megamusical and its corresponding financial implication. To accommodate these new shifts, producers do not just form short-term corporations, but rather "long-term firms with investments in a range of products" (McConachie 2006:429), including merchandising and the ability for a production to have mass, international appeal. Indeed, McConachie (2006:429) contends that megamusicals now function like "franchise operations [wherein] several companies can run for several years in all the major cities of the English-speaking world." As former director of Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Group, Patrick McKenna adds,

> "$60m is an extraordinary sum of money to spend but, in the context of building a global brand, maybe it has some commercial merit. […] Even if the payback takes a year and a half instead of a year, if it runs for ten years that's still a very nice return on your money" (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2010).

Undoubtedly, when producing a megamusical, the margin for error becomes increasingly narrow as the costs of the production reflect the enormity of the production itself. This narrow margin has affected the cost of producing even more moderately sized musicals. According to Adler (2004: 235), a typical musical in the 2003-4 season might cost about fourteen million dollars, broken down as follows:

Physical production (sets, costumes, lights, sound, etc.)	$3 800 000
Fees (creative artists, staff)	$1 600 000
Rehearsal salaries	$1 300 000
Casting and rehearsal expenses	$180 000
Advertising and promotion	$1 000 000
Take-in and rehearsal (salaries and expenses from the start of the take-in/load-in at the theatre through opening night)	$2 000 000
Administrative	$700 000
Out-of-town costs (if the show lays in commercial arenas)	$2 000 000

Advances (writers, directors, designers, etc.)	$375 000
Reserve or contingency	$1 000 000
TOTAL:	**$13 955 000**

Table 3.1

More than simply illuminating the costs of a production, it also illustrates which aspects of production have shifted to the forefront as, unsurprisingly, the largest expense is the physical production costs at almost $4 million. Expectedly, the costs of staging the production that meets audience expectations have become the greatest expense for creators of the musical.

The costs and corresponding risk involved in the production of a megamusical has had definitive effects on the musical theatre in a wider sense in three important fronts that I will briefly outline before exploring them in depth through the utilisation of particular examples later in the chapter. Firstly, the widespread adoption of the microphone caused a shift in the auditory nature of the musical that mimicked the popular music of the day, including rock-and-roll, in the 1960s. Secondly, technological advancements in mechanics and computing allowed productions to provide visuals that mimicked those found in cinema, which is especially notable in the 1970s, 1980s and onward. This cinemafication, finally, had a combined third effect that would alter the content of the productions themselves.

3.1.2   Technology and the Spectacle of Sound

Beginning with *The Black Crook*, the musical theatre had always had a certain penchant for spectacle before the era of the integrated golden age musical exemplified by Rodgers and Hammerstein. These musicals, although at times visually impressive, ostensibly reserved focus on the book and attempted to conceal the other performance elements (such as spectacle) under the auspices of critically only fulfilling the needs of the book. Classically-trained singers would perform these musicals over an orchestra without the aid of microphones or other amplification equipment. In the late 1960s, the advent of sound technology crucially changed the musical and the musical sound. Miller (2011: 112) notes that "although microphones had been used on Broadway since the 1940s, [*Promises, Promises* (1968)] was the first show to consciously create a 'studio' sound with a trained sound designer, pop record producer Phil Ramone." *Promises, Promises* was also the first production that almost exclusively made use of extensive electronic instruments (orchestrated by Jonathan Tunick, who would later work with Stephen Sondheim) and used backup vocals sung from the pit.

Indeed, the increased use of the microphone and other electronic devices, such as amplifiers, had effects on the format and tone of the musical as a form itself. Grant (2005: 45) notes that "American teens in the 1930s and 1940s absorbed big band singing styles by osmosis, the youth of the 1950s, 1960s and later absorbed the new lingua franca of rock, country and pop." The Broadway musical had thus transformed to reflect popular taste and, Grant (2005: 45) adds, the production "becomes more of a concert than a play." Grant (2005: 45) proposes that, aurally,

> "[t]he Broadway musical theatre in the last thirty years has thus become a warehouse for almost every pop music style on the market: Europop, Motown, country and western, neo-big band, neo-early jazz, hip-hop and even smaller niches."

On an auditory level, the extensive simultaneous use of electronic sound and amplification that coincided with the rise of rock-and-roll and other forms of popular music shifted the expectations of what a musical should *sound* like. On this point, Wollman (2006: 2) remarks,

> "[t]he now-typical use of electric instruments and amplification systems in the theatre are begrudgingly seen as necessary evils that attract wider audiences while simultaneously destroying the purity of the musical as it was during its golden age from the 1930s through the 1950s."

As Litton and Smith (2013: 292) argue, rock music brought to Broadway musicals "some of the excitement that had waned as musical theatre shifted over and over the phrasings, rhythms, orchestrations, and sentiments that by the mid-1960s were more than thirty years old."

3.1.3 Technology and Visual Spectacle

The change in sound technology had corresponding effects on the change in the visual presentation of the theatre – a significant factor that differentiated the megamusical from previous musicals that were simply large and expensive. Bordman (2001: 665) determines that "[b]y the 1970s, spectacles were architecturally and electronically conceived, relying on movable towers and bridges, frequently loaded with electric lights and other apparatus, and on what Hollywood terms 'special effects.'" The effect of technology, television, films and other media is indisputable and left a distinct mark in the grandiosity of musicals post-1970s. Wollman (2006: 121) meaningfully adds that

> "[t]he approach to staged spectacle began to change with the rise of new technology and the influence of the cinema on the American theatre. Whereas past productions emphasises elaborate costumes, scantily clad dancing girls, and immense sets, new technology led to shows that favoured instead the latest in mechanically produced stage effects."

Adler (2004: 3) contends that the rise of the megamusical is at least partially attributable to "the advent of television." The widespread adoption of the television had hitherto unimagined effects on the musical theatre, signalling the arrival of an amplified, electronic sound and constantly-shifting and engaging visual stimulus.

Television, along with its ancillary electronic entertainment forms, proved especially significant in how public expectations shifted for the consumption of the musical. Adler (2004: 3) explains that

> "[t]elevision siphoned off a sizable portion of both talent and audience alike in a way that radio and film had not. In the fifties, serious new works by major playwrights – Miller, Williams, Igne – and occasional newcomers would still garner critical attention and box office revenue. And musical writers and composers – Lerner, Loewe, Rodgers, Hammerstein, Burrows, Loesser, Bernstein, Sondheim, Laurents, Styne, Willson, Bock, Harnick – would establish or burnish their reputations and catapult the musical from its pre-war anything-goes giddiness to a more sophisticated, sometimes even contemplative state."

The musical, therefore, had to reinvent its aesthetic to lure a depleted audience pool that had now begun consuming electronic entertainment forms. The golden age musical, *My Fair Lady* (1956), for example, "relied on conventional theatre technology of the time," (Adler, 2004: 18). By the time such megamusicals as *Phantom of the Opera* (1986) was produced on Broadway, the producers spent "large sums to excavate the basement and modify the infrastructure of the Majestic Theatre to accommodate spectacles like the rowboat gliding through the sewers of Paris, candelabras that magically appeared through the stage floor, and the now famous crashing chandelier" (Adler, 2004: 18–19). Contemporary megamusicals are consequently characterised by a constant stream of appealing visual tableaux images that are technologically designed to mimic cinematic effects and editing techniques.

Over time, audiences no longer expected the theatre to stand as a simultaneous entertainment form to television and film but was expected also to simulate the experience of the other. As Auslander (2008: 10) contends,

> "[i]nitially, mediatized events were modelled on live ones. The subsequent cultural dominance of mediatisation has had the ironic result that live events now frequently are modelled on the very mediatized representations that once took the self-same live events as their models."

3.1.4 Technology and Content

The widespread popularity of cinema is not perhaps the only significant factor in audience's altered expectations; however, the increased presence of technologically enhanced cinematic

effects, as well as the widespread adoption of television and its enablement of mass marketing and distribution of media, had corresponding effects within the musical theatre. In order to provide a comparable cinematic experience, not only was the presentation of the musical itself altered, but also the content of the production. According to Sternfeld (2006: 2)

> "the plots of megamusicals are big in scope: they are epic, sweeping tales of romance, war, religion, redemption, life and death, or some combination of these or other lofty sentiments. […] Just as the plot of the megamusical is big, so is the music: a megamusical has little to no spoken dialogue, but is typically sung throughout […] and the orchestra plays constantly."

The content of many these musicals therefore have foci that range from grand, sweeping narratives with a Romantic inclination, such as *Les Misérables* (1984), *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986), or *Miss Saigon* (1989) to productions that completely abandon plot for the sake of spectacle, such as *Cats* (1982).

The content of the megamusical is inescapably affected by its necessity to address its status as a megamusical. Regarding content, therefore, there seems to be a greater shift to themes relating to the mass late-capitalist consumer culture that accompanied mediatisation; sometimes explicitly and sometimes implicitly. More pervasively, however, megamusicals are categorised by the insignificance of the plot as it relates to the enjoyment of the musical. Many megamusicals, performing in international markets, feature plots that are either incidental or ancillary to the entertainment-value of the event. The pervasive selling point for the production, therefore, remains its visual and aural aesthetic, thereby limiting the function of the narrative to simply enabling the spectacle that frames it. Stephen Sondheim comments in *New York Times Magazine* that

> "[y]ou have two kinds of shows on Broadway – revivals and the same kind of musicals over and over again, all spectacles. You get your tickets for *The Lion King* a year in advance, and essentially a family comes as if to a picnic, and they pass on to their children the idea that that's what the theatre is – a spectacular musical you see once a year, a stage version of a movie. It has nothing to do with theatre at all. It has to do with seeing what is familiar. We live in a recycled culture" (Rich, 2000).

The megamusical, I will argue, came into being as a mode of mimicking, borrowing and merging other media forms with the traditional musical. This first and most significant example is Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's megamusical, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971). In relating the creation and reception of the first of the megamusicals, I hope to highlight some of the salient features of the form so as to examine later how the intimate forms utilise or repudiate megamusical aesthetics. Thereafter, I will explore the influence that Disney Theatricals had on

the musical theatre in the 1990s with one of the most significant movie-turned-musicals, *Beauty and the Beast* (1994). Finally, I will discuss director Julie Taymor's legitimisation of the megamusical form with *The Lion King* (1997) which will be followed by an analysis of her next megamusical, which is also the most expensive megamusical, *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011) so as to summarise the aesthetic extremes to which the form has evolved.

3.2 *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971) and the contemporary Megamusical

Jesus Christ Superstar, which opened on Broadway in 1971, marked a radical departure from the musical theatre landscape on Broadway post-1964 when the last of the Golden Era musicals, *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964), debuted. The overture of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, with its insistent electric guitar over a low tri-tone pedal point, signalled a new sound on the commercial musical theatre stage – an amplified, electronic sound. As Sternfeld (2006: 8) comments, "[i]t is a dissonant serious line, free in tempo, and immediately unsettling." It was as if, with these opening notes, the creators were marking a distinct aesthetic departure within the musical theatre; one that resonates to this day. With its unique combination of a traditional orchestra and a complete set of rock instruments, it was "beyond unusual; it was revolutionary" (Sternfeld, 2006: 8). Its creators described it as a rock opera, featuring "a sung-through score with no spoken dialogue, lavish and complicated sets, and an extremely emotional, larger-than-life plot" (Sternfeld, 2006: 9). The musical is not only mega in its subject matter, but also in its presentation and critical context. The electric guitar symbolised more than simply a change in the auditory properties of the musical theatre, but a radical departure from convention as led by Andrew Lloyd Webber – "that wailing electric guitar signalled his arrival on Broadway, and Broadway would never be the same" (Sternfeld, 2006: 9).

It seems clear that audiences were becoming increasingly disinterested in the musicals of the mid-to-late 1960s. In his review for the musical, *Hair* (1968) – another musical with a rock influence – *New York Times* critic, Clive Barnes christened it as "the first Broadway musical in some time to have the authentic voice of today rather than the day before yesterday" (Barnes, 1968: 40). John J. O'Connor, in *The Wall Street Journal*, added that "[n]o matter the reaction to the content […] I suspect the form will be important to the history of the American Musical Theatre" (*in* Miller, 2011: 60). Virtue of hindsight illuminates the accuracy of O'Connor's prediction as very few contemporary musicals utilise a full orchestra and most instruments in the pit have been supplanted, replaced or enhanced by digital and electric counterparts. As

Stephen Holden (2009: C1) added, *Hair* was a "show that heralded the beginning of something – the arrival of rock-and-roll on Broadway – marked the end of something else."

For this reason, *Hair* proved to be the aesthetic precursor to *Jesus Christ Superstar* with its larger than life, rock-and-roll visual and aural aesthetics. Lloyd Webber, however, had an arguably greater connection to public taste than the creators of *Hair*. *Jesus Christ Superstar* would have go on to enjoy immense popular appeal; this, in comparison to *Hair*, which was marginally popular by comparison and featured "very little plot, a unit set, plenty of four-letter words, explicit sexual content, rituals, drugs and the sound of genuine rock and roll on the Broadway stage for the first time" (Miller, 2011: 61). *Time* magazine reviewed *Hair* as "a cross between a Dionysian revel and an old-fashioned revival meeting. The religion that *Hair* preaches, and often screeches, is flower power, pot, and protest" (Miller, 2011: 61). In many ways, this perhaps was what Rice and Webber were aiming for when they first envisioned their musical response to corrupt late-capitalist consumer culture.

The *Saturday Review* magazine proclaimed that "Director Tom O'Horgan is pushing the medium to new limits by moving away from the verbality of multisensual theatre" (Miller, 2011: 61). O'Horgon's directorial aesthetic seems to have suited *Hair* well as he frequently worked with improvisation. According to Sternfeld (2006: 12), he "spent much rehearsal time having the cast bond together, and he was a hippie himself, with strong political ideas and unusual ways to stage them." *Hair*, therefore, was more "a hippie experience than a story" (Sternfeld, 2006: 12) as it had almost no plot and there are very few moments in the musical when the characters interact.

It is, therefore, unsurprising that O'Horgan was approached to direct *Jesus Christ Superstar* after the unanticipated success *Hair* which went on to run 1,750 performances. The superabundant conglomeration of visual and aural stimulus was perhaps suited to *Jesus Christ Superstar* which unintentionally attempted to megamusicalise the "radical [and] eclectic" (Miller, 2011: 62) aesthetic. O'Horgan's directing was both postmodern, filled with aggregate references, and dense with heterogeneous visual and aural referential meaning. O'Horgan thought of his work as "kinetic sculpture" and said that his goal was to be "able to blend all aspects of the theatre without letting any part become secondary to the others." He added in the article in the New York Times of 19 May 1968 that audiences were

> "hung up on chandeliers because they insist that the one-dimensional, verbal Ibsenite theatre is the only theatre. But this is an aberration of the 19th century. If the ideas are

the primary thing, it's not theatre. Theatre has always meant music, dance, art. That's what the Greek theatre was."

This impulse proved to be not only radical, but also necessary for the life-blood of Broadway during the 1970s. Indeed, as Sternfeld (2006: 11) notes,

> "[m]usical Broadway had fallen behind the times; its music, stories and style were out of fashion. In the 1940s and 1950s, Broadway music and popular music had been the same thing; cast albums were regular chart-toppers, as were singles from musicals. Now, show music was relegated to an older generation – the youth of America had moved on to rock 'n' roll. On Broadway, and also in out-of-town tryouts, failures abounded. Costs to mount a show rose, and audiences dwindled."

Jesus Christ Superstar shared the same opening season as other experimental musicals such as Stephen Sondheim's *Follies* which, incidentally, concerned itself with the early mega *Ziegfeld Follies*. *Follies* ran for a total of 522 performances at the Winter Garden. It was directed by Harold Prince who would later pioneer the directorial aesthetics of the megamusical with productions such as *Evita* and *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Jesus Christ Superstar, however, would be the most anticipated release of the season having already been playing its songs on the radio weeks before the production opened. The titular song raised to the top eighty hit singles on the *Billboard* chart by February 1970, eliciting unprecedented pre-sales in tickets. After 20 previews it would open at the Mark Hellinger and continue a successful run of 711 performances. Sheridan Morley (1987: 176), before the first use of the word megamusical, christened *Jesus Christ Superstar* "the first of the pre-packaged blockbusters," adding that it is the first "all-new, transatlantic long-playing megahit" (Morley, 1987: 181).

The ensuing success bears a certain irony as Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice (the lyricist) struggled to find a producer for the musical owing to the potential resistance to the subject matter. For this reason, they recorded the album first. As Sternfeld (2006: 14) comments, "they need not have worried so much. Jesus, it seemed, was in fashion." The production's close ties to contemporary popular culture would be a defining feature of its success and, furthermore, the success of many musicals post-1970s. Musicals that tie into the aorta of popular culture continually bears a sense of immediacy and vitality that many other musicals do not possess. This feature has become especially significant in an era and for generations that are ever more connected to television, films and other forms of electronic media that underscore the widespread proliferation of popular culture.

In the case of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, "references to Jesus and to religion in general were becoming increasingly frequent […] in popular music of the late 1960s and early 1970s" (Sternfeld, 2006: 14). Oft-cited examples of this spiritual 'Jesus Rock' movement includes the Beatles' "Let It Be", Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and Neil Diamond's version of "He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother". As Sternfeld (2006: 14) argues, "these singles dealt with the idea of brotherhood and a general spirituality." More specific examples of 'Jesus Rock' abounded in songs like "Remember Bethlehem" by Dee Mullins, "Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up" by The Sweet Revival, and "Jesus is Just Alright" by The Byrds. *Time* magazine (Bender & Foote, 1971: 70) pointed out that Jesus could be found not only in pop music, "but on all sorts of merchandise like bathing suits and wristwatches; […] a fad among America's youth."

The New York Times reviewer, Don Heckman, observed on the concept album that "[o]bviously, the story of the last days of Jesus Christ was an attractive story choice. Portraying Christ as a modern day prophet who has all the hang-ups and image confusions of a rock superstar is a fascinating and contemporary notion" (Heckman, 1970: 42). Indeed, the popularity of Jesus as a cultural idea helped the impending success of the musical in no uncertain terms. George Gent (1970: 28) in *The New York Times* commented that in popular music, "emphasis on the name Jesus is common to several new songs, many of which seem to be seeking a more down to earth personification of a deity combined with a heightened sense of celebration that is absent from standard worship." Rice, ironically, would remark in an interview in *The Times* (Wale, 1971: 12) that "[i]t was right against what was going on at the time, although now in America people come up and say: 'Well, man, you were backing a winner getting in on the Jesus craze.'"

Lloyd Webber and Rice's conflation of popular culture and scriptures would pave the way for one of the most fruitful and unique formulas in the contemporary musical landscape. *Jesus Christ Superstar* would prove to be the first in a series of musicals to tie the high cultural currency of theatrical entertainment to the immediacy of popular culture. On the creation of the concept, the lyricist and bookwriter, Tim Rice explains that

> "[w]e naturally considered rock with my background and opera with Andrew's knowledge of the classics. Then we had this idea. 'Why not combine the two?' The Who had caused quite a stir by calling their *Tommy* a rock opera. That's how it all came about" (Nassour & Broderick, 1973: 21).

Commenting on the postmodernity of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and, in a sense, sensing a trend that would evolve, Bender (1971: 63) notes that

> "[i]t was a moment when pop culture, nourished by everything from hard rock to Prufrock, stood on a tiptoe of expectation. Could the eclectic age – borrowing everywhere from the Bible to *Porgy and Bess*, from Beethoven to the world of *Hair*, from the symbolic body and blood of Christ to sheerest humanism – shape an enduring musical tribute to human failure and aspiration, to divine inspiration and its loss?"

Of course, the creators maintained that the musical should be intimate in nature. In an interview with *The New York Times*, Andrew Lloyd Webber commented that the O'Horgon's eventual production was "not the way I envisioned it. I saw it more as an intimate drama of three or four people." He would also comment that "O'Horgon's production has posed problems for me. […] When I saw Judas coming down in that *butterfly*, I thought, "What the hell is he *doing*?" (Flatley, 1971: 34).

The claim to intimacy, however, is usurped by the ironic grandiosity of the presentation. By the time the concept album was released in 1970, Lloyd Webber and Rice had created a major work for an eighty-five-piece orchestra, seven rock musicians including one playing Moog synthesiser, a church organ, eleven principal singers, sixteen chorus singers and three backup choirs (Nassour & Broderick, 1973: 49).[7] Much commentary in initial reviews of the concept album was reserved for the successful use of musical pastiche that Lloyd Webber would later become infamous for. William Bender of *Time* magazine considered the album in league with Bach's passions "in ambition a scope if not in piety or musical exaltation." He found Lloyd Webber's music "clever and varied" (Sternfeld, 2006: 21). Sternfeld (2006: 21) comments that "eventually, Lloyd Webber's use of recognisable musical styles, set up against one another over the course of a show […] would become an object of criticism."

Bender, however, felt that Lloyd Webber's eclectic mixture of musical styles made for a refreshing and even daring technique. Bender mentions Prokoviev, Latin music, ragtime, Puccini, gospel, the Beatles, Orff, and Stravinsky, among others, and asserted that all these influences "combine with great effectiveness" (Sternfeld, 2006: 22). Commenting on the majestic scale of *Superstar*, Bender (1970: 59) compares it to The Who's *Tommy* which "was the first, flawed suggestion that rock could deal with a major subject on a broad symphonic or

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[7] Even the original long-playing disk was billed as "massive" by *New York Times* reviewer Don Heckman (1970:42): "a six-piece rock group, various ensembles of studio musicians, the strings of the London Ensemble, Moog Synthesizers, three vocal choirs (including a children's ensemble), and a cast that includes eleven principles. The work encompasses two long-playing disks and runs for nearly an hour-and-a-half."

operatic scale. *Superstar* offers the first real proof." Heckman (1970: 42), however, was less sympathetic to the music's eclecticism, querying, "is it good rock, and is it good opera?" He posited that

> "Webber's music sounds like a vast sampler of all the musical impulses that are charging through the contemporary pop scene: snatches of Vivaldi and Bach; abstract fragments a la Ligeti and Stockhausen; Brubeckian passages in 5/4 and 7/8 jazz, bossa nova, and even an occasional aria that sounds like a revived fantasy of Gilbert and Sullivan."

He answers his own question by concluding that "[n]o, I'm afraid Webber and Rice just can't cut it;" thereafter commenting that someone "once said something about the density that great art must have, but the only density one can find here is aural – thick sounds and overweighed electronics" (Heckman, 1970: 42). The reviewers, therefore, were torn as to the value of the superabundance of musical styles and electronic underpinnings which, in the physical production, would eventually find visual equivalents.

Before the production opened on Broadway, O'Horgan stated in an interview that his vision for *Jesus Christ Superstar* is "more trip-out, more spatial, more surreal" than the Renaissance depiction of Christ (Gussow, 1971: 46). The design for the production, he stated, is influenced by such artists as Georgia O'Keeffe and Tanguay: "Desert skies. Very big skies as seen through the pelvic bone." He finally added that his hope "is to make it a totally spiritual experience. There's no need to have a nude scene or outrages against the church. It should be a highly mystical experience, an exaltation for the audience" (Gussow, 1971: 46). Gussow (1971:46) also reveals his discussion on the "complex" set that would appear in the production:

> "'The floor is the curtain,' he said and demonstrated on a model how a wooden curtain would fall away from the audience and become just a ramp on stage and then the stage itself."

The eclecticism and complex set of interconnected and referential visual and aural aesthetics lent the production a sense of pop-cultural awareness that might have influenced its enormous appeal. Litton (in Smith & Litton, 2013: 324) continues to describe how O'Horgon inflated *Jesus Christ Superstar*'s visual style to "grotesque limits."

> "Inspired by the audacious commercialism of Webber and Rice's songs, he asked costume designer Randy Carcelo, set designer Robin Wagner, and lightening designer Jules Fisher to synthesise a vision that had never been seen on the musical stage before. Christ […] made his first appearance extruded like toothpaste from the mouth of a giant silver chalice. But his penultimate entrance, just before the crucifixion, topped that. It began with a giant cocoon billowing out of a trap at centre stage; as the cocoon rose,

dancers pulled sections away to reveal Christ's head and shoulders, and beneath them, a tentlike robe. The figure glided upward, while chorus members pulled at straps to unveil three more robes, until at the end of the lift-off, as Christ's head and shoulders stood fifteen feet above the stage floor, a final strap was pulled, revealing a conical gown made of one hundred yards of gold lame and sequins. That was one of the most awesomely vulgar of the show's wonders, but only a sample of its hyperbolic styles" (Smith & Litton, 2013: 324).

The utilisation of pastiche, therefore, in the hands of both the composer and the director, cemented the production as the first electronic, cross-referential, mass-produced megamusical.

The entire production would be an expensive exercise with "a cast of 40 plus 35 musicians who will be in the put, sealed off behind plastic in order to simulate the sound of a recording studio" and was budgeted at $700,000 (Gussow, 1971: 46), but after already earning $1.2 million in pre-sales (Flatley, 1971: 34), it made a definite return on its initial investment.

One can almost sense the musical's awareness of it economic-cultural environment with numerous references to the pervasive nature of technology-fuelled consumer culture within the narrative and music itself. Undeniably, *Jesus Christ Superstar* is a musical that concerns itself quite explicitly with the concerns of rampant consumer culture as it manifests in class disparity. In the song "The Temple" we find Jesus entering the titular temple, only to find it overrun with merchants trying to haggle their goods. The song, written in G-minor, almost claustrophobically remains in the tonic and sub-dominant, as the merchants advertise:

"Roll on up for my price is down,
Come on in for the best in town,
Take your pick of the finest wine,
Lay your bets on this bird of mine" (Webber & Rice, 1971: 79).

In many productions, including the 2000 television recording and the 2012 revival concert, this number is performed with numerous televisions screens on stage depicting various images of consumption and excess.[8] Jesus himself would later, in a fit of frustration, symbolically overthrow the merchants and destroy their products. As a megamusical, however, it is almost as if the musical is aware of its ironic commentary on the vices of the excesses of consumer consumption. The mere fact of the megamusical's presentational style seems to wryly comment on its place within a superabundant theatrical economy; for as the merchants add in an ascending G-minor scale,

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[8] Ironically, this aesthetic might have made it into the original production as producer Robert Stigwood had intended, were it not for O'Horgan's overwhelming "sensory-assaulting Broadway production" (Miller, 2011:127). Stigwood "had wanted to stage the piece more simply, perhaps using projections and television screens to underline Tim Rice's themes of celebrity and stardom" (Miller, 2011:127).

"Name your price I got everything
Come on buy, it's all going fast
Borrow cash on the finest terms,
Hurry now while stocks still last" (Webber & Rice, 1971: 79–80).

The song is further troubled by its time signature that uncomfortably refuses to revert to common time. The cadence remains unresolved in a jarring 7/4, underscoring the restlessness inherent in a society that privileges the unjust abundance of capitalism and commerce within a rock musical style that upholds the authenticity of the subversive. Jesus, however, does not offer solutions to the crisis of the disparity between the wealthy and the poor for when Judas confronts him in "Everything's Alright", he reasons,

"Surely you're not saying we have the resources to save the poor from their lot?
There will be poor always pathetically struggling;
Look at the good things you've got!" (Webber & Rice, 1971: 38).

The notion of superabundance, therefore, seems ironically crucial to the musical's main thematic concern. Even Judas's betrayal is tied to capitalistic gain. In the first act's song "Blood Money", he argues that he did not wish to peddle Christ for gold. Somewhat hysterically, he then defends himself to the priests,

"I have no thought at all about my own reward;
I really didn't come here of my own accord."

The priests, who according to Lloyd Webber "represent the establishment" (Flatley 1971:34), reply wryly with

"Your help in this matter won't go unrewarded
We'll pay you in silver; cash on the nail."

What follows is an entire discussion on the evils of capitalistic greed that Rice and Lloyd Webber thematically tied to the original Biblical story:

"JUDAS. I don't need your blood money.
CAIAPHAS. Oh, that doesn't matter. Our expenses are good.
JUDAS. I don't *want* your blood money.
ANNAS. But you might as well take it. We think that you should.
CAIAPHAS. Think of the things you can do with that money.
Choose any charity, give to the poor.
We've noted your motives; we've noted your feelings.
This isn't blood money. It's a fee, nothing more."

Regardless of Judas's protests, he eventually accepts the money, betraying Jesus's location. Later, after the last supper when Jesus accuses Judas of the betrayal, he runs away and we find him once more begging the priests to help him again. Annas, now holding him to the gold that

he took in exchange for Jesus's life, chastises him, deliberately comparing his actions to a gamble or a bet:

> "Cut the confessions, forget the excuses
> I don't understand why you're filled with remorse.
> All that you've said has come true with a vengeance:
> The mob turned against him, you backed the right horse" (Rice and Lloyd Webber 1971:175).

Caiaphas also comments that Judas should be pleased with the transaction because he had been paid "pretty good wages for one little kiss" (Webber & Rice, 1971: 176). Of course, it is here that Rice and Webber place the most emotionally potent condemnation of capitalism, building a universal warning into the character of Judas who firmly believes that he "only did what [Christ] wanted [him] to." In a fit of hysteria, Judas bitterly belts on a high G: "Christ, I'd sell out the nation for I have saddled with the murder of you." (Webber & Rice, 1971: 176). He concludes with a realisation that he has sold his rock-and-roll anti-establishment ideals for financial gain and laments that he has "been spattered with innocent blood" and he "shall be dragged through the slime and the / slime and the / slime and the mud" (Webber & Rice, 1971: 177). The repetition of the melody and lyric serves, finally, to emphasise the extent to which he will carry the burden of guilt for his inevitable betrayal.

When O'Horgan's production finally opened, reviewers pointed out that the score was unusually varied in its style and presentation. Clive Barnes (1971: 13) commented that "[t]he music itself is extraordinarily eclectic. It runs so many gamuts it almost becomes [a] musical cartel." He found the title song, "Superstar" to have a "bounce and exaltation to it" and found it to possess an "almost revivalist fervour." He found the song "I Don't Know How to Love Him" admirable, but noted that "[t]here is a certain vulgarity here typical of an age that takes a peculiar delight in painting moustaches on the Mona Lisa." To add to the postmodern twinge, he comments that although most of the music is "pleasant," the "orchestral finale […] sounds something like a church organ voluntary inspired by Vaughan Williams and Massanet." He finally concedes that "[t]he pastiches of the The Beatles are far more acceptable."

Barnes had reservations about the staging which he found overall to be "monumentally ingenious." He found that "even since [O'Horgan's] beginning work Off-Broadway, [he] has tried to startle us. Once he startled us with small things, how he startles us with big things. This time, the things got too big." In a later article, he would revisit his opinion and declare the production as "depressingly ornate" (Barnes, 1971: 13). Regardless, the musical firmly

positioned itself as the precursor to the contemporary megamusical. Barnes' full commentary here is illuminating:

> "There were too many purely decorative effects, artistic excrescences dreamed up by the director and his designers Robin Wagner and Randy Carcelo, that seemed intended to make us gasp and our blood run cold. The stage is full of platforms, carriages descend from the heavens, and even the stars over Gethsemane are captured in a blue plastic box. The total effect is brilliant but cheap" (Barnes, 1971: 13).

Frank Rich (1987: 2) adds that "[t]he other key to the English musical's new success is its shift in emphasis in musical staging. Unable to compete with Broadway's high-powered choreography, the English musical had to turn elsewhere for kinetic energy. The option chosen was spectacle: If the performers can't dance, why not let the scenery do so instead?"

Some viewers, in letters to the editor of the *New York Times*, had different opinions on the musical, picking up on its inherent postmodernity:

> "Tom O'Horgan's direction brilliantly emphasises the popular tendency to sensationalise the hero, thus vulgarising the man; and the cheapness O'Horgan employs is not nearly as offensive as the sight of a John F. Kennedy commemorative tapestry hanging in the window of a Times Square novelty shop. We live in a world of plastic Madonna's, Beatle wigs, Chairman Mao drinking glasses, and, to top it off, a wax statue of the Pope which once sat conveniently next to a collection box in St. Patrick's Cathedral" (Lowenthal 1971: 13).

Others also felt that the production was an artistic and political statement on the manner in which Christ is viewed in the public sphere and felt that O'Horgan "has mirrored […] the overblown larger-than-life Jesus that man has insisted on creating to satisfy his own need for a super-being – a God of his fantasy" (Freeman 1971: 10). Freeman regarded the production as an almost religious experience and commented that "[t]he theatrically of the production not only augments the music and lyrics but comes together in such a forceful, gripping manner that one cannot help but get caught up in its magnitude." He concludes that

> "O'Horgan utilises a surrealistic art form, consistently and innovatively rendering a version of the old, old story that literally breathed new life into its flaccid branches. […] Paradoxically, it is in the over-telling of the story that the simpler thrust of Christian love is manifested."

Don Heckman (1971: 27) would later reflect that "*Jesus Christ Superstar*, in all its manifestations, from Tom O'Horgan's Broadway monstrosity to the easy listening recordings of "I Don't Know How to Love Him" represents success, success, success. And when that happens on large scale, it's enough to make even such old hands at religion merchandising game as Billy Graham sit up and notice."

3.3   The new megamusical aesthetic: a penchant for the postdramatic

After the debut of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, the Broadway stage saw many megamusicals that transformed and developed the form which resulted in the popularisation and mass proliferation of the form. The megamusical transformed and evolved into an ever more sophisticated form. Sternfeld (2006: 334) argues that "[t]oday, there are virtually no new musicals that, at first glance, fit the 1980s definition of the megamusical." Her opinion stems from splitting the idea of spectacle-driven megamusicals into three distinct movements or waves.

The first accounts for the ascent of the megamusical preceded by *Jesus Christ Superstar* and runs through the 1970s megamusicals *Evita* (1978) and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* (first performed in 1968; West End in 1973; Broadway in 1982). The second wave – also the largest with the most longevity – includes *Cats*, *Les Misérables, Chess, Starlight Express* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. Sternfeld (2006: 290) notes of this age that "the megamusical bears the distinct stamp of the 1980s in many ways." She observes that "*Cats* especially seemed stuck, mostly stylistically, in 1981; by the 1990s those leg warmers had become appealing kitsch."

It would be the third wave that, she argues, redefined the concept of the megamusical, "retaining certain elements, altering others, dropping a few here and there" (Sternfeld 2006: 290). Now, the megamusical transformed; "megamusicals no longer needed to be sung from beginning to end or based on a romantic, melodramatic plot" (Sternfeld 2006: 292). In a sense, even more attention shifted away from the content of the musical towards the presentation thereof. The third wave megamusicals may have shifted their focus, but the spectacle-orientated mode reigned supreme – Disney Theatrical's productions such as *Beauty and the Beast* (fully titled *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*) and *The Lion King* may have eluded the 1980s megamusical aesthetic that Sternfeld is referring to, but simultaneously created a *new* megamusical aesthetic. It retained the focus on visual and aural spectacle, but distanced itself from the sung-through structure.

The narratives of these musicals, in addition, became even less significant than the megamusicals of the 1980s, relying on the fact that audiences would be familiar with the story before entering the theatre. Indeed, as Kathryn Edney (2007: 939) comments, "[t]he megamusical appeals to the mass audience […] which is willing to spend money on a 'name brand' that promises a staged spectacle and a certain level of familiarity."

The move way from narrative-driven (or book-driven) musical theatre, would evolve with these two productions. This gives rise to a new theory of the megamusical, articulated by Siropoulos (2011) wherein he posits that the megamusical has become a postdramatic form, shedding its roots of the book-driven musical and, in an aesthetic sense, and, I propose, returning to the early modes of musical production with the aid of technological advancements.

He posited that the popularity of the megamusical is tangled with the relationship between (late) capitalist economics and the manifestation of the megamusical as a form, citing, among other factors, an increase in audience's visual literacy as the mechanism driving the contemporary 'mega' aesthetic. A surge in technological capabilities within the theatre has allowed practitioners to exploit this to the advantage of the production. In addition, he proposes that the megamusical represents an almost postdramatic approach to musical theatre wherein the dependence on the dramatic text has become an ever-decreasing part of the performative whole.

The narrative of the contemporary musical, therefore, is replaced or superseded by other performative modes, most notably the visual spectacle of the production itself. This is especially prominent in musicals that already have a strong focus on the visual aspect of the performance; the megamusical being a significant form. Thus, Siropoulos (2011: 15) contends that the "synergy between capitalist economy, technology and aesthetics creates a new kind of visual literacy and sophistication in a postmodern culture that radically affects the conception and production of mass-cultural artefacts."

The focus of the production, therefore, is placed on the spectacle of the event itself: in the aural and visual landscape. Wollman (2009: 124) limits her notion of spectacle to "scenic technology that has, in recent decades, become sophisticated enough to allow the simulation of special effects previously only possible on film." Frequently cited examples are, of course, the descending helicopter in *Miss Saigon*, the chandelier in *The Phantom of the Opera*, the working and authentic Ford Model T in *Ragtime* and the ascending tire in *Cats*. Wollman hints that sound can also be part of the megamusical aesthetic and proposes that rock-and-roll has become the de facto musical idiom of the megamusical. Especially, I would add, the genre of symphonic rock and roll that combines symphonic orchestrations with electronic instruments. All the above-cited megamusicals contain scores that feature a rock-and-roll infused orchestral aural aesthetic.

The megamusical, Siropoulos goes on to speculate, if viewed within this context, encapsulates Hans-Thies Lehmann's (2006: 46) notion of the postdramatic wherein the performance is liberated from the dominance of the dramatic text, which may be totally extinct or "merely a component with equal rights in a gestic, musical, visual, etc. total composition." One can correspondingly connect the current predilection towards a more visually-inclined musical to a contemporary audience's exposure to constant visual stimulus, "with electronic screens invading our living and working environs in the form of LCD computer monitors, plasma TV displays, mobile touch-screen surfaces and large-scale projection architectural hypersurfaces" (Siropoulos 2011:14). The contemporary megamusical, as a result, is one that is inevitably influenced by its surrounding technological context that certainly has ramifications on the content (and presentation) of the production itself.

In the following section, I will apply briefly Siropoulos's theory to the musicals *Beauty and the Beast* (1994) and *The Lion King* (1997). Thereafter I will do a close reading of *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011) to cement the most contemporary manifestation of the postmodern megamusical aesthetic.

3.4 Disney and Taymor: Economy, Technology and the New Megamusical Aesthetic

The prominence of technology in the traditional Broadway musical has had such marked effects on the perception of the musical as a form that now "audiences […] expect a cinematic experience when they see a live show" (Wollman & Sternfeld, 2011: 8). From technology's first major inclusion in the musical theatre in *Jesus Christ Superstar* where technological presence manifested in sound design and overabundant visual stimulus, there has been a shift in the manner in which technology has now been infused with the musical. These fusions are present in both the musical's superficial presentation and the semiotics of its creation, its content, its inevitable performance and its reception that ultimately result in "aesthetic changes to the musicals themselves" (Wollman & Sternfeld, 2011: 8).

The way in which a musical is conceived from the outset has shifted dramatically which, inescapably, affects the content of the musical itself. At this point, Rubin's notion of the superabundant becomes inadequate for now megamusicals are not merely somewhat disparate elements of spectacle "with the musical numbers functioning as a series of self-contained highlights that work to weaken the dominance of a homogeneous, hierarchical narrative continuity" (Rubin, 1993: 18). Rather, while fighting the "sudden prevalence of musicals in

new media," musicals must also simultaneously compete and integrate with "today's cultural and economic climate of 'spectacularization' that can be seen in many aspects of our daily lives" (Wollman & Sternfeld, 2011: 9).

Siropoulos picked up on this point by suggesting that *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011), "which [cost] more than twice as much as any Broadway show in history" (Wollman & Sternfeld, 2011: 5), is a musical that "draws attention to the overarching stylistic concept of a performance rather than its narrative organization" (Siropoulos, 2011: 16). Although one cannot prove whether Siropoulos also draws on Rubin's theory of the superabundant, one can sense a distinct similarity between the two aesthetic models. Indeed, Rubin (1993: 18) contends that "[t]o a certain extent, all musicals bear the mark of their ancestry in nineteenth-century aggregate forms" and consequently "all musical numbers are spectacles, by virtue of the way in which they function as semi-autonomous exhibitions somewhat distinct from the discourse of the narrative" (Rubin, 1993: 18).

Siropoulos, perhaps unwittingly, draws on this discourse, but adds that it bears a striking similarity to the theatre of the postmodern, specifically Hans-Thies Lehmann's thesis of the postdramatic. The postdramatic theatre, as Siropoulos explains, is a performance event where the script "is merely a component with equal rights in a gestic, musical, visual, etc., total composition" (Lehmann, 2006:46). In the megamusical, therefore, as in the postdramatic theatre, the book of the musical would decrease in significance and the prominence of other performance aspects, such as song, dance, and the visual or aural spectacle would come to the forefront and bear a greater weight in the overall presentation of the production itself.

In retrospect, one can already see the roots of this theory in *Jesus Christ Superstar* with its implicit expectation that audiences be aware of the narrative before watching the show. An audience's familiarity with the subject matter would increase their awareness of the eclectic references that make up the immensely dense visual landscape of the production, drawing on late 1960s hippie culture, the popularity of Jesus-themed imagery and of course, fusions of biblical and psychedelic iconography. Furthermore, awareness of the score would account for a production that was easier to palate – a process helped by the release and distribution of the album before the production opened.

Siropolous makes a similar point by utilising Taymor's 1997 stage version of *The Lion King* as an example. He notes that "in true postdramatic fashion, the narrative itself was not the main attraction of the show" (Siropoulos, 2011: 15). Indeed, the stage musical is based on the Walt

Disney film version of the same name that was released in 1994 which itself was based on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The narrative of a son that seeks revenge on his father's death is one that is familiarly tied into cultural consciousness, and the Disney retelling of this narrative correspondingly placed it within the framework of younger audiences.

One can clearly at this point observe critics' mistrust of the new, technology-infused megamusical theatre. Before *The Lion King* opened, Richard Zoglin (1997: 64), in a *Time* magazine article ironically titled "Another Breed of Cats" pre-eminently praised the production for its unusual aesthetics, but asked whether "Broadway audiences, who now expect grandiose realistic effects like falling chandeliers and flying helicopters and sinking ocean liners, will take to her concept just as readily." Taymor's concept was to reimagine the African landscape onstage through a combination stylised raised masks and puppetry that represent the characters from the film version. The production proved popular and became "the most successful theatrical production of all time" (Begley, 2015) and earned $6.2 billion worldwide, outperforming another megamusical that held this title, *Les Misèrables* (1985).

The Lion King, however, was not Disney's first venture into musical theatre, but its commercial appeal as a megamusical did not escape reviewers of the production. Zoglin (1997: 64) noted that "[e]very big Broadway musical these days has the obligatory souvenir stand in the lobby, where happy patrons can buy a *Cats* T-shirt or a *Les Miz* CD on their way out." The commodification of the musical has reached, he argued, a new level of consumer appeal with merchandising opportunities that belie its corporate origins. He adds that

> "the gaudily restored New Amsterdam Theatre on 42nd Street, where Disney's stage version of *The Lion King* opened last week, boasts nothing less than an entire store filled with sweatshirts, stuffed animals and other Simba memorabilia. Has there ever been a Broadway show more confident that it will run forever? It has to; how else are the kids going to pass the time before loading up on merchandise" (Zoglin, 1997).

3.4.1 *Beauty and the Beast* (1994)

Zoglin's cynicism is not groundless as Disney's first Broadway musical, *Beauty and the Beast* (1994), was criticised extensively by reviewers and columnists (especially the *New York Times*) for utilising an "arsenal of Disney special effects" in order to amaze the audience (Witchel, 1994). *Beauty and the Beast* (officially titled *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*) was, more so than previous megamusicals, labelled as an oversaturated commodity to be sold, though "[t]he quality of merchandise that Disney brings is top-drawer. *Beauty and the Beast* arrives on Broadway at an official cost of nearly $12 million with a cast of 38" (Witchel, 1994). It's

similarity to existing megamusicals did not go unmentioned as the columnists rhetorically asked, "If *Cats* can flourish on the road for 14 years, why not *Beauty and the Beast*" (Witchel, 1994). Expectedly, Witchel (1994) admitted that "[m]oney, of course, is a key reason for industry sniping about this show. As is power. And control. And expertise.".

When *Beauty and the Beast* opened, the reviews noted that the production has a distinct robotic sensibility as "each individual performance, each song and each dance is seemingly programmed by the same computer responsible for moving the scenery and setting off the fun-house special effects" (Canby, 1994). Visually, the production utilised extensive stage machinery that the reviewer found overpowering. Canby (1994) contended that the production's volume is "often so loud you long for earmuffs, though, if you're sitting down front, it's not always loud enough to cover the noises made by the stage machinery." Canby (1994) also criticised the production's cinematic sensibilities and maintained that "[t]he creators of this show appear to regard the stage as simply a primitive form of film that must be disguised with vaguely cinematic effects, like moving the scenery instead of the camera."

One can almost sense a Baudrillardian undertone to the review which concludes that *Beauty and the Beast* is "much like those exhibits at Disney World where mannequins representing George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, created through the magic of Audio-Animatronics, astonish tourists with their lifelike gestures and speech" (Canby, 1994). Indeed, *Beauty and the Beast* had "more special effects, pyrotechnics, magical illusions, evolving costumes and computer-driven set changes than any show in Broadway history" (Witchell, 1994). The director, Robert Hess Roth, defended the use of technology in the production and argued that "[w]e never wanted effects for the sake of having effects [and that] [t]he technology is useful only if it helps us tell the story." Witchell (1994) describes that

> "[a]bout \$5 million[9] worth of computer equipment governs the sorcery of *Beauty and the Beast*. Computers mind everything, says Jeremiah J. Harris, the production supervisor, from the 34 candles that pop up sequentially during one number of the show's 1,000 pieces of scenery and the two elevators that deliver cast, sets and props to the stage. There, scenery rides silently on runners beneath the floor; these are activated by electric winches that pull the sets through slits in the stage. Computers control the stationary lights and the 60 moving Vari-Lites, powered beams that are individually focused and programmed. Computers also balance the sound from the 38 miked actors and 26 musicians."

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[9] To place this figure in perspective, one must place it is comparison to Adler's (2004:235) outline of a typical musical's cost structures. Adler's outline is from a 2003-04 season, while Witchell is describing a production staged in 1994.

The impact of technological computational power was, for the first time in the musical theatre, truly felt in this production. As *The New York Times* reviewer David Richards (1994) pointed out, "you don't watch it, you gape at it." He found the visual effects so overpowering that "[n]o apparition, disappearance, thunderbolt, rainstorm or swirling fog bank is beyond the capabilities of the show's special-effects engineers." He also compared it to other megamusicals, noting that

> "if you thought the chandelier crashing to the stage in *The Phantom of the Opera* was something, wait until the Beast (Terrence Mann), presumably dead, rises up from the castle floor, floats 10 feet or so into space, then starts to spin like a human propeller" (Richards, 1994).

He found the production too saturated with stimulus and cynically commented that "[o]thers may look upon the eye-boggling spectacle as further proof of the age-old theory that if you throw enough money at the American public, the American public will throw it right back." Significantly, he noted something that seems to be a frequent criticism of megamusicals – especially those that are recreated from film. He protested that "[n]othing has been left to the imagination. Everything has been painstakingly and copiously illustrated" – a trend certain contemporary megamusicals have attempted to avoid.

The production, with its computational electronic effects and theme park-like sensibility, represents the crossroads between the postdramatic and the Baudrillardian hyperrealist re-representation of the recycled, thereby anticipating Siropoulos's theory. Richard (1994) reinforces this view by positing that "[i]t is Las Vegas without the sex, Mardi Gras without the booze and Madame Tussaud's without the waxy stares." In terms of the narrative, Canby (1994) noted that "Linda Woolverton's book follows her screenplay for the 1991 film virtually scene by scene, shot by shot," outlining the fact that the *Beauty and the Beast* relies exclusively on visual stimulus, that itself is merely a copy of the effects in the film, and does away completely with any re-invention of the film (which in turn is an adaptation of Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve's fairy tale). Finally, Richards (1994) contends that "[i]t is hardly a triumph of art, but it'll probably be a whale of a tourist attraction."

3.4.2 *The Lion King* (1997)

The Lion King (1997) would enjoy far more favourable reviews owing to an ostensible departure from the "fun-house" (Canby, 1994) aesthetic of *Beauty and the Beast*, thus manifesting in a production that critics perceived as more artistically admirable; mostly owing to the involvement of Julie Taymor, "a leading light of New York's experimental theatre scene"

(Zoglin, 1996: 85). Following *Beauty and the Beast*, critics expected *The Lion King* to be a similarly "literal-minded exercise in turning its cinematic model into three dimensions" (Brantley, 1997).

Irrespective of the cynicism, however, original reviews of *The Lion King* (1997) were immensely positive, comparing the experience to being a four-year-old attending the circus for the first time, adding that "you can only marvel at the exotic procession of animals before you: the giraffes and the elephants and the hippopotamuses and all those birds in balletic flight" (Brantley, 1997). The notion of spectacle-driven performance, however, remains consistent. Brantley added that the "exquisitely restored" New Amsterdam Theatre, the original playhouse of the Ziegfeld Follies, "disappears before the spectacle within it." Brantley (1997) comments that in *The Lion King*

> "Ms. Taymor, a maverick artist known for her bold multicultural experiments with puppetry and ritualised theatre, has her own distinctive vision, one that is miles away from standard Disney fare."

The standard Disney fare that Brantley refers to is the commodification and mass-reproducible megamusicals that Disney (and others such as Cameron Mackintosh and Andrew Lloyd Webber) are known for. It was these franchised live performances that Philip Auslander (1997:5) notes "takes on the defining characteristics of a mass medium: it makes the same text available simultaneously to a large number of participants distributed widely in space." The musical theatre, with the stylistic focus of the megamusical, has shifted the form closer to mass media which, in turn, has not just affected the manner of its production, but also its aesthetic makeup. As an example, Wollman points to rock-and-roll, which was already prevalent in the pre-megamusical *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1973). She notes that one of the defining features would be

> "scores built of maddeningly simplistic, redundant melodies; anachronistic orchestration that strive to make every production – whether set in revolutionary France, Saigon during the Vietnam War, or Hollywood at the beginning of the 1950s – appealing to listeners of adult-orientated radio stations through the use of electric instruments and propulsive rhythms; this treacly plots; and emphasis on visual spectacle over content" (Wollman, 2009:123 – 124).

The Lion King, however, utilised a contemporary pop score by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice that Singer (1997) describes as "a symphonic Hollywood exercise tinged with African flourishes." Perhaps sporting the largest list of composers than most megamusicals, *The Lion King* featured eclectic music by no less than a committee of seven composers, including John,

Rice and Taymor. Additional music was composed by film composers Hans Zimmer and Jay Rafkin and the 'African' songs and soundscape was composed and engineered by Lebo M and Mark Manica. As Singer (1997) notes,

> "that the music works all is a further tribute to Ms Taymor's aesthetic judgment. For the score of *The Lion King* ultimately seems to have been composed by Ms Taymor using multiple composers as her instruments."

The score, however, remains expressly in the realm of popular music with a combination of synthetic and rock instrumentation. Elton John's music is placed firmly within Wollman's categorisation regarding the mimicry of theatre music to pop music, however much in the way that *The Phantom of the Opera* utilises a sound that evokes a Romantic aesthetic, so too does Lebo M and Mark Manica's contributions lend an African aesthetic. Elton John, speaking of the Africanised orchestrations would comment, however, that "I think [Disney] wanted to accentuate the African, which was a very clever move on their part" (Singer, 1997). Taymor added that "[w]hat I love is that the South African sound pulls all of the pieces together so that it's not one eclectic mess. *Lion King*'s power is that it is a true bridge between western pop, South African pop and South African traditional music."

Nevertheless, the production's focus was explicitly on the visual. The rural African landscape, in a way, tricks the audience into thinking that the production is less expensive than it is. Crucially, however, Taymor created "a world of animals onstage without hiding the theatrical trickery needed to do so" (Zoglin, 1996: 85). This concious theatricality is in stark contrast to many preceding megamusicals that persistently attempt to emulate a cinematic experience by concealing the mechanisms that enable the spectacle. Glen Berger (2013: 14), who later wrote the book for Taymor's *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011), illuminates Taymor's efficient use of stage illusion by commenting that

> "[Taymor] delivered a wildebeest stampede in *The Lion Kind*. […] Well, really scrutinise that stampede. Because you first hear the distant rumbling of hooves, but no, snap out of it – those aren't hooves, they're kettledrums. And on the horizon, that blurry herd kicking up dust and getting nearer? They're just paintings of animals on a long scroll that's spinning fast. There's no dust, no horizon. And they're not getting nearer – larger wildebeests now full-sized and practically on top of you? They don't even look like wildebeests – they're dancers with hairy pants and horned shields stamping their feet to louder drums."

Decisively, he adds that Taymor "staged it this way because her objective wasn't to render reality. It was to make an impression" (Berger, 2013: 14). This act of making an impression is in line with the overall aesthetic preoccupation of the megamusical. Taymor utilised effective

stage illusions (similarly to *The Black Crook*), but even without its obvious use of technology, it remains within the aesthetic discourse of a megamusical owing to the shift of focus of spectacle instead of narrative content.[10] *The New York Post* would, however, not register the megamusical-aesthetic of this production in their review:

> "A single Taymor puppet leaves an indefinitely more indelible imprint on the imagination than the whole caboodle of ascending saucers, descending helicopters, collapsing chandeliers and similar contraptions of other Broadway musicals."

Zoglin (1997) labelled it as "a gorgeous, gasp-inducing spectacle" that, even though simple stage devices have been used, communicate a monumentality that befits the megamusical aesthetic. Zoglin's assessment of the visual aesthetics of *The Lion King* is a significant summation of the effect that the production is attempting to create. Visually, Taymor

> "achieved the de-anthropomorphization of the theatrical space and its transformation into a vast canvas, upon which an impressionistic representation of the African savannahs and tropical jungles was painted, through the irreducible interactions of architectural mobile structures, lighting, human bodies and stage props (mainly puppets and masks)" (Siropoulos, 2011: 15-16).

By painting the stage as a canvas, Taymor attempted to create a series of successive visual illusions that, while not mimicking the visual literalness of *Beauty and the Beast*, evokes a similar aggregate effect. The combined use of "architectural mobile structures, lighting, human bodies and stage props" suggests the postdramatic nature of the production which relies exclusively on the superabundant use of illusionist puppetry as an entertainment device. The value of the book as a mechanism of entertainment is shifted to the margins, creating the first arguably conscious precedent for a postdramatic aesthetic in the megamusical. Taymor herself offers that her reimaged interpretation of the movie is based on an inherent excitement in the visual theatricality of the production, omitting any reliance on its textual base:

> "I tried to break that wall and really bring the animals and the experience into the audience. So when the elephant walks down the aisle and when you get the hyenas coming and brushing shoulders with the little kids in the aisle it was exciting for people."

Many megamusicals that would follow would utilise a similar production device, reducing the book of the musical to a subservient aspect of the production instead of the driving force around which the visual and aural aesthetics are subsequently structured. The result of which is a significant influx of megamusicals that are based on films. These musicals, according to

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[10] When Taymor returned to the megamusical with *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011), she would develop this idea to its aesthetic extremes with less success.

Kenrick (2014a), are sometimes also termed "corporate musicals." He continues by arguing that

> "[w]hile the staging of these shows may reflect the stamp of creative individuals, corporate musicals exude the anonymous efficiency of a department store. They look quite impressive, flow with ease [and] provide an effulgence of pop ballads."

Another salient feature of these productions, of which *The Lion King* and *Beauty and the Beast* are prime examples, are that "[t]hey can also be reproduced for foreign or touring productions with matching sets and casts – no need for high-priced stars" (Kenrick, 2014a). Indeed, by the 1990s, "almost every show that made it to Broadway was a corporate product" (Kenrick, 2014a). These productions that followed the new megamusical aesthetic, including Frank Wildhorn's *Jekyll and Hyde* (1997), *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (1997) and *The Civil War* (1999). Maury Yeston's *Titanic* (1997) and Ahrens and Flaherty's *Ragtime* (1998) are prime examples of 1990s megamusicals where the content of the production, while similar in proportions to *Les Miserables* (1984), proved less significant than the superabundant visuals that framed them.

It would be the 2000s that paved the way for "scenic technology that has […] become sophisticated enough to allow the simulation of special effects previously only possible on film" (Wollman, 2006: 124).

3.5 Deconstructing the Book with Spectacle: *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011)

Returning to the megamusical form after *The Lion King* (1997), Taymor posited that

> "I think that the spectacle has been made to feel second place to the words, by people who are reared on, or only studied, literally, plays, and not the art of making theatre. […] I'm a theatre maker. I use all the elements: the words, the image, the music [...] to tell the story" (CBC Radio 2015).

In no contemporary megamusical is this statement as acute as in Taymor's colossal production *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011). Glen Berger (2013: 268), the bookwriter of the musical, wrote in his memoir *Song of Spider-Man* that *Turn off the Dark* was "nothing more than a diabolical machine built by the gods to teach humility." Here, the intersection between technology and the musical theatre collided in a volatile, and ultimately failed experiment. *Spider-Man*'s unique combination of technological excesses and disparate music, lyrics and

book, made for an example of the aesthetic extremes to which the contemporary megamusical is capable.

Spider-Man would gain notoriety as the most expensive musical ever produced, with an unusual $70 million production budget. Even from the outset, *Spider-Man* was "conceived as an extravaganza, complete with the [Spider-Man] himself swinging above the audience" (Healy, 2009d). With a promise to begin previews on January 16 2010 with a pantheon of producers comprised of Hello Entertainment, David Garfinkle, Martin McCallum, Marvel Entertainment and Sony Pictures Entertainment, early reports (Healy, 2009a) projected the production to be budgeted at $40 million and would already have been "the largest show in Broadway history." As a megamusical, it consciously attempted to recreate a cinematic experience that is based on the *Spider-Man* film franchise which, in turn, was based on the influential comic books. *Spider-Man*'s finances reached almost mythic proportions because

> "as most of the solar system knows, the legendarily woe-plagued show has had a long, costly and media-saturated journey from its disastrous first preview last November [of 2010] through agonising weeks of injuries, technical snafus, cast departures and vicious gossip" (Cote 2011).

The production was continually battered with "obsessive, Schadenfreudish coverage" (Green, 2010b) that persistently highlighted the mythology of the production's seeming financial excess. As Riedel (2010a) reported before the production opened, "[t]here are 19 scenes in Act 1 and 16 in Act 2. There are 40 different set changes. The money they're spending is crazy." *Spider-Man* transcended the material fact of the production and became a macabre celebration of conspicuous consumption.

Much of the coverage arose from Patrick Healy of *The New York Times* and Micheal Riedel of *The New York Post* who would both raise much fanfare surrounding *Spider-Man*'s financial circumstances. One of Riedel's (2009a) first articles on the musical, published three years before the production opened, posited that *Spider-Man* is no more than a

> "theatrical extravaganza that features gigantic, perspective-skewing sets, 3-D projections, more aerial acrobatics than Cirque du Soleil, a cast of heroes and villains from Marvel comic books and a rock score by Bono and The Edge."

Riedel reveals yet again the dismay that critics display towards large-scale musical extravaganzas. Taymor would describe her aesthetic vision for the production as a "circus rock-and-roll drama" (Riedel, 2009a), suggesting a return to the early theories of the superabundant Ziegfeld-like displays of the late nineteenth century. Berger (2013: 29) adds that *Spider-Man*

by necessity was "going to have a bigger budget, bigger publicity machine, and some gargantuan technical demands." Even the composers, Bono and The Edge, admitted the influence of megamusical veteran, Andrew Lloyd Webber, on the aesthetics of the music, with Taymor herself declaring, "Elton John [and] Andrew Lloyd Webber: eat your heart out" (Berger, 2013: 38). Riedel (2009a) reported that "Bono said he decided to write for the stage after attending a dinner honouring Andrew Lloyd Webber [and added that] 'We've decided to give Andrew a little competition.'" The production's visual and aural aesthetic were, therefore, from the outset rooted in the megamusical tradition.

The earliest record of a *Spider-Man* musical dates to 2002 when "Irish producer Tony Adams along with his lawyer and producing partner, David Garfinkle, purchased the superhero's stage rights from Marvel comics" (Wollman & Sternfeld 2011: 4). The rights alone, although no particular balance has been made public, is "rumoured to be an astronomical price" (Wollman and Sternfeld 2011:4). Adams, however, would not see the production trough because in October 2005, "The Edge was searching for a pen with which to officially sign on to the project when Adams suffered a stroke and died" (Wollman & Sternfeld, 2011: 4). Garfinkle, a "lawyer with virtually no previous producing experience" (Green, 2010) took creative control of the project. Despite "regular warnings about Taymor's reputation for profligacy," (Bernstein, 2010) Garfinkle continued to develop the project, assuring investors that "it would be a fantastic, even revolutionary, production" (Bernstein, 2010).

According to *The New York Times* (Lee, 2009: 2), "the first round of previews were to start on February 18, 2010, at the Hilton Theatre" but the previews was postponed for a week. In the same press release, Evan Rachel Wood and Alan Cumming were announced for the roles of Mary Jane Watson and Norman Osborn respectively. The new preview dates for were attributed to procuring the "necessary state and building permits and landmark approvals to prepare the theatre." The production's unique size and technical demands would uproot the theatre and rebuild much of its interior. This would allow for the acrobatic flying sequences that eventually became the main draw for the production.

Again, however, the opening dates were revised. A shortage of finances urged the production team to reconsider, as they had already "ripped up" the Hilton theatre in order to "accommodate Ms Taymor's vision for the musical." (Healy, 2009b: 5). The following day it was announced that a rock concert producer, Michael Cohl, was stepping in to produce the production which was already facing enormous financial difficulties. *The New York Times* then reported that even with Cohl's lack of experience, having only co-produced *Spamalot* (2004) previously, "he is

widely regarded in the entertainment community as a man with deep pockets, a Rolodex packed with investors and a knack for presenting entertainment spectacles" (Healy, 2009c: 3). Chol himself would defend the monetary implications of *Spider-Man* by arguing that "[s]ometimes it takes a lot of money to build a championship team, and that's what we're doing." At this point, the production was already costing a reported \$50 million (Healy, 2009c: 3).

The megamusical's spending would only increase in order to accommodate Taymor's colossal vision for the production. As Green (2010) reported,

> "[m]oney doesn't interest her except as a means to an end. When a lighting designer shows her the difference between the red achievable with one kind of fixture versus the far richer red achievable with a more expensive one, what a surprise, she picks the latter."

Cohl acknowledged that "[n]obody wants to see the \$25 million *Spider-Man*," arguing that the cost of the production would be directly proportionate to the enjoyment that the audience would experience. In the case of megamusicals, this seems to be a recurring theme wherein the cost of the production is offset by the myth constructed around an impossibly expensive event that, inevitably, lures audiences in a similar manner than to a P. T. Barnum museum. In many ways, this is similar to the model that Andrew Lloyd Webber and Cameron Mackintosh utilise where "[t]he return on that initial investment comes not just from one show but from transporting the show to several other cities" (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2010). Nevertheless, Green (2010) reported that

> "as jaw-dropping as the show looked in the theatre – and the effects are miles beyond any use of flying, LED screens, and animation I've ever seen on a Broadway stage – doubters say it's not enough to compensate for the third of the capitalization that got 'flushed' along the way."

Conversely, critic Terry Teachout (2011) later stated in the *Wall Street Journal* review that "[n]ever in the history of Broadway has so much been spent to so little effect." The economics of the production would balloon, however, owing to various delays caused by the curious clash between an unresolved book and the overpowering visual extravagance. Siropoulos's (2011) theory accounts for the increasing necessity for megamusicals to rely on its narrative as a performance device. *Spider-Man* accounts for this theory in an aesthetic extreme. A close reading of this production will illuminate the contemporary manifestation of the megamusical as a culmination of spectacle entertainment, dating from *The Black Crook*.

Opening in the same season as *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert: The Musical*, *Sister Act: The Musical* and *Catch Me If You Can*: *The Musical*, *Spider-Man* was not out of place within the

movie-turned-megamusical format which, increasingly, had become a trend among megamusicals. This is unsurprising when recounting that megamusicals, by design, attempt to recreate a cinematic experience and, therefore, the literal re-interpretation of filmed material on stage supplies ample opportunity for visual display. Yet, as was the case with other movies-turned-megamusicals, *The Lion King* and *Beauty and the Beast*, the megamusical relies on an audience's familiarity with the source material to both reach a wider international market that may already be familiar with the source and to place its focus on the "spectacularization" (Wollman & Sternfeld, 2011:9) of the production itself. Indeed, Dziemianowicz's review (2011) observed that "[t]he straightforward story doesn't expand the portrait of the popular hero," assuring that audiences would be greeted with the narratively familiar when seeing *Spider-Man*.

The narrative of *Spider-Man* follows the origin story of Peter Parker as he gains spider-like supernatural powers and goes on to defend both the residents of the city, as well as his love interest, Mary Jane Watson from his arch nemesis, Norman Osbourne, who attempts to murder the now supernatural Spider-Man while proving that his company, Osbourne Industries, has perfected new and advanced evolutionary technology. Brantley (2011) stated that the narrative is simple enough so that "anyone can follow." He summarised the show as "[b]oy is bitten by radioactive spider, boy acquires amazing powers, boy fights crime, boy has doubts, boy triumphs" (Brantley 2011). Producer Chol described it as

> "a spectacle with a very basic love story at its heart, and the conflict between great power and responsibility and your loved one. What do you do? Do you go to work or stay home with your girlfriend?" (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2010).

By Chol's own admittance, the "very basic" narrative itself is almost substituted by the 'spectacle' that frames it. The only original element of the production that is not to be found in either the comic books or the movie, would be the inclusion of a mythical spider-figure, Arachne, who seems to weave the action of the story as it unfolds. This character was later reduced to a minor role, thus depleting any sense of narrative originality.[11] Riedel (2010h), however, would comment that "all the special effects in the world can't mask an incoherent plot, lame jokes and dull characters." The technical tricks that the production employed would be the main draw for audiences to whom

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[11] When the second iteration of the production opened, Gardner (2011) proposed that the "new *Spider-Man* is cuter and more cautious than its predecessor, more in line with the winking musical adaptations of famous films and brands that have lined the theatre district in recent years." This version did away with such elements as the Geek Chorus (a wordplay on "Greek Chorus") and Arachne.

> "[t]he prospect of [Julie Taymor] hooking up with Spidey, the nerdy-cool Marvel Comics crime fighter, seemed like a swell opportunity for another lucrative melding of pageantry, puppetry and culture high and low" (Brantley, 2011).

To be sure, Taymor had been lauded for her aesthetic as "the new Ziegfeld after reinventing a Disney animated film, *The Lion King,* as a classy, mass-appeal Broadway blockbuster" (Brantley 2011). Her penchant for visual spectacle would be the main driving force of Spider-Man's ineffable marketing campaign. As Dziemianowicz (2011) adds, "[t]he reason to see *Turn off the Dark* remains the acrobatic aerial stunts and flying, particularly the 11 o'clock showdown, are dazzling."

Visually, the production consisted almost entirely of computer-controlled special effects from beginning to end. One of the most elaborate "selling points" (Green, 2010) of the production, were "[a]erial stunts in which actors zoom and battle directly over the heads of the audience" (Green, 2010). Indeed, "the mezzanine, where many of the lift-offs and landings take place, has been renamed the Flying Circle" (Green 2010). According to Green (2010), there are more than thirty motors that power the speed and height trajectory of the movements, thus creating the visually impressive effect of stage flight.

It would be George Tsypin's scenic designs, however, that underscored Taymor's aesthetic which Green (2010) described as "visual, physical [and] as dense as dance." Tsypin's designs consisted of "awesome comic-inspired sets. They flip, unfold and twinkle as they weave their way from Queens rowhouses and high-tech lab to the top of the Chrysler Building" (Dziemianowicz, 2011). These were to accommodate the demands made by Berger and Taymor's script

> "that so nonchalantly calls for the most impossible things. 'Decimated buildings on fire.' 'He bounces off the walls and ceiling.'" (Green, 2010)

The production's "high-tech" aesthetic (Dziemianowicz, 2011) would complement the comic-book-inspired scenery that, though elaborate visual trickery, show "exaggerated perspective lines of a set meant to look like a 3D pop-up book version of New York" (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2010). The technical requirements of Taymor and Tsypin's vision, meant that the production was powered by "a bank of computer screens" which made the theatre "look more like a Nasa control room than a theatre" (Edgecliffe-Johnson 2010).

When the production finally opened, "it only took $75 million, seven months of previews, a round of injuries to flying actors, the emotional departure of its creative director and a three-week shutdown to retool" (Dziemianowicz, 2011). The more positive reviews noted that the

final production weaves "an exciting web of wonder" (Sheward, 2011). Sheward (2011), having also reviewed the first opening after the delayed fourth opening, found it "a weird amalgam of fanboy esoterica, feminist mythos, startling stage pictures, and thrilling aerial sequences." Noticeable in all discussions on the show is the nature of the book which many critics only refer to briefly, if at all. The focus is clearly on the postdramatic nature of the show that taps into the postmodern conglomeration of high art and pop-culture, similarly to *Jesus Christ Superstar*. This aesthetic did not go unnoticed by at least one reviewer who argued that *Spider-Man* is

> "a straightforward children's entertainment with a mildly suspenseful story, two-dimensional characters, unapologetically bad jokes and the kind of melodious rock tunes that those under 12 might be familiar with from listening to their parents' salad-day favourites of the 1980s and '90s. The puppet figures and mask-dominated costumes worn by the supporting villains still seem to have wandered in from a theme park. The projection designs by Kyle Cooper continue to suggest vintage MTV videos, as does the unimaginative choreography by Daniel Ezralow and Chase Brock" (Brantley, 2011).

The disharmonious MTV-digitalism that surrounds the creation of the contemporary megamusical – constructions of enormous technological performances – are to be found in the music and lyrics of *Spider-Man* itself. In an interesting admission by The Edge, he notes that "people have lost their trust in what they are seeing and feeling [owing to films that rely heavily on computer graphics]. There is something very visceral about theatre, and there is nowhere to hide" (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2010). Bono agreed and added that

> "[i]n the digital age, live art is where it's at. […] The music fan is placing the value they once put on owning a recorded moment to, instead, having a moment that can't be recorded" (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2010).

Regardless of Bono and The Edge's concern for theatre's inherent liveness, there is a distinct pre-recorded, manipulated and digital sound that permeates the music and lyrics. Berger describes the music as a "bizarrely infectious mashup of sampled violin notes, Pixies-inspired punk-surf guitar" (Berger, 2013: 94). During the initial stages of development, the song "Picture This" is described with "guitars sounding like overheating turbines; cymbals getting bashed." What would later be labelled as "Arachne's Theme" would be "a series of descending notes that managed to sound ancient, grand, and foreboding" (Berger, 2013: 30). The riff Bono and Edge called "Boy Falls from the Sky" would be "the driving electric-guitar-fuelled hit of our musical" (Berger, 2013: 30).

The lyrics themselves seem disconnected from the musical's narrative drive. In the song "Rise Above," for example, Peter Parker sings,

> "Cause the sense is in the side
> Cause the marble's in the slow
> And the sheepers in your heart
> In batten you will grow."

Taymor would describe this song – the main theme of the production – as something that "sounds like what the Beatles might have written if they'd studied with Irving Berlin" (Green 2010). Berger (2013: 30) himself notes that "[o]n the page it's silliness." The lyrics are written without concern for driving the plot forward, but instead become slightly diffused conveyers of "emotional content" (Berger, 2013: 30). This style of lyric writing, the creators of the production called "bongelese." Regardless, they found the music to be "mysterious, playful, varied [and] theatrical" (Berger, 2013: 30).

Green (2010) found the lyrics to be impressionistic in its style, refusing the relate narrative or develop character, but rather to impress a feeling or emotion upon the viewer. This impressionism is exemplified by lyrics such as "[t]here's no time for sorrow when there's no such thing as time," to which Taymor offers, "[y]ou don't even know what that means exactly, but you know it's right" (Green, 2010).

The literal meaninglessness of the lyrics was problematic to some reviewers, who noted that it is too generic and sound like many other rock/pop songs that are found in other megamusicals. Dziemianowicz (2011) offered that

> "[u]nfortunately, songs by U2 rockers Bono and The Edge are a mixed bag and don't match visual splendours. Like a vanquished villain, several nondistinct tunes go splat. A new Green Goblin song, "A Freak Like Me," seems like a number cut from *Shrek* or *Taboo*."

The music and lyrics, with its refusal to develop story or character, did not allow opportunity for the show to function like anything other than a rock concert with disparate songs that seem stitched together and pure rock music, according to Miller (2011: 129) "is about the beat; theatre songs are about the information," illuminating the production's lack of narrative focus. Miller (2011: 128) provides a detailed outline as to why many reviewers might have found the music unfavourable.

> "The reason pure rock and pop music doesn't usually work in a stage musical is largely its intrinsically repetitive nature. Rock music uses far fewer chords than classical or theatre music does; in extreme cases, an entire song can use only four chords. [...] The

kind of musical development and invention necessary to hold an audience's attention over two hours is usually missing entirely. Likewise, rock lyrics are by their nature also highly repetitive. A typical pop song repeats its chorus many times, usually with the exact same lyric each time. Conversely, a theatre song has to convey a great deal of information about character, situation, subtext, foreshadowing, and plot. Because of its repetitiveness, a rock song just doesn't have the time and space to communicate that much information" (Miller, 2011:128).

Within the post-*Jesus Christ Superstar* megamusical framework, however, it seems to be a moot point when part of the marketing of the musical resides upon the inclusion of Bono and The Edge as creative partners. The expectation, therefore, is that the rock music utilised in the production would have a similar aesthetic to the band (U2) who's frontmen are used to promote *Spider-Man*; an aesthetic characterised by the very nature of Miller's summation of "repetitive rock" music. *Jesus Christ Superstar* relied on familiarity with the pre-released score to advertise the production, whereas *Spider-Man* uses the fame of the composers to create a similar sense of familiarity – a trait that the music borrows from the narrative aesthetic.

The performances were unable to carry the somewhat meaningless lyrics and repetitive music. In the role of Peter Parker, Brantley found Reeve Carney's performance to represent "an appealingly agitated Everydweeb with great cheekbones and a sanitised, lite version of a concert rocker's voice [sic]" (Brantley, 2011). Brantley's assessment seems to underscore the fact that the production seems less driven by a concern for narrative cohesion and more by the visual and aural spectacle that tries so mimic the rock concert experience. This reading, at least, can be supported by the megamusical's penchant for mimicry of other large-scale performance modes, with cinematic scenery and special effects being a visual example.

The fact that Taymor is known for her visually dense theatrical pageantry accounts for her reasoning to agree to the project in the first place. After reading the original comic books, she realised that *Spider-Man* offered "a mythology as authentic as any other" (Green, 2010). She argues that "Spider-Man […] is a New York precursor to Harry Potter, a mythic story of our age akin to the Greek myths or the Mahabharata" (Edgecliffe-Johnson, 2010).

Taymor attempted to tap into the mythological aspect of the *Spider-Man* narrative and present it with the same sense of mythological staging that exemplifies the highly saturated world of technology. By utilising technology, she attempted to recreate the visual aesthetics of the comic books upon which the musical is based, framing elements of the narrative in striking visual tableaus and only providing visual hints at the underlying narrative. Taymor has notably used this device once before in *The Lion King* (1997). Berger (2013:23) recounts that

"[w]hen Scar and Simba fight, they lock arms, make a half-revolution, and break. That's it. That's the fight. It isn't a real fight; it isn't even a dance-interpretation of a fight. It's a signifier for a fight. On one level, it's incredibly unsatisfying – where's the action? Julie unfolds new tableaux in front of us, and what we get is an *illusion of action*."

This staging device is, ironically, also to be found in the narrative itself which, much like a large machine, is driven from one technologically spectacular event to the next, "taking an audience frame by frame, as it were, through a story" (Berger, 2013: 24). This device of visually "framing" each moment is designed "for maximum impact, always with an ethic of economy in both word and gesture" (Berger, 2013: 24). This has double meaning for the purposes of this study: firstly, it reminds of the aesthetic of the aggregate tradition wherein each successive moment was designed as a device to 'stop the show.' Secondly, it illuminates the megamusical's disinterest in narrative as a storytelling device, instead relying on visual signifiers to sketch the "illusion of action" (Berger, 2013: 23).

In a series of visual signifiers – much like the frames in a comic book – megamusicals function in a similar manner as the early mega musicals of the aggregate tradition. The ostensible difference, however, lies in the speed and succession at which these visual signifiers can be created and recreated. Contemporary megamusicals, therefore, allow ever increasing opportunity for spectacle to fill the performance space, supplanting the book and the actor as an interpretive artist.

Taymor, for her part, had no intention of "making a Broadway version of a conventional summer blockbuster movie; she wanted to create a pop culture epic" (Sheward, 2011). But as Sheward (2011) adds, "[y]ou can't fault her endless imagination, but she forgot one of the most important elements in musical making: coherent storytelling," the salient feature lost in the new megamusical.

3.6   Summary of the Megamusical and Conclusion

Contemporary manifestations of megamusicals, in summary, rely on three interconnected devices that all affect the overall cost (and therefore, size) of the production, which, by necessity must be of a certain proportion so as to both fuel the mythology of the production and cement its popular appeal as a 'blockbuster.' This has the effect that Adler (2004: 100) summarises by positing that "great spectacle generates an expectation of and demand for greater spectacle," thereby propagating the desire of increased size and spectacle. As in the case of the ever-increasing amount of megamusical productions – and the advent of movies-turned-megamusicals – the myth of expense precedes the production. This proliferates the view

that its size is in correlation to the enjoyment that audiences may gather from the production – an enjoyment derived, perhaps, from the pleasure of conspicuous consumption arising from the megamusical's inherent aesthetic of monumentality.

The three facets of production that are affected, broadly, are therefore the aural aesthetic, the visual aesthetic which, finally, affects the narrative of the production itself. These components work in various combinations to achieve a 'mega' aesthetic that is then characterised by its superabundant production value. The visual and aural aesthetics – in their superabundance – have a correlating diminishing effect on the narrative (or the book) of the musical. These facets have been in play even from the birth of the musical theatre, dating from *The Black Crook* through the Ziegfeld *Follies*. These proto-mega musicals, in their enormity, diminished plot and cohesion to provide an experience that provided a sense of overabundance: a practice referred to as the aggregate tradition.

Although the aggregate tradition allows for the inclusion of as many disparate elements as possible to be placed in the confines of a single event or space (performative or otherwise), the notion of superabundance only comes into play when the amount of aggregated components exceeds certain parameters of scale. These parameters are defined by an audience's awareness of the size of the production and the inherent enjoyment derived from the viewership of ostensibly impossibly large performances. In all accounts of these performances (reviews, and personal documentation), the fact of the production's size is without exception the central feature under discussion. The production's scale, therefore, surpasses any other factor of enjoyment.

The advent of technologically advanced performance mechanisms, allowed for this aesthetic (of superabundant aggregation) to transform into a mass-producible art form that shredded the mythology of the rarity of the performance event itself, thereby making the latter aesthetic a threatening norm instead of an uncommon aberration of musical theatre. The first harbinger of this aesthetic was the inclusion of rock music in the theatre, of which *Jesus Christ Superstar* is a prime example.

Although rock music had previously been utilised in the theatre, this musical's use of rock music in combination with a full-scale orchestra created a new musical aesthetic that was both as large and seemingly expensive than O'Horgan's visuals that framed the production. The amplification of the actor's voice (first fully utilised in *Promises, Promises*) combined with rock music and a full orchestra (both also electronically amplified) created a precedent for an

aesthetic that promoted not only visual grandeur but also auditory overabundance. Many subsequent megamusicals utilise a similar soundscape with an almost impossibly large orchestra and rock band accompanying the action.

The second harbinger of the megamusical aesthetic was the use of complex computational apparatus to transform the stage picture. Although productions such as *The Phantom of the Opera* also utilised computers to shift stage machinery, Disney's *The Beauty and the Beast* was the first production to deliberately advertise the immense visual landscape created by computers. The sheer volume of articles published about this production's prolific use of technology prompts the argument that *Beauty and the Beast* was the first production to bring vast canvasses of digitally manipulated scenery into the mainstream consciousness.

Technology in this way inescapably affected the musical's aesthetic. Megamusicals, with the aid of pre-programmed technologies, can be automated to provide an exact replication of a particular stage effect in an almost unlimited array of possibilities, thereby creating stage images that can constantly transform into different configurations; a feat that would be unpractical for productions such as *The Black Crook*, or any of the golden era musicals. Megamusicals could reproduce impossibly complex stage operations that would, if managed by humans, be impossible to the degree of intricacy and flawlessness that computers and mechanics can provide. The crashing chandelier in *The Phantom of the Opera*, for example, controlled by various computers, allow for a stage effect that would otherwise have been dangerous of an audience in the front rows. In the case of *Spider-Man*, for example, Brantley (2011) amusingly proposes that

> "[t]here is something to be said for those dangerous flying objects – excuse me, I mean actors – that keep whizzing around the Foxwoods Theater, where the mega-expensive musical *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark* is playing. […] After all, if you're worried that somebody might fall on top of you from a great height, the odds are that you won't nod off" (Brantley, 2011).

This has an effect on the content of the productions themselves which, invariably, are affected by the possibilities that technology provides. In a certain sense, the narratives take on a lesser importance than the other performance devices that are now controlled by a vast array of digital equipment. The puppets in *The Lion King*, therefore, becomes the focal point of all the reviews published of the production; reviews which make almost no mention of the performances of the actors. The visual aesthetics has surpassed the need for narrative centrality. Of course, one should be wary of assuming that the narrative of the production *should* be central to the performance, thereby diminishing other aspects of performance. The notion should be put

forward without consideration of which mode of production is more artistically acceptable than others, for, as *The Lion King* demonstrates, productions that rely on complex visuals, need not be artistically less significant than productions with other performative prerogatives.

The point should be made, therefore, that the narrative might carry less significance than would, perhaps, otherwise have been the case, such as in the golden age musicals. Siropoulos (2011) posits this theory and proposes that megamusicals are, by design, a postdramatic manifestation. The lesser reliance on book, therefore, is one of the defining features of the megamusical.

In the following chapters, I wish to take these features of the megamusical that I have highlighted, and argue that these features have inescapably affected other modes of musical theatre production: there has grown an expectation for meganess (and its accompanying aesthetic features) that affects how a practitioner approaches even seemingly opposite forms, such as the intimate musical. Furthermore, the intimate musical, as a form, has remained uncomfortably undefined in a milieu that is saturated by the expectations and aesthetics monumentality.

Chapter 4: Towards a Theory of the Intimate Musical

In the previous chapter, I explored the notion that megamusicals had become the de facto standard for musical production since the late 1970s when advances in electronic design and computational power allowed directors and designers greater opportunity for elaborate and intricate staging. The productions themselves became well-oiled machines that, owing to their striking nature, has fuelled an enormous economic model that, centrally, stimulates the creation of large-scale performances. Megamusicals, therefore, have become the driving force behind the economics of the Broadway and West End musical. Presently, these productions have attained an ever increasing cinematic quality in their presentation, partly as a way to compete with film in a live format and partly as a way to tell stories that are similarly cinematic in their scope. Their narratives are vast and expansive and their presentation is correspondingly colossal.

These qualities are rooted in audience's taste for grandeur – a trait that has been present in American theatrical entertainment since the P. T. Barnum-era of conglomerate and aggregate entertainment forms. However, as the technology allowed for greater freedom in this regard, so audiences' hunger for spectacles developed as well. Likewise, because "Broadway [is] primarily a commercial enterprise" (Adler, 2004: ix), practitioners are always attempting to turn a profit. This means that many productions are taylored for audience enjoyment, frequently stripping the work of its original intent to satisfy consumer demand. Adler (2004: 10) points out that "[s]ome practitioners believe that Broadway is now attracting an audience whose makeup is considerably more 'middle-American.'" The productions themselves, according to Todd Haimes, the artistic director for the not-for-profit Roundabout Theatre, are not "dumbed down" to audience's tastes, but

> "are a response to an audience that's already been dumbed down by everything else in society – the education system, television […]. To appeal to the mass number of people that a huge Broadway [production] needs to appeal to now, they have responded by giving fare that more closely resembles the mass-appeal movies than what we consider the highest quality theatre" (Adler, 2004: 71–72).

This "degradation of mass culture" (Adler, 2004: 213) has affected the content of many productions on the Broadway stage. Many musicals running in the 2016 Broadway season are now film-to-stage productions that are inevitably produced in the megamusical aesthetic. Besides the long-running megamusicals *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986), *Les Misérables* (1982) and *Wicked* (2003), these include *Aladdin* (2011), *American Psycho* (2016), *An*

American in Paris (2015), *Finding Neverland* (2015), *The Lion King* (1997) and *School of Rock* (2015). Gerard Alessandrini argues that

> "[p]roducers want names that are recognisable to the general public. That's why they pick a film. You put it on the stage, and a lot of the general public believes that they are going to see a film, live on stage!" (Adler, 2004: 213).

Adler (2004: 132) summarises that "[g]lib cynicism, surface irony, and earnest pop-operatic sentimentality are the current lingua franca," meaning that "[t]he marriage of slick spectacle and pop-rock aural wallpaper has produced a well-honed but soulless wash of sameness" (Adler, 2004: 213). The combination of these elements has therefore nurtured an artistic climate that is almost exclusively focussed on creating theatrical entertainment that promotes productions not by the merit of its content (content that must be familiar to be appealing) but more importantly by the size and corresponding cost of the production itself.

4.1   The Megamusical in South Africa

It would be tempting to argue that these inclinations are exclusively rooted in American entertainment culture – a culture fuelled by Barnum's aggregate forms. The evidence, however, illustrates that this has become a global phenomenon that has infiltrated South African entertainment. Although studies looking at the specifics of the American entertainment aesthetic in South Africa are rare, at least one study (Campbell, 2010: 1) notes that "[a]n American arriving in South Africa today can scarcely help but be struck by how familiar it seems." Campbell contends that

> "South Africans, black and white, drink Coca-Cola, eat Kentucky Fried Chicken, and spend exorbitant sums on Nike shoes and sportswear. They shop in sprawling suburban malls, modelled on American prototypes and offering a dizzying array of American commodities. The local cineplexes carry the latest Hollywood blockbusters, while television, which the apartheid state prohibited until 1976, serves up an endless stream of American commercial programs" (Campbell, 2010: 1).

It stands to reason that this same aesthetic has translated to our taste for the Unites States' most significant contribution to the theatre: the musical. The expectation of grandeur has pervaded a South African musical landscape in a similar manner as the Broadway musical, albeit with the caveat of significantly fewer financial resources. This limitation has brought about to two main professional[12] production styles in South Africa. The first of which are the Baudrillardian

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[12] Here I am deliberately excluding regional or school productions of musicals, thereby limiting my conception of professional musical to a production with significant touring schedules and includes a wholly professional cast.

reproductions of pre-existing megamusicals. South Africa frequently mounts replica productions such as *Les Misérables* (1995), *Cats* (2001), *The Phantom of the Opera* (2004), *The Lion King* (2007) and *Beauty and the Beast* (2008). This phenomenon is only particular to South Africa alone as these productions are specifically created and licenced for international markets. As Alan Levey from Disney Theatricals explains,

> "once the property is developed, there are licensed productions in international markets, but in fact, we retain total control of the artistic content and production standards by sending the specific production team originally responsible for that content and those standards to those markets" (Adler, 2004: 97)

The South African versions of these "licensed productions" are produced for the most part by theatre entrepreneur Pieter Toerien and his (sometimes) producing partner Hazel Feldman. The productions themselves are exact copies of the originals, complete with quality-control teams that monitor the process of reconstruction. Toerien himself calls these productions "clones" of the originals (Toerien, 2016) owing to the fact that they are conscious reconstructions that attempt to both rely on *and* conceal their source. On the one hand, an audience is aware that they are watching a cloned production – a fact that forms part of its appeal – and, on the other, an audience must feel as though as are accessing the thrill of original production without the defect of second-handedness. The production, therefore, toes the line between being simultaneously 'original' and not, evoking the Baudrillardian undertones seemingly inherent in the franchised megamusicals.

Toerien has imported many types of theatre into South Africa, including ballet, plays and opera. Of the musicals Toerien has imported, most fall into two related categories: those initially conceived and created by Cameron Mackintosh (*Cats*, *Les Misérables*, *The Phantom of the Opera*) and those developed by Disney Theatricals (*Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*). These productions, according to Toerien, are the most recognisable to the South African market. Much like Broadway and West End audiences, South African audiences respond to narratives and productions (or rather, the myth of the production) that are already familiar: familiar narratives, familiar music and familiar contexts. In South Africa, however, Toerien (2016) claims that "[i]t is all in the title."

South African audiences differ significantly from their Broadway and West End counterparts in part owing to a lack of exposure to a wider international musical theatre landscape. Toerien (2016) comments that for a reconstructed megamusical in South Africa to make a return on its investment, the production must "have been playing in London and New York for at least a

decade before [it is] registering here." It is consequently only extremely well-known, blockbuster megamusicals – or replicas of them – that are imported by Toerien for South African audiences.

4.1.1   Reconstructing the Megamusical

Cameron Mackintosh and Disney Theatricals specifically license not only the narrative, musical and lyrical content of their productions but also the physical production aspects, which includes all visual and aural elements. Toerien (2016) remarks that before his first imported megamusical, *Cats*,

> "you would buy the rights to the musical and you would do your own production of the musical. And [Cameron Mackintosh] said, 'no. You want to do it? Fine, you can do it in your country, but I'm sending you a director. You will use our designs. You will use our director. You will use our orchestrations. You will use our logo. And what you have on your stage has got to be a replica of what's on the London and Broadway stage."

These replica productions are meant to mimic the "official" version as closely as possible, where scenic elements and costumes are imported or rebuilt to specific design specifications. In the case of *Beauty and the Beast* (2008), for example,

> "a team of fifteen professionals flew into [South Africa] to ensure that *Beauty and the Beast* was put together to the exact specifications, with each specialist overseeing a different aspect such as the choreography, music, orchestral arrangements, cast and of course the intricate technical requirements that include the spectacular pyrotechnics, aerial work, sound, lighting and numerous mind-blowing special effects" (Foat, 2009).

The blocking (the visual arrangement of the actors in the space), their vocal and physical performances (including speech patterns and gestural cues) and stylistic choices are also reconstructed from performances originated from the first production's direction. These reconstructed megamusicals are, therefore, tremendously expensive to produce, even when set-pieces and costumes are imported from other existing productions, such as the case of *Cats* (2011), which was imported from an existing Australian production (Toerien, 2016).

The franchised productions are less expensive to produce than wholly new megamusicals, making them a comparatively safe investment in a South African market. The initial investment, although large, is insured by the surety of the quality of the replicated product. Toerien articulates the specifics of the cost structure by noting that

> "to mount a musical today – any of the big ones – will cost R14 million to mount. Now, when I say to *mount* it, I mean, that's what we call pre-production. Now, that is from day one rehearsal to the first night. […] In that process, we have brought in the team to

do it, we have hired in the sets, the costumes, the lighting, the sound and all that kind of thing. We have remade the costumes for the local actors. So, we've reached the first night and there it is. There's the show and it's cost R14 million" (Toerien, 2016).

The production then goes on to have a running cost of between R3,5 million and R4 million, which includes the "gross office from which you pay fourteen percent VAT, Computicket, Credit Card, anything up to 15% creative royalties […] off the top. [Other costs include] [t]heatre rent, advertising [and] actors' salaries" (Toerien, 2016). Beyond these costs, a producer must also turn enough profit to satisfy the initial investment. This means that the playing houses must be filled to at least 85% capacity (Toerien, 2016), resulting in marketing budgets in excess of R8 million during a sixteen-week running-time in South Africa.

To satisfy these costs and ensure a return on the investment, the performance venues themselves must have a minimum seating capacity of 1,500 seats (Toerien, 2016). There are only two venues in South Africa that fulfil these requirements: The Teatro at Monte Casino in Johannesburg which is partly owned by Toerien and the Opera House at the Artscape Theatre Centre in Cape Town. Both venues have been specifically constructed for the purpose of producing megamusicals. The Teatro at Monte Casino was built specifically with the "requirements of the modern musical" in mind (Toerien, 2016) and houses 1, 848 seats. Toerien (2016) adds, however, that

> "[y]ou lose 30 seats if you use the orchestra pit because the front row comes out. But at full capacity, if you're not using the whole pit and the musicians, then you've got 1, 848 seats, which meant *Lion King* [could be imported]."

In the case of The Artscape Opera House, Toerien (2016) narrates that

> "*The Lion King* couldn't come to Cape Town because there were only 1, 100 seats. We then figured out that if we had 1, 500 seats, it kind-of meant anything could come. And Cameron Mackintosh […] was on holiday in Cape Town and I took him to the theatre and he said, 'Of course you can make this bigger.' We were told because of the structure of the building, it was impossible. And he said, 'No, you're completely wrong. You do this, that and the next thing.' He sent his team of architects from London and they – in six months – revamped the interior of the Opera House and it went from eleven-hundred to fifteen-hundred seats. Now we can have all the shows."

The popularity of these megamusicals is undisputed as they frequently play to full houses for much of the same reasons as their Broadway (or West End) counterparts: a combination of brand recognisability and the admiration of its physical enormity.[13] The inaugural production

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[13] Sometimes local celebrities are cast in lead roles to heighten its commercial appeal, but this is rarely the case. A notable example is the South African version of *The Phantom of the Opera* (2004) wherein André Swartz was

of the "R110-million Montecasino Teatro" (Davie, 2007), *The Lion King* (2007) proves this point. In her review of the opening night, Davie (2007) emphasises the international appeal of the production and highlights the colossal spectacle that it promises its audience. *The Lion King* (2007), she notes,

> "has been seen and no doubt enjoyed by 52 million people across the globe - in China, the United States, Britain, Canada, Japan, Australia, Germany, Holland, and South Korea. The 1,900-seat theatre, specially constructed to accommodate the enormity of the show, is now one of 10 lyric theatres in the world. The stage has all the bells and whistles that add to the magic of the production, with holes opening up to reveal ponds or shooting steam or sprouting plants, and a moving stage accommodating breath-taking sets. Theatrical techniques include rods, ropes, shadow and hand puppets, aerial dancers, inflatable set pieces and off-stage performing" (Davie, 2007).

Beginning its run in June 2007, the production ran until February 2008 and subsequently became the most successful musical produced on a South African stage.

Megamusicals in South Africa, therefore, have enjoyed enormous success by virtue of both their familiarity and their reputations. They are doubtless a lucrative business enterprise, but certain caveats make them a problematic performance mode in a South African economic landscape. The first challenge is that there are a limited number of megamusicals that are familiar enough that a producer can ensure a return on the investment. With the possible exception of *Wicked* (2003), Toerien (2016) believes that the South African market has reached an impasse wherein there are not enough bankable megamusicals that have not already been produced in South Africa. A newer megamusical without a recognisable title will not sell to the capacity that the production requires turning a profit, especially with the cost structure in its current state.

The second challenge lies at the intersection between the price that audiences are willing to pay for a ticket and the value of the Rand in the international market. Toerien argues that "[t]icket prices [in South Africa] are actually a joke," noting that average ticket prices for the centre seats in the stalls for musicals in London and New York are between £85 and £150. These prices cover the running costs of the musical. In South Africa, Toerien (2016) notes that the "ceiling for a musical [ticket] is R500." The prices are then decreased in increments down to R100 for the balcony seats. This discrepency has generated an immense challenge to megamusical production in South Africa because as the Rand decreases in value, the price of

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cast in the titular role. The marketing for these productions, however, rarely mention the specific actors that are employed and rely on brand recognition and the draw of spectacle.

importing the production increases while the price that audiences are willing to pay remains static. Toerien relates this to his imported play, *War Horse* (2015):

> "By the time *War Horse* came to South Africa and we had to pay – everything was paid in Pounds – [the exchange rate was] R16. […] Now, if we had to do *War Horse* today, [the exchange rate is] R22,50. There would be no *War Horse*."

Toerien summarises the challenge by noting that "if the titles [are not] quite top-tier titles – *Cats, Phantom [of the Opera], Les Misérables, The Lion King*," audiences will not pay premium prices to see the production.

4.2   A Response to the Mega in South Africa: The Bonsai Musical

In response to the increasing difficulty of producing megamusicals in South Africa, Toerien and his resident director, Paul Warwick Griffin, have appropriated a production mode that has made the costs more manageable. Kennedy (2011a) points out that

> "Toerien, who pioneered the return of the international musical to our stages, has opted to stage not only the lavish, expensive, gargantuan-scale musicals but also some old favourites that have been given the Lilliput treatment."

They have coined the term 'bonsai musical' to describe a specific set of aesthetic principles that encompass certain visual and aural signifiers that are transferred from either full-scale or large performance forms to a condensed and compacted form. In short, these productions are miniaturised versions of either full-scale[14] musicals or megamusicals. The term 'bonsai' is an informal term to describe the form's aesthetics and performative attributes. Toerien (2016) relates the conception of the term as follows:

> "It's something Paul Warwick Griffin and I came up with following Cameron [Mackintosh] saying, 'I want the perfect show to come to South Africa.' We said, 'There are titles that aren't "mega," but we still want a perfect little Bonsai. We want a perfect little show."

To create a bonsai musical, according to Toerien (2016), "we cut nothing." Instead, the décor is minimalised into "beautifully crafted, very clever ingenious little sets" (Toerien, 2016). The number of musicians is decreased, meaning that "instead of having sixteen musicians in the pit, [there are] six" (Toerien, 2016). The aural landscape is in line with the original production's

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[14] Balio and McLaughlin (1969: 86), made extensive study of the types of musical that were defined as "full-scale" by analysing the cast size and budgets of several productions in the 1960s. An average "full-scale" musical, therefore, requires between thirty and seventy-five actors, dancers, vocalists and musicians, "two or more big-name stars; extensive use of music requiring several musicians; elaborate staging requirements with an average of seven set units."

intent but is just presented on a smaller scale. Any additional instrumentation is then digitally mixed into the sound system. The number of actors is also decreased, with the exception of the principle roles. This means that the supporting ensemble will frequently double as other characters where possible, without compromising the integrity of the production.

Toerien (2016) argues that the process of conceptualising a bonsai musical is simply a consideration of "cutting the frills." He notes that

> "when you come to see a bonsai, you get every detail of the show, but in a slightly smaller version. Often I find it's better because you're getting *Sweeney Todd* up close, you are getting *Evita*, you are getting *Sunset Boulevard* in your face. It's a marvellous experience in a small theatre" (Toerien, 2016).

There are, for the most part, two cited reasons practitioners consider creating a bonsai musical. The first reason has directly to do with financial restrictions. If a production would cost R14 million to mount in South Africa, a less expensive alternative must be explored. The second reason lies in the deliberate aesthetic choice of the creative team. This approach, in essence, holds the belief that the musical will gain from a smaller, pruned approach in comparison to its source material. Both motivations are important to explore separately, but it is important to note that they rarely function in practice in isolation from one another. Practitioners both in South Africa and on Broadway and the West End usually cite a combination of factors as their artistic motivation.

4.2.1   Miniaturisation of the musical as aesthetic choice

The concept of pruning a musical to its essence is especially useful in South Africa so that musicals that are usually too expensive to produce can be mounted with relative ease and professionalism. The idea, however, of trimming a musical to its bare essentials is an established and legitimate form on both Broadway and the West End. Indeed, by the 2000s, the costs of running full-scale or mega productions have become far more expensive than in the 1970s to 1990s. Healy (2011a) wrote in the *New York Times* that

> "[s]ome intimately sized musicals that hold down expenses can be capitalized in the ballpark of plays — the musical *Next to Normal*, for instance, cost $4 million — while bigger-scale musicals tend to cost $10 million to $15 million these days. (The hit musical *The Book of Mormon* cost about $9 million.) The most lavishly produced musicals are even higher: Dreamworks has confirmed that *Shrek the Musical* cost $25 million to mount on Broadway."

There are cases when musicals are better suited to a smaller scale than their original production. Audience's demand, however, for large-scale performances has meant that productions that

might not require a monolithic treatment, are presented to suit the market's tastes, instead of serving the requirements of the narrative. One may merely examine Harold Prince's elaborate staging of the $10 million *Whistle Down the Wind* (1996) which was widely criticised for its elaborate stage effects that seemed to overshadow its apparent intimate subject matter. This musical, a rather intimate portrayal of a family's loss of their wife and mother, was produced to mimic contemporary staging trends of enormity. Although Paul Harris (1996) from *Variety* felt the production was "a refreshing departure from the musical-as-spectacle genre," other critics were quick to question the elaborate staging. *The Washington Post* review of the production pointed out that

> "[t]here's that burning-barn effect, and some marching pylons, and a town street that seems to appear as magically as Brigadoon, and a train that whizzes by, and a train that whizzes right at us like the one in Mr Toad's Wild Ride. The sets move more than the story" (Rose, 1996).

Prince, who was also responsible for the megamusical, *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986), is not particularly known for his regular use of intimate staging. His production of *Sweeney Todd* (1979), for example, drew the same criticism as the later *Whistle Down the Wind*. Richard Eder (1979: 16) of *The New York Times*, wondered "whether [Sweeney Todd's] overwhelming physical presentation is not a drawback" to the production's seemingly intimate nature. He admits that "certainly the vast staging, with its suggestion that human life is a monstrous factory, is impressive" but noted that "it tends to muffle the characters and their actions" (Eder, 1979: 16). He later ponders whether "in a few years' time, somebody will decide to put on *Sweeney Todd* on a reduced, more austere scale, and whether this will not display its strengths to better advantage" (Eder, 1979: 16).

The 2005 revival of the production, directed by John Doyle, followed through on Eder's request to enormous success. The stage action of the 1979 production was set in an enormous factory with "a central rotating cube that represents both the inside and outside of Sweeney's barbershop and pie stand" (Eder, 1979: 16). The 2005 production chose a more symbolic locale. Brantley (2005) describes the action "[s]et in a bleak wooden box of a room that suggests an underfinanced psych ward in limbo." The fact that the set seemed "underfinanced" served the production to its credit as Brantley (2005) comments that "no previous production of *Sweeney Todd* has had such a high quotient of truly unsettling horror or such a low quotient of conventional stage spectacle."

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This "skeletal *Sweeney*" (Brantley, 2005) served the inherently intimate content of the production far better than Prince's elaborate vision. Brantley (2005) compares both versions of the production by noting that the original production "was a big-picture masterpiece that placed the show's luridness in a distancing Dickensian social framework. Mr Doyle's version, by contrast, draws you claustrophobically close." The claustrophobia of the design seemed to match the focused (almost stifling) nature of the content itself. The musical, at its heart, is an intently focussed character study that magnifies the madness of a father and husband driven to revenge over the apparent death of his wife; by any reckoning, *Sweeney Todd* is an intricately woven family drama set to Sondheim's haunting and asphyxiating score. A score that, in the 2005 production, reduced the required 27-piece instrumentation to 10, "and because the performers are the musicians, they possess total control of those watching them in a way seldom afforded actors in musicals. They own the story they tell, and their instruments become narrative tools" (Brantley, 2005). Brantley (2005) points out that the narrative "reads remarkably clearly for a show without changes of scenery to map the plot's itinerary." Brantley (2005) concludes that "the big visual scare tactics, which involve little more than red light and buckets of stage blood, are more effective than the grisliest cinematic splatter scenes."

4.2.2   Miniaturisation owing to financial restrictions

In South Africa, however, most bonsai productions are produced as a result of wishing to do a production, but not possessing the necessary funds. The bonsai musical, therefore, is far more prevalent in South Africa than it is on Broadway or the West End owing to the relatively small market. This restriction, therefore, results in productions that are miniaturised through necessity, instead of deliberate aesthetic choice. This does not diminish the value of the productions themselves, but still highlights the crucial need for creating musical theatre on a smaller scale.

Many productions that are pruned to the bonsai aesthetic are, as Toerien (2016) argues, not quite well-known enough to warrant full-scale – or mega – treatment. Instead, they are popular enough to fill smaller spaces such as the Theatre on the Bay in Cape Town and the Monte Casino Studio Theatre in Johannesburg. When examining the specific titles that have been trimmed to bonsai stature, there indeed seems to be a strong consideration of the marketability and relative popularity of the titles. The productions that Toerien produced in the bonsai aesthetic include *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Hair*, *Chess*, *Evita*, *Sunset Boulevard* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The titles, although perhaps not of the scale or stature of

The Phantom of the Opera, for example, are well-known enough to draw a small audience, thereby ensuring a profit on the original investment.

This raises particular problems with regards to the bonsai aesthetic. The bonsai musical, although certainly 'small,' can only be labelled as 'intimate' in comparison to its original source material. Furthermore, bonsai musicals still employ between ten and fifteen actors and quite a few (albeit modular) set-pieces. This means that costs can still range upward of R1 million to produce (Toerien, 2016). Moreover, bonsai musicals can only be revivals or re-imaginings of existing musicals. New musicals that are produced with similar proportions pose particular challenges to creators because the less-known title would be unlikely to guarantee sufficient attendance in order to assure a return on the investment; an investment which is indeed smaller, but, again, only by comparison to full-scale or megamusicals. One solution to this conundrum is to attach a celebrity to the project, but this adds significantly to the production and pre-production costs. Considering the ceiling ticket prices for productions in South Africa and the limited number of seats in smaller spaces, it would be challenging to assure a return on the investment if the title and celebrity does not draw audiences in sufficient numbers – even if playing at Toerien's expected capacity of 85% in his two venues: The Monte Casino Studio (150 seats) and Theatre on the Bay (256 seats) (Toerien, n.d.).

There have, of course, been instances of South African musicals that have managed to be financially successful through a combination of successful marketing and the celebrity status of its creator. The musicals of David Kramer and Taliep Petersen, in particular, have managed to utilise the small-scale aesthetic to their advantage and have played well in smaller venues such as The Fugard Theatre in Cape Town. Recent productions such as *Orpheus in Africa* (2015), which employed seventeen actors and a small band, has been very successful in the South African musical theatre landscape.

Toerien (2016) points out that the lure of the bonsai might also lie in the relative intimacy of the performance. He argues that the

> "audiences that come to the bonsai [musical] are […] thrilled because they don't really realise what they're coming for until they get there. Then they get this intimate experience; this up-close experience which is, for me, very exciting."

The intersection between intimacy and cost structure becomes problematic when, for the most part, financing for musicals without celebrities tied to the show is, firstly, difficult to secure and, secondly, difficult to recuperate. South Africa, with its specific financial restraints, must perhaps consider an even smaller form of musical theatre: the intimate musical.

The intimate musical as a form might, in fact, be more suited to South African practitioners looking to create musical theatre in a climate that does not necessarily have the market size of the more traditional Broadway industry, nor its financial infrastructure. Furthermore, the intimate musical might be a way to create *new* work with a low enough risk that finances become less significant.

In the following chapter, I will revisit the Broadway musical by focussing attention on the Off-Broadway district where the notion of the intimate musical both began and developed. I will examine various small-scale musicals and examine how each contributed to the development of the intimate musical as a form. By exploring the seed of the various aesthetic attributes that constitute the intimate musical, I will outline the principles that govern its creation and, thereafter, highlight how these features (such as a reconfiguration of the relative centrality of the narrative) can offer an alternative mode of musical theatre production in a South African context.

Chapter 5: Initial Developments in Intimacy: Locating the Intimate Form

Almost all forms of musical theatre have been affected in some way by the proliferation of the megamusical form, from so-called full-scale musicals to their bonsai relatives. Contemporary full-scale musicals, for example, share many of the aesthetic features of the megamusical: electronically enhanced instrumentation and visually evocative scenery. With many full-scale production budgets exceeding $10 million, distinctions between the megamusical and the full-scale musical become ever more problematic to define.

Even miniaturised production forms, such as the aforementioned bonsai musical, has invariably transformed. In South Africa, bonsai musicals have mostly become a manner in which to create and consume mega- of full-scale musicals without the enormously challenging cost implications. This has paved the way for an entire South African (and international industry) that is built on re-imagining mega- or full-scale musicals for smaller and comparatively more intimate environments. In many instances, such as the case in both *Whistle Down the Wind* and *Sweeney Todd*, the miniaturised bonsai productions were greeted with reviews that praised the smaller aesthetic. This approach has worked well, therefore, for productions that are ostensibly suited for such physical treatment. In other cases, as Toerien (2016) argues, miniaturisation would perhaps be unwise:

> "You can't take a musical with a chorus of forty and say, 'Oh, we're going to Bonsai it,' unless it will do it. You can't make something that isn't right. The content – the subject matter – dictates whether or not you can bonsai it."

Toerien (2016) illustrated the point with examples from *Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats* and *Miss Saigon*.

> "Half of *Phantom*'s joy is its opulence and its huge staircases and its big drapes. A small *Phantom* wouldn't work. *Phantom* is larger than life. [In the case of *Cats*], you've got the dancers. Even though […] the set is simple, they dance everywhere. All over the set. Things opened and did tricks and there they were. You couldn't do that on the small stage. It wouldn't have the same effect. Imagine *Miss Saigon*? *Saigon* is epic!"

Musicals that are presented on a smaller scale, therefore, are invariably done so owing either to financial reasons or to aesthetic choices. Arguably, the most successful bonsai musicals, as illustrated by *Sweeney Todd* and *Whistle Down the Wind*, are musicals wherein the content dictated the aesthetic of the presentation.

To create new musical theatre in a South African context, a practitioner must find a way to navigate towards an even smaller musical aesthetic that would allow for productions to be staged with modest budgets without the accompanying financial risk of either megamusicals, full-scale musicals, or bonsai musicals. A truly intimate musical would, therefore, be found at the intersection between intimately themed content and extremely small-scale physical aesthetic. This chapter will explore the notion of intimacy in the musical theatre by analysing the salient features of the form by narrating the historical terrain of content and form.

In her critical analysis of the intimate musical, Galloway (2010: 103) begins her initial investigation by quoting a review of the two-hander musical, *John & Jen* (1995), authored by Tom Greenwald and Andrew Lippa. The reviewer notes that *John & Jen*

> "is a chamber musical, meaning it was conceived to be presented in a small theatre for a small audience with a single piano player […]. What makes it perfect for the 49-seat Nonesuch Theatre in Fort Collins is also the very thing that would ruin it in a larger space: If you tried to blow this musical up to fit a larger venue, that's exactly what you'd be doing – blowing it up – because you'd rob it of its intimacy and charm" (Moore, 2007).

Intimate musicals, in contrast to their megamusical counterparts, are created specifically with a smaller aesthetic in mind that is both limited by its stature, while simultaneously exploiting it to the benefit of the content. Musicals created in this manner, such as *John & Jen*, find ways to tell stories in a milieu dominated by large-scale performances through narratives that emphasise the intimacy of the human experience. From a scholarly standpoint, Galloway(2010: 104) maintains that it highlights "the interdependence of design and space" by showing that "intimacy and simplicity are inherent in the structure of the work" (Galloway, 2010: 104). The intimate musical is therefore defined by, firstly, its physical aesthetic features and, secondly, its subject matter that is characterised by "intimacy and charm" (Moore, 2007).

These two frameworks – the physical aspects and the content of the work – are intricately connected. It will be problematic, therefore, to discuss them separately. Instead, I will explore the various productions that paved the way towards the aforementioned aesthetic framework by referring and cross-referencing specific examples of musicals that may not appear to be intimate in singularity, but in some way lead to the aesthetic formation of the form. Thereafter, I will examine three case studies that highlight the points made throughout the chapter: *The Fantastics* (1960), *110 in the Shade* (1963) *I Do! I Do!* (1966). This chapter, therefore, will attempt to illustrate the "boundaries of setting and plot [as well as] the size and style" (Galloway, 2010: 104) of the intimate musical.

5.1   Preliminary Definitions of the 'Intimate Musical'

Galloway (2010: 103) posits a practical working definition of the intimate musical. She separates the intimate musical into specific characteristics that are defined either through physical properties or the notions of content. The first definition is easier to define as it presents exact and measurable physical parameters. This includes cast size, orchestra (or band) size, the physical performance space, costuming, décor and costs. As an initial point, she suggests a cast size of about six people, a band that has fewer than six musicians and a production space with a seating capacity of no more than 150 seats. This ensures that the actors can perform in a conceivably more 'naturalistic' style than would be possible in a larger theatre.

The second tier of her definition is somewhat more problematic to measure. She proposes that the content of the production should concern itself with "humanistic, transparent treatment of characters" (Galloway, 2010: 104). In other words, this encapsulates "musicals with an emotional intimacy usually reserved for drama" (Brantley, 2009a). As many musicals are concerned, as already discussed, with visual and aural stimulation as a method of dramatisation, the intimate musical must, ostensibly, shift its foci to the intricacies of human experience. I will make specific reference to this particular notion throughout the chapter in an attempt to extrapolate and define intimacy in content.

5.2   A Brief History of Early Intimacy (1919 – 1959)

The various aspects that constitute Galloway's definition of the intimate musical did not appear singularly at one moment in a musical. Instead, the facets of intimacy developed gradually and unevenly, both simultaneously and reactive to the history of the intimate musical as a from. By tracing its early history, I will identify productions that showed particular features of the intimate musical, or would ideologically pave the way for future ventures into intimacy. Although I will briefly discuss so-called "intimate revues" (Wilson, 1960: 20), I will not reference cabaret performances or other one-person productions as they exclude the use of various characters in conflict with each other – a critical component of the intimate book musical.

5.2.1   The First Alternatives: *The Greenwich Village Follies* (1919 and 1920)

In terms of musical theatre, one must turn one's attention from Broadway to the so-called Off-Broadway district during the formation of the early musical comedy itself. The Off-Broadway rationale is centred on creating theatre that is "geographically and philosophically removed

from Broadway" (Hischak, 2011: 1). While Barnum and Ziegfeld were producing popular large-scale musical theatre performances in the main Broadway district, an alternative form was simultaneously developing. Theatre of this kind – at the time called "civic theatre" and then later "little theatre" (Hischak, 2011: 1) – was conceived as an alternative theatre "wholly divorced from commercialism" (Hischak, 2011: 1). Where the mega musicals of the era were concerned with securing large returns on correspondingly large investments, Off-Broadway was developing an alternative aesthetic that, initially, remained within the domain of non-musical plays. Owing to its ideal as an "alternative to the commercialism of [Broadway]," the little theatres had minor interest in producing *musical* theatre specifically because, as Hischak (2011: 2) posits, nothing "was more commercial than a glitzy Broadway musical." Perhaps one of the first off-Broadway, small-scale musical productions to challenge this trend and gain widespread recognition, was *The Greenwich Village Follies*.

The first production in the series (1919) was commissioned by Paul Salvin who ran a small cabaret venue named the Palais Royal. He approached John Murray Anderson to conceive and direct the production. Following much of the same pattern as Ziegfeld's *Follies*, this iteration of the follies formula was far modest in comparison to the enormous performances held at the Amsterdam Theatre. The performances of the *Greenwich Village Follies* ran at the relatively small Greenwich Village Theatre which seated 500 spectators at a production cost of $35,000. By contrast, Ziegfeld's *Follies* played to a seating capacity[15] of 1,702 and at the cost of more than $100,000 ("News and Gossip of Plays Here and to Come", 1919: 48).

Besides cost, Anderson's *Follies* differentiated itself from Ziegfeld's through its reliance on multi-talented performers. In Ziegfeld's iteration, chorus girls were presented for pure visual pleasure and were only expected to dance, singers were mostly employed to sing and, finally, actors were hired to interpret short scenes. A reviewer in *The New York Times* notes that what made Anderson's *Follies* particularly striking was that "[a]lmost everyone in the company sings – really sings – including the chorus" ("Greenwich Village Gets Its Follies", 1919: 14). The measures that were employed to conserve finances amplified the overall effect of the production. The reviewer notes that "[i]n place of chorus men there is a quartet that makes harmony, and the girls – well, one looks at them and they look so good one does not expect them to sing. But they do" ("Greenwich Village Gets Its Follies", 1919: 14). The *Greenwich*

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[15] The rebuilt New Amsterdam Theatre now has a seating capacity of 1801 ("New Amsterdam Theatre", n.d.).

Village Follies of 1919 went on to be "one of the most successful musical attractions" of that year ("What News on the Realto?", 1920: 74).

Ziegfeld demonstrated concern at the smaller version with his advertisements for the 1920 *Follies* carrying the announcement that he will "sound the death knell of imitators" ("News and Gossip of the Rialto", 1920: 92). *The Greenwich Village Follies of 1920*, however, proved even more popular than its predecessor. *The New York Times* notes that the production, regardless of its relatively frugal presentation, "is often surprisingly lovely to look upon. A stagecraft of considerable cunning, good taste and real imagination" (Woollcott, 1920: 14). The reviewer notes that "unlike so many of its kind, it avoids the opulent and almost tropical splendour which has been the midsummer fashion" (Woollcott, 1920: 14). He reports that the production was served well by its small scale, noting that it

> "achieves its beauty daintily, achieves a cool and airy liveliness, with silks of delicate yellow and green, sudden, startling adventures into black and white, and silver screens across which the lights play wonderfully" (Woollcott, 1920: 14).

Anderson's staging followed his personal motto of "simplicity and taste" (Hischak, 2011: 4). Whereas Ziegfeld was concerned with realist or extravagant staging techniques, Anderson "employed some of the scenic ideas he discovered in Europe, such as the unrealistic and evocative designs of Gordon Craig" (Hischak, 2011: 4). Moving away from a literalist staging technique, Anderson's scenic décor "was lavish through suggestion" (Hischak, 2011: 4) and was specifically developed as a more fiscally conscious entertainment event. Anderson and his designer, James Reynolds, created visual imagery that reviewers noted were cunning in its simplicity. This included a birthday cake with human candles, a Valentine's Day musical number with a stage filled with lace, flowers, and cupids, and a perfume factory with girls as bottled scents.[16]

The subsequent *Greenwich Village Follies* (1921 to 1925 and 1928) all opened on Broadway in larger theatres, retaining its Off-Broadway name, but increasing considerably in scale. Nonetheless, as Hischak (2011: 7) notes, "[t]he as-yet-unnamed Off-Broadway was seen for the first time as an alternate to Broadway musicals." The *Greenwich Village Follies* was the first musical theatre production that consciously reimagined the musical theatre (at the time dominated mostly by revues) in a miniaturised aesthetic form.

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[16] The following year, Ziegfeld hired Reynolds to design his next *Follies*.

5.2.2 Alternative Ideologies: Blitzstein's *The Cradle Will Rock* (1937) and *The Threepenny Opera* (1954)

Following the success of the *Greenwich Village Follies*, many other revues attempted to recreate the aesthetic – some to greater success than others. These includes *The Grand Street Follies* (1924 to 1927), *Bunk of 1926*, *Bad Habits of 1926*, *Provincetown Follies* (1935) and *Pins and Needles* (1937). On 16 June 1937, however, Marc Blitzstein's *The Cradle Will Rock* opened in the 1,700 seat Venice Theatre for 19 performances, later moving to the slightly smaller Windsor Theatre (970 seats). Although the performance space is decidedly not intimate, the musical itself was an early challenge to the status quo of large-scale performances, albeit by accident.

While labelled an opera by its contemporaries, Blitzstein maintained that *The Cradle Will Rock* was an integrated musical theatre performance.[17] He lamented that "in America, the musical theatre is either opera or musical comedy. Opera means only the Met; musical comedy is on its last lap. Vaudeville has died a scurvy death; revue is alarmingly deteriorating, one revue a year" (Blitzstein, 1938: 124). His solution, in the form of *The Cradle Will Rock*, was to be "a colloquial piece," speaking about characters in real circumstances facing true emotional turmoil that would neither be opera (or operetta) nor musical comedy (Blitzstein, 1938: 124).

The musical, a "Brechtian allegory of capitalist greed" (Tommasini, 2009), satirises capitalist ideologies through its sardonic treatment of wealth and greed (Downes, 1947: 37). However, in spite of its supposed suspicion of capitalism, the director, Orson Welles, did not conceive *The Cradle Will Rock* as a small-scale intimate musical, instead opting for a full-scale presentation, complete with a "twenty-three piece orchestra" ("WPA Opera Put On As Private Show", 1937: 20). Nonetheless, its tumultuous opening transformed its presentational style into one more in line with its anti-capitalist ideologies.

In December 1936, union strikes in Flint, Michigan, "led to riots that paralleled the events in *The Cradle Will Rock*" (Hischak, 2011: 21). The original financiers of the production (The Actors Repertory Company in New York) withdrew, and John Houseman stepped in as producer. Houseman and Welles approached the Works Progress Association that "financed professional theatre to give employment to thousands of out-of-work theatre artist and to offer low-cost entertainment to Depression-stricken America" (Hischak, 2011: 21). After strikes in

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[17] With the exception of *Show Boat* (1927), musicals "had not yet matured. Unlike the very serious, socially conscious theatre going on around them, musicals were still silly, inconsequential, largely nonsensical stories constructed around (hopefully) hit songs" (Miller, 2001).

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Chicago led to "another riot in which women and children were killed" (Hischak, 2011: 21), the Works Progress Association cancelled the production (which was to begin previews that evening) and obtained a court injunction stating that the actors could not perform the piece on stage and the musician's union forbade its members from playing the score.

As neither the actors nor the musicians were legally permitted to appear on stage, Welles retooled the production with aesthetics arguably more in line with its subject matter. After moving the production to another theatre, the actors were required to buy tickets and deliver their dialogue and songs from the auditorium. On a bare stage, Blitzstein accompanied the actors on an "out-of-tune upright piano" (Hischak, 2011: 22) and delivered much of the dialogue because many "actors […] would not risk being seen in the renegade production" (Hischak, 2011: 22). Welles, at the conclusion of the performance, noted that the performance was "not a political protest, but an artistic one" ("Steel Strike Opera is Put Off by WPA", 1937: 4).

This accidental intimate performance was both a commercial and critical success. It marked the first time that a full-scale (integrated) musical was performed with only a piano and a limited cast. It played 19 performances in this iteration before being reverted to a full-scale musical in the Windsor Theatre, where it played 108 performances. As Hischak (2011: 23) posits, "[i]t was a landmark evening and a historic night in the chronicle of alternative theatre in America." The "alternative" musical theatre – marked by intimacy and small stature – would perhaps not be directly instrumental to the intimate musical, but its ideals of subverting the status quo would be central to the development of the aesthetic principles of the form. Other productions with a singular piano accompanying actors on a somewhat bare stage are rare in musical theatre, but variations thereof would appear sporadically later in its development.

Another of Blitzstein's contributions to the intimate musical came in the form of *The Threepenny Opera* (1954). Although Blitzstein had previously done *No for an Answer* (1941), the musical only played for three performances. Described as "a heavy-handed piece of propaganda" (Hischak, 2011: 23), *No for an Answer* did not manage to reach the same level of intimacy of human experience that characterised *The Cradle Will Rock*, however, "some of the songs sometimes overflowed with humanity" (Hischak, 2011: 23). Blitzstein, however, performed the production, yet again, with himself at the piano accompanying the cast.

In the 1950s "Off-Broadway came into its own" (Hischak, 2011: 25) and the format of smaller productions became far more popular as Off-Broadway "lost the taint of being amateur" (Hischak, 2011: 25). While Broadway entered its golden age, Off-Broadway was producing

> "musicals that were often more demanding and not so worried about being appealing [and] that replaced spectacle with cleverness, belly laughs with wit, stars with promising newcomers, and popularity with bravado" (Hischak, 2011: 26).

Ideologically, this is far closer to a useful description of the intimate musical. More "cabaret-like" (Hischak, 2011: 26) in both presentation and content, the Off-Broadway musicals became known for their relative intimacy in comparison to their large-scale counterparts.

The Threepenny Opera, with a cast of twenty, cannot be considered intimate in terms of cast size, but proved uniquely alternative in its bare presentational style. The musical, written by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, was translated and adapted by Blitzstein into English and opened at the Theatre De Lys on 10 March 1954. The theatre itself had a very limited seating capacity of 299 and a small stage that was ideal for this production. The relatively small cast and "an eight-piece orchestra" (Zolotow, 1954: 24) was considered a "very creative" (Zolotow, 1954: 24) venture owing to its diminutive stature. This, however, did not deter reviewers who felt that the musical, despite its small instrumentation, "was overwhelming in its effect" (Taubman, 1954: 3). Blitzstein, therefore, did not attempt a literal translation and transformed it from a "music drama" (Taubman, 1952: 15) to an "intimate musical with sting" (Hischak, 2011: 29).

The director, Carmen Capalbo, presented the production in a Brechtian Epic Theatre style.[18] As Hischak (2011: 28) argues, "although *The Threepenny Opera* was conventionally linear, the presentation was 'historified' and sometimes 'alienated.'" The musical helped define what an intimate musical could offer: "intimacy that [is] also somewhat confrontational, a hard-edge that [is] still entertaining, and a spare production that [is] still highly professional" (Hischak, 2011: 30).

Blitzstein's two principal contributions to the development of the intimate musical provided both a framework and a foundation as to what precisely constitutes an intimate musical. These two productions proved that musicals could indeed be firstly classified as musicals even if they do not conform to the hegemonic notions of musical theatre as large entertainment pieces. With the accompaniment of a single piano, *The Cradle Will Rock* illustrated that the musical theatre's aural landscape might be limited without limiting the impact of the work itself. *The Threepenny*

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[18] Gifford Cochran and Jerrold Krimsky produced *The Threepenny Opera* in 1933 on Broadway, but it failed to reach an audience in its first iteration. It is unclear how it was staged as very little record of this production exists.

Opera, with only six instruments, cemented this notion. Both musicals also illustrated that the enjoyment or success of the musical need not be limited by its presentational style wherein the visual pleasure derived from viewing large-scale performance forms (or, during this time, mega musicals) can be substituted by pleasure derived from content.

5.2.3 Decreasing Size in the 1950s

Very few musicals at the time attempted also to reduce the number of actors. The only musical entertainment forms that sought to do so was the diminishing revue format, which was waning in popularity in the wider musical theatre. Productions such as *Four Below* (1956) featured a cast of four actors and a pianist – Julius Monk. Monk, besides his role as pianist, was also the director, the composer and the writer of the material. In addition, he served as the master of ceremonies and welcomed the audience upon arrival. With about 50 performances in the Downstairs Room, Monk's revues were "often hits because the production costs were minimal" (Hischak, 2011: 37). Monk added additional performers each year, adding one number to the title: *Five Below* (1957), *Six Below* (1958), and so forth.[19]

Another revue that attempted the small-scale production format was Steven Vinaver's *Diversions* (1958) which ran for 85 performances in the Downtown Theatre. It featured a musical number ("Five Plus One") that introduced the small six-person cast which was followed by the song "Musicians" which introduced the three-person band. The second act opened with a "splashy production number" (Hischak, 2011: 44) titled "Production Number" that satirised the expectation of scale that was prevalent in musical theatre of the time. *The New York Times,* ultimately, found the production "cute," but "clever," commenting that perhaps the theatre might even be too large for the little revue and notes that "what would be wonderful in the parlour proves ultimately dreary in the theatre" (Funke, 1958: 14).

The remainder of the 1950s was classified by further refinement of the small-scale form. Although not expressly "intimate," productions such as the ten-person musical comedy of manners, *Fashion* (1959), and the nine-person costume musical comedy *Once Upon a Mattress* (1959) both played in very small performance spaces with minimal musicians.

The 1960s, however, proved to be a seminal period in the formation of the intimate musical. Gassner (1960: 1) remarked in the *New York Times* that the Off-Broadway, smaller musical theatre "accounted for most of the originality of the past season's musical entertainment. He

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[19] In 1960, Monk revived his idea with *Four Below Strikes Back* with Tom Jones credited as a co-writer.

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commented that "[t]he liveliness of *Little Mary Sunshine*, the loveliness of *The Fantastics* and the charm of *Ernest in Love* brought relief from the mammoth musicals of midtown show business" (Gassner, 1960: 1). *The Fantasticks* (1960), in particular, created by Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones, formed the foundation of an oeuvre focussed on creating musical theatre that, returning to Galloway's (2010: 104) definition, featured, among other features, "a small cast [and] humanistic, transparent treatment of characters." Building on the underpinning provided by previous efforts at intimacy such as *The Greenwich Village Follies*, *The Cradle Will Rock* and *The Threepenny Opera*, *The Fantasticks* refined and defined the intimate musical.

5.3   The First Intimate Musicals: Jones and Schmidt

Throughout the remainder of this chapter, I will mostly focus on the intimate musicals of Jones and Schmidt as they stand central in the formation of the intimate musical form itself. Furthermore, Jones (2004b) has expressed his own personal aesthetic preoccupations as being completely separate from the hegemonic, superabundant forms of large-scale entertainment. Their work, furthermore, exists at the intersection between the mega musical and the formalised megamusical forms in terms of the timeline of its development. They have, mostly, staunchly veered away from creating musicals that bear any traces of grandeur, owing perhaps to their first failed attempt at creating such a production (the unperformed *Joy Comes to Deadhorse*). In describing the problematic nature of the superabundant large-scale spectacle forms of the 1950s (which was dominated by Rodgers and Hammerstein), Jones (2004b: 68–69) relates that

> "[t]he form of these musicals became predictable. Perhaps they had been *too* successful. The form is too well known. Too many people had studied it. You could tell, after a while, how it was going to 'breathe' in and out. You could anticipate the production number, the use of the chorus, the lead-in to the next song."

Writing the lyrics for an 'Ode to Off-Broadway' for one of Jules Monk's *Below*-series revues, Jones appreciatively writes

> "I've played in every kind of house
> In every kind of hall.
> I once played Cinderella
> In an empty shower stall.
> The stage was kind of slippery
> But, I mean, we had a ball!" (Jones, 2004b: 82–83)

On relating the virtues of the intimate musical, Jones (2004b: 84) adds that "there is a real hunger for an alternative form, for an unamplified sound, and for more personal interchange between performer and spectator."

5.3.1 *The Fantasticks* (1960)

Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt's *The Fantasticks* (1960) opened in the same season as large-scale musicals such as *Saratoga* (1959), *Beg, Borrow or Steal* (1960), *Greenwillow* (1960), *Bye Bye Birdie* (1960) and the well-known *The Sound of Music* (1959). *The Sound of Music* opened on Broadway on 16 November at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre and later moved to the Mark Hellinger Theatre and ran for a total of 1,443 performances. A few months later on May 3 1960, *The Fantasticks* opened at "miniscule Sullivan Street Playhouse" (Bordman, 2001: 672) and began a record-setting run of 17,162 performances. The latter musical is a landmark production, not only in terms of its longevity but also in the historical development of the intimate musical form.

5.3.1.1 Beginning with superabundance: The Initial Stages of Development

Tom Jones wrote the libretto after Edmond Rostand's play *Les Romanesques* which itself is a "direct parody of *Romeo and Juliet*" (Asher, 2011). Indeed, the play opens with Sylvette, the daughter of Pasquinot, talking across a wall to Percinet, son of Bergamin. Percinet is reading the final act of *Romeo and Juliet* in the moments before Romeo dies. Finally, he is interrupted by Sylvette:

> "SYLVETTE. No, he must not say such things, or I shall cry.
> PERCINET. Then let us stop and read no further until to-morrow. We shall let Romeo live! *[He closes the book and looks about him.]*" (Rostand, 1961: 378).

Later Sylvette and Percinet note the central conflict of the drama in which they are disallowed from speaking to one another upon instruction from their respective fathers.

> "PERCINET. Ah, that's too transparent. I see it all: you are thinking of our fathers!
> SYLVETTE. Perhaps…
> PERCINET. Of their terrible hatred for each other.
> SYLVETTE. The thought often pains me and makes me cry when I am alone. Last month, when I came home from the convent, my father pointed out your father's park, and said to me: 'My dear child, you behold there the domain of my mortal enemy, Bergamin. Never cross the path of those two rascals, Bergamin and his son Percinet. Mark well my words, and obey me to the letter, or I shall cast you off as an enemy. Their family has always been at bitter enmity with our own.' And I promised. But you see how I keep my word!" (Rostand, 1961: 378)

Thematically, the *Les Romanesques* functions as a parable about the troubles of young love while the action, according to Rostand, "takes place anywhere, provided the costumes are pretty" (Rostand & Clark, 2010: 1). The narrative of the musical follows the original play

closely: two fathers pretend to be enemies by building a wall between their respective houses, hoping to fool their children into falling in love.

Jones was introduced to *Les Romanesques* while studying Drama at the University of Texas by Iden Payne who, at the time, was Professor at the Drama Department. Jones relates that "[t]his charming, but trifling, piece, [was] written when Rostand was twenty-four and played with modest success by the Comédie Française" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 4). The play, while Jones described it as mostly "amusing," did not seem initially to be a source of inspiration for a musical. He notes that he "[w]as a director, not a writer. Certainly I was not a writer of musicals. I don't think I had ever seen a musical, except in the movies" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 4). When he met Harvey Schmidt while working at an organisation called the Curtain Club, he "began to discover the exhilaration of the musical theatre" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 4).

Jones and Schmidt wrote two musicals at University titled *Hipsy-Boo!* and *Time Staggers On*, directing both himself. Both musicals proved enormously successful, especially "[i]n the rarefied atmosphere of the classically minded Department of Drama." (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 5). Jones and Schmidt were subsequently drafted in the Korean War and, upon release, Jones "went to New York, fully intending to become a director of plays (the more classical, the better)" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 5). After struggling to create a career as a theatre director, he began writing for Julius Monk in the *Four Below* (1956) series of small-scale four-person revues, and Ben Bagley's *Shoestring* Revues (1955 and 1956) (Sheehy, 2014: 17) and was thereby introduced to the developing intimate musical theatre scene.

While waiting for Schmidt "to become a civilian again" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 5), Jones began working with John Donald Robb – a lawyer that also wished to compose musical theatre who previously studied composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, France. Jones relates that

> "[i]n 1955 [Robb] took a year's sabbatical with the specific goal of writing a musical comedy. [I]n short order we were having meetings, trying to select something to musicalize. I truly do not remember which of us suggested the Rostand piece but, whatever the sequence, we soon decided this would make a 'fun musical,' and we set to work together" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 5–6).

The title for their adaptation would be *Joy Comes to Deadhorse*, relying more on *Romeo and Juliet* than on *Les Romanesques* and deciding on the Western-themed narrative of quarrelling Spanish and Anglo rangers on opposing sides of the Mexican border. The Girl's father would be named Don Luis, thereby naming her Luisa. She would also have a nurse, that was as yet

unnamed, and they "had a villain, modelled on Tybalt, who was a half-breed Apache" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 6). Jones elaborates that

> "[i]nto this rather mixed bag, I added Rostand's bandit Straforel, now known as El Gallo (named after a famous gypsy bullfighter), plus two roly-poly sidekicks borrowed substantially from the Cisco Kid movies of my youth."

Jones described his work with Robb as "friendly and productive" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 6). The music of the original version was different than the traditional sound of a Broadway musical, even while the production itself was still conceived as "an elaborate musical" (Tueth, 2014a: 39) with the aesthetics of a full-scale musical of the time. The music, according to Jones (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 6) "was accomplished and, one might even say, classical. If it was a bit short on 'show tunes,' it did seem appropriate for the strange mixture of opera, operetta and Broadway we were trying to concoct."

The production premiered at the University of New Mexico in 1956 to a moderately "respectful response from the academic audience" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 6). Jones, however, disliked this version of the musical and found it to be "a totally hopeless mix of styles and intentions, with melodrama mixing queasily with whimsy and romanticism" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 6). Furthermore, the *Romeo and Juliet* narrative was shortly thereafter musicalized in 1957 with *West Side Story* which explored "similar questions of race and relationship, the playwright and composer were forced to rework the piece" (Tueth, 2014a: 39). Thereafter, when Jones and Schmidt reunited, they began reworking the musical, albeit still in the aesthetic style of a full-scale musical. That is to say, the musical – which was still titled *Joy Comes to Deadhorse* – was to be staged "on Broadway in the Rodgers and Hammerstein manner" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 7).

This is unsurprising because "virtually all musicals at that time were patterned after the [Rodgers and Hammerstein] model" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 7). This was an issue that beleaguered the creation of original musical theatre extensively at the time because "[Broadway's] customers were the same romantics – or the same tired businessmen – who had first set foot in the theatre to see *Oklahoma!* in 1943" (Smith & Litton, 2013: 208). The result of which was the aesthetic homogenisation of the Broadway musical. Hammerstein himself argued that their musicals were distinguished by "realistic characters and their compelling hold on an audience" (Smith & Litton, 2013: 210), however their musicals were later characterised by "verbose dialogue, […] busy staging and heavy spectacle" (Smith & Litton, 2013: 210). It is therefore unsurprising that Rodgers and Hammerstein's imprint at the time was "shows that

glossed American legend with spectacle and the optimism of bright melodies" (Smith & Litton, 2013: 213) and that this widespread aesthetic formed the cornerstone of *Joy Comes to Deadhorse*.

In early 1959, Word Baker (from the University of Texas) visited New York to direct three short plays at Barnard College. One of these those plays was meant to be a musical. Jones and Schmidt decided to rework *Joy Comes to Deadhorse* after Baker requested that they reduce the musical in size. Jones (2000) relates that

> "[w]e threw out the R & H model. We gratefully let go of our adjoining ranches and our chorus of cowboys. We threw away the entire script and score, except for a couple of songs. We decided to break all the rules."

Jones (2000), when he directed as a student, had always "championed the idea of an 'open stage.'" Partially borrowing from the Brechtian techniques epitomised in *The Threepenny Opera*, he wanted the new version of the musical to be a form of "presentational theatre which would exalt in theatrical devices rather than trying to hide them" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000).

This deliberate aesthetic choice was a seminal moment in the historical narrative of the intimate musical. Noting his vision to "break all the rules," it again highlights the proliferation and far-reaching impact of the large-scale musical. In a milieu where musicals were either large or revues (with notable exceptions), the notion of true intimacy in musical theatre was very uncommon. The idea that a musical theatre piece could function more like a small play than a grand opera was central to the aesthetic formation of the intimate musical. Jones, therefore, returned to the original Rostand play and after reading an adaptation by George Fleming,[20] he chose this version as the model for the musical.

5.3.1.2   Becoming Intimate: Renouncing the Rodgers and Hammerstein-model

Neither Fleming's version (titled *The Fantasticks*) nor the original Rostand text carry any of the salient features of the eventual musical. Besides the singing, the original play has a realistic setting:

> "The stage is divided by an old wall, covered with vines and flowers. At the right, a corner of Bergamin's private park; at the left, a corner of Pasquinot's. On each side of the wall, and against it, is a rustic bench" (Rostand, 1961: 377).

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[20] George Fleming is a pseudonym for Julia Constance Fletcher.

The Jones and Schmidt version does away with any notions of realism, opting instead for Jones' form of Brechtian presentational theatre. Borrowing from various eclectic forms of theatre, including the "commedia dell'arte tradition" (Tueth, 2014a: 39), *The Fantasticks* is

> "played on a platform. There is no scenery, but occasionally a stick may be held up to represent a wall. Or a cardboard moon may be hung upon a pole to indicate that it is night" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 35).

This is a crucial aesthetic choice because many other musicals of the day utilised extensive visual stimuli to sustain and underscore narrative. Returning to *The Sound of Music* of that same season, *The New York Times* noted that Oliver Smith's scenic designs "has provided opulent décor" (Brantley, 2012: 178), highlighting especially the striking filmic effect of its opening scene. Jones's deliberate repudiation of aesthetic norms in this regard was revolutionary in its visual aesthetics. *The Fantasticks*, therefore, was conceived as a musical that would rely on the imaginative interplay between spectator and performer to fully realise the shared experience, foregoing the literal staging conventions characterised by *The Sound of Music* and its ilk. The opening stage directions, for example, notes that

> "[d]uring the OVERTURE, the members of the Company arrive and prepare to do the play. They take down the lettered drape, set out the Wooden Bench, and put the finishing touches on their costumes. When the MUSIC is over, they take their places and wait while the NARRATOR (EL GALLO) sings to the audience" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 35).

Jones believes the scenographic simplicity of the musical is crucial to its narrative power by noting that "[i]f you trimmed away all that [naturalistic scenery], I could believe anything" (Farber & Viagas, 2005: 15). Schmidt's view is more geared towards the practical implications of staging an intimate musical, especially *The Fantasticks* which played in the 153-seat Sullivan Theatre. He argues that "[a] lot of what is now considered to be the 'style' of *The Fantasticks* had to do with the limitations of that theatre. We didn't want that theatre." Director Word Baker concurs, noting that "[w]e used to spend hours talking about 'breaking through the proscenium' and getting an 'open stage'. We didn't know what we were talking about, but we knew what we wanted to get away from" (Maltby, 2009). In this way, Maltby (2009) considers the play to be inherently experimental in nature, arguing that no one foresaw "the impact of the show, how daring or innovative it was in 1960 on May 3 when it opened." Indeed, Hewitt (2016) notes that upon its first professional staging, *The Fantasticks*, "with its minimal set, archetypal characters and deceptively complex themes, was considered a revolutionary shift from the Rodgers and Hammerstein-style musicals that dominated stages."

5.3.1.3   From "Realism" to "Theatricality:" Methods of Creating Intimacy

The presentational style of showing the audience the stage mechanics results in the construction of a shared experience – the audience, doubly aware of the theatricality of the performance, shares the weight of dramaturgical creation with the actors. They are invited *into* the action, as though as to imagine the circumstances along with the actors without the visual aid of elaborate scenery. This creates a sense of immediacy and intimacy that, up to this point in the development of the intimate musical, had not yet manifested. When El Gallo invites the audience to "[t]ry to remember the kind of September [w]hen life was slow and oh, so mellow," (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 35), he is simultaneously inviting them to imagine the circumstances of the action along with the performers, as well as to enable the convention of co-imaginative creation.

With a "chilling, understated act of hypnotism" (Hischak, 2011: 63), El Gallo continues by coaxing the audience to "[t]ry to remember, and if you remember, [t]hen follow" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 35). Utilising a "rather slow" (Schmidt & Jones, 1981: 6) 3/4 time signature, the music encourages the audience repeatedly, yet delicately to "follow" (Schmidt & Jones, 1981: 8) and, through the subtext, to join the act of theatrical creation. When El Gallo speaks, he reinforces this presentational, non-realistic convention by speaking directly to the audience:

> "Let me tell you a few things you may want to know
> Before we begin the play.
> First of all, the characters:
> A Boy.
> A Girl.
> Two Fathers.
> And – a Wall" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 36).

This convention, of course, has been utilised before in plays [Jones himself cites Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* as s source of inspiration (Schmidt & Jones, 2000)], but here the method is applied to forge an intimate bond between the audience and the nine actors specifically in a musical.[21] El Gallo then instructs the audience that they will use no other stage properties or décor, revealing that

> "Anything else that's needed
> We can get from out this box.
>
> *[EL GALLO and the MUTE quickly cross up to the large Trunk and remove the Prop Box, which they place on the stage floor.]*" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 36).

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[21] In terms of musical theatre, this had only been done in small-scale revues, but in these instances it was done for comic effect. This is a unique convention in the small-scale book-musical form.

As El Gallo narrates, "we" – audience *and* actors – are collaborators in the construction and dramatization of this story, while also actively deconstructing traditional modes of theatrical storytelling "whereby audience members remain passive, rarely – if ever – acknowledged consumers in a dark auditorium" (Stephenson, 2014: 119), such as in the full-scale and megamusicals, ranging from *The Sound of Music* (1959) through *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark* (2011). Repudiating this notion of passivity in the theatrical consumer, *The Fantasticks* requests that the audience reassesses its role in the event. Jones (2004b: 14) believes that there are four distinct aesthetic principles at play in *The Fantasticks* that enable this realignment of the audience's role. He argues that

> "I didn't like stage sets very much. That is, I didn't like 'realistic' stage sets – sets which purported to be the actual environment where the action took place. I didn't like living room walls and charming bric-a-brac and pretend windows with present bushes outside. […] On the other hand, if little or no pretence is made to literally depict a place, I had no trouble in believing in its reality. […] Any more [than a suggestion] took away the fun, the magic, the creation. It robbed me as an audience member of my part of the proceedings" (Jones, 2004b: 14).

The first element he calls "fluidity of form" (Jones, 2004b: 14). He reasons that "[b]ecause there is no cumbersome realistic scenery, you can go anywhere you want [and that] all that is necessary are a few (well-chosen) words." When El Gallo instructs the audience to observe the wall separating the two houses, he commands,

> "Look!
> *[Snaps his fingers and points to MUTE.]*
> This is the wall their fathers built between their houses.
> *[Everyone moves into position as the MUTE stands up-stage centre on the platform and holds out a stick to represent the 'Wall.']*" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 40–41).

The second element Jones (2004b: 15) calls "linguistic magic." He notes that owing to the fact that the characters are not bound to 'realism,' they are "free to speak in a language that is more colourful and dynamic and full of nuance and variation than ordinary speech" (Jones, 2004b: 15). The characters in *The Fantasticks*, for the example, do not speak in the 'realistic' mode of speech, opting for a heightened musicality in the language itself. When Matt (the Boy) describes his love for Luisa, he exclaims that

> "[t]here are no other ears but hers to hear the explosion of my soul! There are no other eyes but hers to make me wise, and despite what they say of species, there is not one plant of animal or any growing thing that is made quite the same as she is" (Schmidt & Jones, 1981: 41).

Jones (2004b: 15) maintains that "realistic drama is much better served by film and TV than by theatre," thereby repudiating notions of realism in language itself. He crucially argues that "[i]n an increasingly visual world, the theatre provides a place where people may gather and have a group experience induced primarily by the power of words" (Jones, 2004b: 16). In megamusical "spectacles," (Jones, 2004b: 15), the audience must derive enjoyment from visual stimuli that hides and, in fact, rejects its inherently theatrical nature.

This leads to Jones' third element of presentational theatre that he simply calls "theatrical conventions" (Jones, 2004b: 16). His exact explanation is cryptically concise; therefore, it will be helpful to quote his description in full:

> "Not being 'realistic,' the kind of theatre that I like can have all manner of useful theatrical conventions, such as:
> - Direct address to the audience.
> - A narrator, if desired, to speed us through time and space.
> - Soliloquies. Spoken arias.
> - The free use of music and dance" (Jones, 2004b: 16).

These features fall under the wider umbrella of 'metatheatricality,' which I will discuss shortly. Jones, however, provides one more element to his style, naming it simply "schmaltz." A continuation of his third element, he maintains that "this type of theatre can dare to be outrageously theatrical" (Jones, 2004b: 16). He concludes that presentational theatre, such as *The Fantasticks*, can be "bigger than life [and] larger than the confines of realism" (Jones, 2004b: 17). In essence, *The Fantasticks* originated a style in musical theatre that celebrates its theatricality and invites the audience to actively engage in the act of theatrical creation.

In *The New York Times* review of the production, Atkinson (1960a: 55) commented that "the style is entrancing […]. It seems like a harlequinade in the setting of a masque. The characters are figures in a legend, acted with an artlessness that is winning." Indeed, the dialogue varies between characters speaking intermittently directly to each other and to the audience, reminding them of their active role. During the first exchange between El Gallo and Luisa, the audience is tuned to this stylistic mode:

> "LUISA. The moon turns red on my birthday every year and it always will until somebody saves me and takes me back to my palace!
> EL GALLO. That is a typical remark
> The other symptoms vary.
> She thinks that she's a princess;
> That her name must be in French,
> Or sometimes Eurasian.
> Although she isn't sure what that is.

LUISA. You see; no one can feel the way I feel
And have a father named Amos Babcock Bellomy" (Schmidt & Jones, 2000: 37).

The musical, in essence, utilises a self-reflexive presentational mode that differs from the similar Brechtian theatre by using "metatheatricality in an effort to get the audience to connect and invest more deeply in the play" (Cooper, 2003: 6).

This notion of metatheatricality in *The Fantasticks* has been studied by Stephenson (2014), observing that Lionel Abel's notion of 'metatheatre' is central to the stylistic conventions of *The Fantasticks.* Abel (1963: 60) defines the term 'metatheatre' as "theatre pieces about life seen as already theatricalized." Stephenson (2014: 117) elaborates by remarking that "[m]etatheatre has a transformational ability to engage audiences in a revisioning of the way in which they perform their social roles." This act of direct engagement is a critical component towards the conventions of the intimate book-musical. The notion of intimacy in the musical is forged by the characters and the audience sharing an intimate space; the audience, therefore, becoming crucial witnesses to the theatrical act. Owing to the direct interchange between the actors and the audience in the intimate space, the audience doubles as both witnesses and accomplices. Richard Hornby (1986: 117) notes that this interchange

> "always has the effect of drastically realigning the audience's perception of the drama, forcing them to examine consciously the assumptions that lie behind and control their response to the world of the play. Since these assumptions, the drama/culture complex, are also the means by which the audience views the world at large, self-reference has the effect of challenging, in a sudden and drastic manner, the complacencies of the audience's world-view."

The opening scene of *The Fantasticks*, therefore, "blurs the boundaries between the performance, the performers, and even the audience, establishing a world where 'willing suspension of disbelief' takes on new meanings" (Stephenson, 2014: 118). In the intimate space of the 153-seat Sullivan Theatre, the audience "become collaborators with the writer, filling in the 'white spaces' of the text, or expanding that text into the larger context of our culture, and thereby continuing a creative process initiated by the author" (Homan, 1989: 12).

By casting the audience as collaborators in such an intimate space with the actors, the characters paradoxically become more 'real,' even within the admittance of theatricality. In the 1995 London revival of the musical, for example, the production was staged in a considerably larger theatre and "was removed from its open-stage concept and placed in a traditional proscenium environment, breaking the important connection between actor and audience" (Farber & Viagas, 2005: 227). This production ran for less than a week, indicating that "when the

metatheatrical intimacy and connection between stage and audience is hindered, so is the play's reception" (Stephenson, 2014: 122). The success of the musical, therefore, hinges on the forging of an intimate bond between its characters and the audience.

In addition to its metatheatricality, Galloway (2010: 105) notes that the narrative itself emphasizes the effect of intimacy. She argues that "[the story is concentrated into a small space, both figuratively and literally." The narrative of *The Fantasticks* is focussed on a small cast of people and the effect that their actions have on one another. Indeed, while El Gallo and his actors provide much of the action, the emotional thrust is provided for the most part only by the two children and their respective fathers. Moreover, the narrative scope of the musical is limited to two intersecting spaces: the imaginative intersection between the two houses and the literal theatrical space of the small platform.

These two features – the limited scope in character relations and their equally limited space – are further crucial components of the intimate musical. By refusing the shift the narrative outside the confines of the nuclear family unit and their households, *The Fantasticks* provides a seminal framework for the creation of a definition of the intimate musical. The form itself, contrary to the full-scale or megamusical, focusses its lens on the smallest possible societal unit: the family (an idea that I will return to in the next chapter).

Jones and Schmidt would go on to define other key facets of the intimate musical in their subsequent musicals, *110 in the Shade* (1963) and *I Do! I Do!* (1966).

5.3.2   Facets of Intimacy in selections of Jones and Schmidt's oeuvre: *110 in the Shade* (1963) and *I Do! I Do!* (1966).

5.3.2.1   "The Emotional Microscope" and the music of *110 in the Shade* (1963)

Jones and Schmidt's next collaboration moved away from the smaller, intimate Off-Broadway arena, to the larger 1,156-seat Broadhurst Theatre on Broadway. Following *The Fantasticks* (1960), they set about transforming Richard Nash's drama, *The Rainmaker* (1954), into a musical. Although not expressly intimate, the tools that *110 in the Shade* (1963) utilises in order to obtain its specific intimate effect, is sufficiently notable to mention because they feature prominently in the overall aesthetics of the form itself.

Owing to the success of their previous collaboration, *110 in the Shade* could afford to be somewhat larger in physical scope than their debut production. The original play, a domestic drama with a cast of seven, concerns itself with a spinster named Lizzie Currie who keeps

house for her father and two bothers on the family's cattle ranch in the 1930s. After returning from a trip to her male cousins with the failed objective of finding a husband, she must now care for her family on the deteriorating farm. While the family is concerned with Lizzie's marriage prospects, Lizzie herself is concerned over the dying cattle. A man named Starbuck arrives and promises to bring much-needed rain in exchange for $100.

Harvey and Schmidt's musical version of the drama transforms the play into something more akin to *The Sound of Music* than *The Fantasticks* regarding its physical scope, moving away from their initial ideas of presentational metatheatrical aesthetics. With a cast of twenty principals and a chorus, Nash's drama was developed to include the townspeople surrounding the farm with songs such as "Hungry Men," for example, performed in the original production by "a full chorus of swaggering husbands and fluttering wives" (Richards, 1992). It was not particularly well received by Howard Taubman of *The New York Times* who noted that *110 in the Shade* was weighted down "by the surface effects that our musical theatre practices so knowingly" (Taubman, 1963: 37). Subsequent productions such as the 1992 and 2007 revivals shed much of its weight and was retooled for a smaller cast, cutting, for example, the song mentioned above.

What makes this musical interesting within Jones and Schmidt's oeuvre, even though it is not expressly intimate, is the specific *quality* of its narrative and score; a quality that they would carry through their other projects to a greater or lesser degree and that can only be defined as the musical theatre equivalent of a focussed "emotional microscope" (Brantley, 2003). The content of the musical, consequently, is defined by its "gentle, threadbare" (Brantley, 2007) quality with a narrow focus regarding narrative and musical content.

The score, orchestrated by Jonathan Tunick for a ten player ensemble (Brantley, 2003), has a quality similar to the music and lyrics of *The Fantasticks*, even if the physical size of the orchestra is larger. The music and lyrics are characterised by their intimacy of content and presentation; a quality that the original reviews of the production tended to overlook owing, perhaps, to its arguably unsuited grand physical presentational style. Believing that the songs were trying to mimic the Broadway sound of the era, Taubman (1963: 37) notes that

> "Harvey Schmidt and Tomes Jones […] have tried to soar in some of their songs, as if aware that a lot depended on them. […] But somehow the songs reaching for rapture fall short, and those intended for the bouncing comic relief at which the Broadway musical is so proficient, fizzle."

While one can appreciate Taubman's argument for a score that 'reaches for rapture,' *110 in the Shade*, just like Jones and Schmidt's other works, refocuses their lens to other, smaller emotive possibilities within a musical song. Instead of employing songs meant to evoke the extremities of emotive expression, the virtue of this musical lies in the "mellow songs [and] the gentle, low-key way they express real feelings" (Rooney, 2007). Both the comic and dramatic moments in the score are neither outwardly hilarious nor tragic, but rather skirts the more fragile intermediary territory, lending the musical its complex emotional ambivalence. Richards (1992) emphasises that

> "[t]he drama depends on the reflection in a man's eyes, on the sudden suspension of breath in a woman's breast, on the spark leaping between prospective lovers who are very nearly face to face."

This notion of expressing the smaller (or intimate) human experiences is arguably a typical characteristic of the intimate musical and, especially, the intimate musical song. *110 in the Shade* continued Jones and Schmidt's tradition of defining the emotional scope of the production by focussing on the intimate, concentrated moments of internal conflict as the impetus for the musical numbers that "manage to express the eloquence of ordinary people experiencing elemental emotions" (Richards, 1992). Brantley elaborates that

> "[t]his is not music that rattles the rafters. On the contrary, it seems to melt away even as it's being performed" (Brantley, 2007).

Indeed, when Lizzie sings "Simple Little Things," she underscores Jones and Schmidt's overall artistic vision for musicals that focus on the intimate moments of human experience. She sings that

> "Not all dreams are great big dreams
> Some people's dreams are small
> Not all dreams have to have a golden fleece,
> Or any kind of fleece at all
> My dreams, like my name, are very plain
> No shining knight must kneel
> My dreams, like my name, are very plain
> But nevertheless, they're real
> They're all so very real
> Simple little things
> All I want are simple little things."

The intimacy of the song is characterised by her admission that her dreams "are very plain." By crucially placing herself in relation to other, bigger 'dreams,' Lizzie encapsulates the small-scale notions of the intimate musical itself: notions represented by modesty of size and scope.

Richards (1992) comments that, by the end of the song, "her discovery that she is beautiful, however exultant, is still framed modestly in the form of a question." This inherent "modesty" of the lyrics in combination with the score, is a typical characteristic of the intimate musical that *110 in the Shade* encapsulates through its emotional microscope, perennially focussed on the quiet, unvarnished and unassuming moments of human experience.

5.3.2.2 Narrowing focus in *I Do! I Do!* (1966)

I Do! I Do! (1966), Harvey and Schmidt's next collaboration, shared many of the features of Galloway's definition of the intimate musical. The plot of the musical is based on the 1951 play, *The Fourposter*, by Jan de Hartog and concerns the tribulations of a married couple throughout their lives – roughly from 1895 to 1945. The musical functions in a series of scenes, with each scene depicting a different milestone within their marriage. Again, much like *110 in the Shade*, *I Do! I Do!* does not completely function within the developing framework of the intimate musical in every aspect of production, however, certain aspects of the musical focussed on particular features of intimacy more so than others.

I Do! I Do!, which opened in the 1,319-seat 46th Street Theatre, is unique in that it is the first mainstream two-person musical. The couple in the play are never accompanied on stage by the characters to whom they refer, thereby focussing the narrative quite narrowly not only on their lives, but on their interaction with each other. The original 1966 production starred Robert Preston and Mary Martin [22] in the roles designated simply as 'He' and 'She.' Critics were sceptical, and as Haskel Frankel (1979: 26) from *The New York Times* commented, "[c]onsidering that it was a two-character, one-set play, the idea of turning it into a two-character, one-set musical would hardly seem a great one."

Indeed, critics were baffled by the notion of creating a two-person musical with reviewer Sam Zolotow, also from *The New York Times*, dubbing the concept as "unconventional" (Zolotow, 1966: 28). Considering the minute cast size, Zolotow (1966: 28) noted that neither the performers would appear in the Wednesday matinees owing to the "strenuous" weight of the intimate material in comparison to a full-scale musical. He elaborates that

> "[n]either of the stars will leave stage during the performance. There will be less dialogue than there is in the average musical, and more music. Miss Martin and Mr Preston will have fourteen songs apiece, in addition to four duets. The prologue calls for them to sing three duets before uttering a word of dialogue" (Zolotow, 1966: 28).

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[22] Mary Martin had just finished playing Maria von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* (1960).

The fact that the small cast must each carry an equal share of the dramatic weight of the production can be considered one of the crucial identifying aspects of the intimate musical. In this respect, *I Do! I Do!* is an excellent example of an early attempt at pushing the boundaries of cast size within the musical theatre. It would be tempting to designate *I Do! I Do!* as a singularly exemplary illustration of an intimate musical, however the musical deviates somewhat from the parameters Galloway has outlined. While only featuring a cast of two, the producer, David Merrick, had to raise $250,000 capital to fund the production (Zolotow, 1966: 28). The relatively large budget was used to fund the salaries of the two celebrities cast in the production who, at the time, could draw a considerable audience by name. Furthermore, the orchestra of twenty-five musicians, conducted by John Lesko, added considerably to the cost of the production (Zolotow, 1966: 28). In addition, the numerous costume changes and makeup used "to indicate the passage of years" (Zolotow, 1966: 28) added to the relatively large production cost.[23]

The narrative of the musical is mostly communicated through a series of twenty scenes, with each successively moving in a linear fashion towards the end of their marriage. Regardless of its uniquely small scope, the original production of *I Do! I Do!* was not greeted with warm reviews:

> "What [Mary Martin] brings to these steadily sentimental, overly familiar, and not very inventively rewritten snapshots of everybody's married life (as the comic strips fancy it) is the soothing gloss of a spirit that has long since reduced itself to a few basic, indispensable confidently fetching ingredients" (Kerr, 1966: 294).

When the stars of the production were replaced by Carol Lawrence and Gordon MacRae, critics wondered whether the musical, while "entertaining enough" (Barnes, 1967: 54) with its original casting, would survive. Barnes (1967: 54) mentions that, upon reappraising the production with the new cast,

> "[t]he music […] has only a slender appeal, a pallid inoffensiveness, and the book is as predictable as a marriage manual.
>
> I can see little against *I Do! I Do!* but can also see little for it. I am somewhat surprised that it finds itself on the eve of its second year, but not shocked. Audiences in the mood for nostalgia will forgive the banalities as they happily identify with the time-honoured rituals of wedded bliss, hugging themselves and nudging themselves as each cliché creakingly emerges."

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[23] The 1996 Broadway revival utilised only two pianos, which, *The New York Times* notes, when "[p]osed against the overblown nearby Broadway shows, [is] in itself is a pleasant relief" (Backalenick, 1996). This illustrates the point that the original production, although large, functions well when presented in its intimate form.

Regardless of the critics' appreciation of the source material, *I Do! I Do!* went on to run 560 performances; however, even though the casting is small and the narrative scope is correspondingly so, the production values were of such a degree as to suggest something more akin to full-scale musicals than the intimacy characterised by Harvey and Schmidt's other work. Regardless, *I Do! I Do!* encapsulates two important aspects of intimacy: firstly, a small cast that, secondly, occupies a restricted physical space. The scenic design is limited; in this case bound more by 'realism' than *The Fantasticks*, for example, which allows a certain freedom of movement in locale by suggestion through stage properties and verbal cues. *I Do! I Do!* is set in one particular place – the couple's bedroom – and only moves temporally within this space. This offers a somewhat different intimate effect than in the case of *The Fantasticks* as the limitations of intimacy is bound by locale, rather than by linear temporality and metatheatricality. The singular vantage point of the spectator, bound in this case to the bedroom of the central couple, lends *I Do! I Do!* an intimacy characterised by a similar 'microscopic lens' as with *110 in the Shade*. In disallowing the audience other localities, the emotional thrust of the narrative is exclusively driven by the characters and their specific turmoil within this space. The privacy of the illustrated space, furthermore, adds to the intimate effect. By allowing the audience the entry into the couple's most private sphere, the bedroom, *I Do! I Do!* further outlines its intimate preoccupations.

Additionally, the demonstrative scope of the production is limited by the emotional experiences of these two characters. By restricting the perspective of the production to only the central couple, the musical achieves a certain amount of intimacy in its expressive possibilities. Even though the couple's friends and children, for example, are mentioned, we are never allowed *their* perspective, therefore deliberately only exploring the psychological viewpoints of two characters. This is a crucial aspect of the intimate musical form as a whole as it allows an even more "microscopic" treatment of the characters than would otherwise be possible, allowing greater focus om emotive nuance and scope.

5.4   Conclusion: Defining the Intimate Musical

Throughout Jones and Schmidt's oeuvre, they had managed to develop a clear aesthetic vision of the intimate musical form; much of which is influenced by their rejection of large-scale performance forms. In their early careers, they were influenced by the aesthetics of the full-scale golden age musicals which were known for their 'realist' depictions of the dramatic content which, itself, was a refined and developed from the early mega musical performances

developed by Ziegfeld's *Follies*. These musicals, while rejecting overt aggregation in favour of 'integration,' still formed part of the superabundant theatrical mode, categorised by large and expansive visual aesthetics; in this case through the agenda of realism.

Repudiating these notions, early intimate forms attempted to construct musical theatre performances characterised by an alternative aesthetic. This aesthetic principle developed intermittently through numerous cultural and artistic influences. *The Greenwich Village Follies of 1919*, for example, discarded many of the visual trappings of Ziegfeld's version in favour of a style characterised by resourceful scenic designs meant to evoke visual pleasure through ingenuity, rather than spectacle.

Jones and Schmidt developed this aesthetic with their first intimate musical, *The Fantasticks* (1960), in which the simple scenography is not only present, but also *integrated* and central to the dramatic event in itself. The intimate musical, therefore, must not only utilise a small scenic design, but must also acknowledge and, indeed, incorporate its visual sparseness into the action of the performance itself. The bare visual landscape of the production, therefore, must be crucial to the functioning of the performance event. Inasmuch the music and lyrics are central to the foundations of the musical, an intimate musical's visual style must be central to its dramatic functioning. Galloway (2010: 106) warns, however, that

> "[w]hile the sparseness of the typical set in an intimate musical means that the audience will be focused by default on the actors, it also allows little room for error with the space and set pieces. In a small space, any wrong choice in set or props becomes glaring and possibly irritating to the audience. Imaginative lighting design can often compensate for a modest budget allocated to costume and set design by choosing what to illuminate and what to leave in the dark."

Additionally, the intimate musical not only employs a condensed aural landscape, but must also acknowledge its soundscape by making it indispensable to the performance itself. In the case of *The Fantasticks*, the pianist and harpist is acknowledged by the characters (especially El Gallo) and, in this way, become accomplices to the theatrical act. The music in the intimate musical, consequently, differs from the larger performance forms in that the musicians form a crucial part of the theatrical creation, thereby heightening the intimate bond between performers and audience. The musicians, usually seen as an intermediary between the music and the audience, now take the active role of actors; in essence, they are not ancillary to the performance (and therefore replaceable by computerised instrumentation), but rather a central part of the musical's dramatic function.

This has corresponding implications for other practical considerations of the form. The musical numbers must be performed by both the band and the actors without amplification. In the 1960s, before amplification in the musical theatre became a mainstream feature, this might not have been a crucial consideration. Nonetheless, the intimate musical is characterised by the direct triangular bond between the musicians, the actors and the audience which must be unhindered by amplification. By enlarging the aural experience of the production, intimate musicals risk losing the intimacy that a smaller soundscape constructs. The perceived volume of the production, therefore, should ideally match the volume at which the actors would naturally speak. In terms of the singing style of the intimate musical, Galloway (2010: 106) adds to this point that

> "[t]he traditional 'big-voice' style and the attendant bold vocal projection are no longer necessary [in an intimate musical]. Healthy singing and clear articulation with proper breath support is still necessary, of course, but the dynamics can be subdued and the nuances made much more subtle. With the enclosed acoustical parameters, singers are able to take advantage of greater dynamic ranges in light head tones/falsetto; focused, strong belt technique; and the intensive effects of *sotto voce* and spoken lyrics, even whispers. As a side note, this opens the door to many vocalists who have talent but lack the ability to reach the back of a cavernous theatre."

This aspect is certainly only allowed in a very small space. A critical component of the intimate musical, therefore, is the parameters regarding the size of the performance space. Although it is problematic to define exact parameters, a survey of trends regarding performance space places the seating capacity at fewer than between 100 and 499 seats, the standard seating capacity of an Off-Braodway house ("Lortel Archives: About", 2016). Galloway's (2010: 103) original parameters places preferred seating capacity at fewer than 150 seats, as a larger seating capacity has corresponding effects on the performance style. Galloway (2010: 106) offers that

> "[t]he close proximity of the audience means that the actors must use a style that might be called 'restrained intensity'. Actors could employ techniques common in acting for the screen. In small houses, broad gestures – physically or vocally – will seem forced and contrived when the audience is fifteen feet away. In this environment actors are always 'in the scene', and do not enjoy the luxury of relaxing while figuratively holding their spear. They cannot be passive – the audience is close enough to notice subtle facial expressions and even the focus point of an actor's eyes. The locus of any scene is the entire stage itself."

Owing to the restrictions of the performance space, intimate musicals expressly concern only a few characters. Although there cannot be strict parameters regarding cast size, one can postulate that, depending on the length of the production, the 'emotional microscope' can focus ever more deeply if there are fewer character arcs that must be explored in the musical's

running time. While *The Fantasticks*, for example, had a cast of nine (although five feature far more prominently than others), *110 in the Shade* had a principle cast of six and *I Do! I Do!* had a cast of two, one can only postulate on cast size when dependant on the content. Crucially, the small cast does not limit the emotional scope of the production, but allows deeper emotive exploration into the characters that *are* represented. Therefore, instead of sketching various characters, the intimate musical of Harvey and Schmidt explore the relatively complex psychological recesses of *all* of the characters throughout the running time of the musical. Therefore, the fewer characters there are, the greater the potential nuance of exploration.

This has the ultimate result of solving Galloway's (2010: 104) initially problematic parameter regarding the "humanistic, transparent treatment of characters." The very act of depicting characters in greater detail than would normally be possible in a large-scale musical (owing to restrictions in running time that must be allocated to aspects such as dance and spectacle), allows for greater subtlety of expression. By focussing the musical's 'emotional microscope' to the minute details of a character's interaction with him/herself, the other characters and the world she/he occupies, the intimate musical forges an emotional intensity that is provided solely through the (arguably) simple act of speech, song and movement; supplanting spectacle for sparseness.

Finally, Jones (2004b) provides certain methods of creating the intimate musical that, for lack of other theory, outlines the parameters of this performance mode rather succinctly enough. Through fluidity of form, freedom of linguistic expression and unrestricted use of theatrical conventions, practitioners can construct intimate performances by utilising the broad theatrical method of metatheatricality. By removing, therefore, the performance entirely from the 'realist' methods of large-scale performance forms (including the early mega musicals) and acknowledging its own theatricality, the creator is allowed more artistic freedom than would otherwise have been allowed with limited financial resources. As Jones articulates on this matter: "This [is] the space. These [is] its limitations. And the job [is] suddenly to find the possibilities hidden within the limitations – to study the restrictions" (Jones, 2004b: 85).

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Chapter 6: After the Megamusical: The Contemporary Intimate Musical

By the 1970s the commercial Broadway musical was, by necessity, being redefined in order to "win back their lost audiences and find new ones" (Smith & Litton, 2013: 300). Audiences, lured by the convenient spectacles of cinema and television, came less frequently to the theatre. Mordden (2015a: 6) explains that, in order to adjust with the changing sociological climate, "every aspect of production was costing more; but the audiences was not expanding in proportionate support." The dominant melodic and harmonic style of the musical theatre was ever more out of fashion with the public who was now looking towards rock-and-roll and accompanying popular musical fashions of the era. Mordden (2015a: 6) elaborates that the musicals of the 1970s attempted to radically change the way in which they sounded, noting that "[m]usic itself, the very essence of the musical, also contributes to the breakdown of the golden age: because it changes from Tin Pan Alley to rock." Even Off-Broadway, the home of the intimate musical, was changing. Smith and Litton (2013: 322) explain that

> "[a]lthough Off Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway continued to introduce new talent and avant-garde work, they were no longer the brave outposts of eccentric and experimental drama they had been in the 1950s and 1960s. […] Broadway had eagerly, often desperately, absorbed both the innovations and much of the energy of what used to be the non-commercial theatre. Especially for the musical theatre, the 1970s was a decade of assimilation."

The postdramatic aesthetics of the megamusical was beginning to advance with productions such as *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971) heralding this new era of the Broadway musical with an ever increased focus on the spectacle aspects of the production. An article from *The New York Times* dissecting the issue, asks "[w]hat accounts for this emphasis on the visual?" (Kent, 1978: 22). The article answers by suggesting that

> "[t]t is possible that just as religious spectacles make believers out of non-believers, Broadway spectacles are expected to make theatregoers out of non-theatregoers. It is also possible that in the 1960s, the great blossoming of the counter-culture – the protest pageants, be-ins, sit-ins and happenings, the colour and profusion of individual styles – made Broadway spectacles seem unnecessary" (Kent, 1978: 22).

Bernard B. Jacobs, at the time the president of the producing body The Shubert Organisation, references the effect that the burgeoning Off-Broadway movement of the 1960s had on the larger musical theatre spectrum. He argues that,

> "[f]or a while, we were paring our musicals down to the bone. […] The musicals were shrinking. Now they're being embellished, which is one reason the prices have been raised. For a long while, producers were trying to hold the price line, and $750,000, more or less, was the maximum budget. Then we broke the million-dollar barrier. It shows in the productions" (Kent, 1978: 22).

Producer Cyma Rubin cautioned that it is "going to be more and more difficult for serious plays on Broadway. I think that Broadway audiences are really interested in spectacles, products, if you will" (Kent, 1978: 22). Reassessing Rubin and Jacobs' theories regarding the musical theatre in hindsight, one can appreciate how, in the 1970s, the megamusical as a form was beginning to take its contemporary postdramatic shape with its ever-growing emphasis on visual and aural spectacle heightened by new stage technologies.

The intimate musical, simultaneously, was invariably affected by the proliferation of the megamusical form. The megamusical's spectacle-based entertainment did not only change audiences' expectation of what a musical *should* be, but also prompted practitioners to refocus the intimate musical within its wider (and more dominant) aesthetic framework of the megamusical. With the megamusical's overpowering visual spectacles and rock-and-roll soundscape, the intimate musical itself was beginning to be affected in key ways, especially in construction and presentation, which was gradually beginning to borrow freely from the megamusical's postdramatic aesthetics.

While many intimate musicals continued to follow the formula spearheaded through Jones and Schmidt's musicals, other practitioners were experimenting with the form in a similar postdramatic fashion in reaction to the megamusical's aesthetic evolution. The term that many critics utilised for this type of musical was the so-called 'concept musical.' Although the concept musical is not inherently directly tied to the intimate musical, many intimate musicals in the post 1970s era of Off-Broadway musicals were assimilating various eclectic styles, including the aesthetics of the megamusical and the concept musical. In this chapter, consequently, I will discuss the salient aspects of the concept musical and, thereafter, examine certain case studies to illustrate how this form, in combination with the megamusical, reshaped and redefined the construction of the contemporary intimate musical.

6.1 New Intimate Musicals: Introspection, The Fragmented Musical and the Intimate Musical

Theatre critic Mark Grant (2005: 298) argues that "[w]hen the primary language of [musical] theatre is no longer word, character, or music but rather gesture, movement and staging, the

power and legitimacy of language and music is undermined." He believes that the musical theatre of the 1970s, transforming as it was into a "theme park" of entertainment, featured "crowd-pleasing gesture and movement with language and music as secondary elements – very much like the musicals before 1900" (Grant, 2005: 298). Framed by various cultural influences, the modus of the musical theatre was shifting away from textual entertainment to a more unified, experiential model wherein all aspects of the production – visual, aural and textual – was being rebalanced. Grant (2005: 300), however, proposes that this had the adverse effect of "[emasculating] not only strong-voiced writers and composers, but the very tradition of strong writing." He continues by arguing that

> "[v]arious phenomena outside the theatre share responsibility for the rise of the hypervisual director [such as Harold Prince]. The rise of visual culture and aliteracy, the predominance of oral over written culture, arguably even the abstractionist and anti-narrative tendencies of modernism, all favour a more frontal role for virtuoso visual staging. Certainly the work of Julie Taymor, a truly individual visual stage artist, for *The Lion King*, is cause for celebration. But the foundational Western dramatic literature from Shakespeare and Ibsen to Gilbert and Sullivan and Rodgers and Hammerstein is nonvisual, grounded in words, narrative and character" (Grant, 2005: 301).

Grant, however, fails to remark that the ever-increasing cost-to-size ratio is arguably the driving force behind this aesthetic movement in the musical theatre tradition. Productions such as the golden age *The Sound of Music* (1959), for example, itself featured striking visual elements, but for the most part, the *focus* of the production was on the textual-narrative logic of the performance. Taking his critique of 'hypervisual' performance modes at face value, therefore, even productions such as *The Fantasticks* (1960) wherein the weight of the production is equally placed upon its metatheatrical visual devices, could itself be considered a manifestation of the "disconnect between the visual noise and the textual sense" (Grant, 2005: 301) in the musical theatre. Grant's critique, however, is rooted in the post-1970s musical theatre's pre-occupation with cinematic mimicry:

> "the exaltation of the director, […] movement for the sake of movement, [and] technological scenic design has brought the outer trappings of cinema to the musical theatre without the cinema's inner psychological eye. Literal illustration in the Broadway musical has taken over the power of suggestion and imagination, which is the essence of the of the art of theatre" (Grant, 2005: 301).

The intimate musical seems to provide the answer to both of Grant's criticisms. Firstly, the intimate musical – with its crucial relationship to its own visual aesthetics – provides ample opportunity for visual suggestion and, secondly, the intimacy of the performance event itself

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(given the proximity of the performer to the audience) provides a nuanced perspective, assimilating (to use Grant's phraseology) 'cinema's inner psychological eye.' The intimate musicals of the 1970s, however, was redefining itself against the now-emerging megamusical form and was itself developing various aesthetic principles that, at times, borrowed and reimagined the existing aesthetics of both prior intimate musicals and its contemporary emergent modes. Opening in the same season as *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971), *Company* (1970) pioneered the next development in the intimate musical. As Galloway (2010: 108) notes,

> "*Company* has several items from *The Fantasticks*' menu – simple set, transparent characters – and adds to them the elements of innovative movement and an episodic story structure. At the same time, *Company* kept some traditional elements of the expanded musical, such as a large space and a full orchestra."

6.1.1 Fragmentation and Intimacy: Personal Narratives in a Non-Personal Space in *Company* (1970)

Stephen Sondheim, the composer and lyricist for *Company* (1970), argued that

> "[t]he form that Rodgers and Hammerstein developed tells a story through character and song; it expands the characters, and the characters therefore cause the things to happen in the story, and it goes song-scene, song-scene, song-scene. I'm very proud of *Gypsy* (1959), but when it was all over I thought, 'that's the last one of those I want to do. Now let's try different things'" (McNally, 1986: 229).

Undeniably, *Company* was considered an unusual project. *The New York Times* reviewer, Sam Zolotow (1969: 48), austerely predicted that *Company* would be a "musical comedy without a singing chorus or major dance numbers;" a fundamental departure from the musicals that were currently playing on Broadway. Tony Perkins, who played the lead role, added that, "I think the American musical stage is about as demanding as a field as exists in the performing arts. We haven't got all the answers yet. And that's what makes it exciting" (Zolotow, 1969: 48). As an experiment in form, *Company* challenged the very notions of the 'book' musicals by connecting its subject matter to its construction; the 'concept' of the production – it's visual and aural presentation – received equal weight to the textual aspect of the production and, in certain cases, surpassing textual hegemony completely. Michael Gottfried, in his review of *Company*, noted that

> "[*Company*] isn't a story musical but an alternative to the 'book show,' which any sophisticated (and there aren't many) musical theatre person knows is silly, passé and doomed. It is also without singing and dancing chorus so that the 14 people in it do everything. That is, it is an ensemble or chamber musical with words and music and musical movement and dance that flow, organically, from the same source. Yet, it

hasn't the self-conscious look of an 'experimental musical' because it is so sleekly professional" (Swayne, 2007: 257).

The 'concept musical' is as a form exceedingly complex to define and, for the most part, only finds definition exactly because of its avoidance of definition. According to Gottfried, who coined the term, the concept musical can be demarcated (at best) as a musical "based on a stage idea, not a story, but a look, a tone – what the show will be like as a stage animal" (in Jones, 2004a: 270–271). The term has frequently been associated with Sondheim's work, along with frequent collaborator and director Harold Prince. Prince severely dislikes the term 'concept musical' as an explanation for the work that he creates:

> "The whole label that was put on our shows, the whole notion of the 'concept' musical, was one that I really resent. I never wished it on myself. […] I kept hearing, 'We're sick of the goddamn concept musical.' And I kept thinking, 'Leave me alone; […] I never called it that.' It's called a 'unified' show, an 'integrated' show" (Swayne, 2007: 258)

Sondheim, for his part, is also unamused by the categorisation and argues that

> "[w]hen they say a show is a concept show, what they really mean is that it is some kind of presentational approach – that it's all done in red, or it's all done with mirrors, or it's all a metaphor for […] war, or whatever. The idea of 'concept' comes from wanting to reduce things to simplicities. 'Concept' is this decade's vogue word, just as 'integrated' was the vogue theatrical word of the 1940s, referring to an approach in which a story it told and characters are advanced through song" (Swayne, 2007: 259).

The fundamental idea, however, remains that these types of musicals veer away from 'realistic' depiction of character towards a more 'presentational' mode. One must recall here that this echoes the sentiments of Tom Jones, the book and lyric writer of *The Fantasticks*, whose essential artistic preoccupation was an engagement with this particular form; a form wherein the audience become co-collaborators in the act of theatrical creation instead of passive consumers through selective staging techniques.

Owing to both Sondheim's and Prince's repudiation of the term 'concept musical', critic John Bush Jones proposed the term "fragmented musical." This term describes more fully the nuanced meanings that the non-realist musical may take. Especially the intimate musical, which must frequently employ non-realist techniques in staging, benefits from this terminology: Jones argues that these musicals

> "forgo traditionally linear narrative plots in favour of a seemingly random structure of disjunct [sic] and isolated (i.e. fragmented) scenes and musical numbers. These scenes

and musical sequences are linked only by theme (not by plot or story), and the focus on individual characters (pre)occupied with personal introspection" (Jones, 2004a: 269).[24]

The notion that characters in the fragmented musical are focussed more on exploring their inner psychological realities than explaining plot through song, elicits recognition owing to similar preoccupations within the intimate musical. Indeed, the intimate musical frequently favours personal introspective songs to narrative, plot-driving musical numbers. In the intimate musical, consequently, a song can function either as a traditional narrative song, or, more likely, assume the role of contemplative explorations of an idea or emotion. Mordden (2015b: 66) argues that *Company*

> "[d]efinitely ended the Rodgers and Hammerstein regime, with its straightforward structure made of dialogue scenes that build in power till they burst into song, emotionalising the characters. *Company* offers songs interfering with dialogue scenes, commenting on them. Sometimes the songs emotionalise an idea rather than a character, and sometimes the songs get mischievous rather than emotional."

Company, which opened in the 1,467-seat Niel Simon Theatre (at the time called the Alvin Theatre) on 26 April, 1970 marked a radical shift in the future construction of musical theatre. George Furth, the bookwriter of the musical, was an actor and acquaintance of Stephen Sondheim and had written seven one-act plays titled *Company*. Prince, the director of the eventual musical, describes the initial creative impetus for the musical:

> "[Stephen] Sondheim said, 'A friend of mine wrote these, and Kim Stanley's going to play in them. Will you read them? Something is wrong with this project.' I read them and they were of varying lengths, and I had a vision of Kim Stanley, who was one of the greatest American actresses I've ever seen, offstage changing costumes and putting on wigs rather than onstage playing the seven plays. I thought, 'She's going to be exhausted doing this thing – and it's a trick. Of course they're worried about it. Of course George Furth thinks this isn't quite right.' Then I said, 'I think it's a musical.' 'About what?' 'About marriage.' Both George [Furth] and [Stephen Sondheim] were stunned, but then we started to meet and go from there" (Davison & Bryer, 2005: 173).

From the outset, therefore, the notion of fragmentation seems to be weaved into the fibre of the production. The seven scenes, connected only by theme, has no other relation to one another besides Robert who apathetically visits his married friends. Through an episodic collage, the musical focusses on the relationships of the thirty-five-year-old bachelor with his doting and devoted married friends. The musical shifts perspectives, but the events are mostly seen

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[24] The term 'fragmented musical' indeed describes the specific features of the 'concept musical' in a more nuanced manner. For this reason, I will mostly refer to the 'fragmented musical' when discussing the form. Many other critics, however, prefer the term 'concept musical,' therefore at times I will use the term interchangeably when quoting or referencing another source.

through the sceptical eye of the bemused Robert, who views marriage as "an oppressive state in which one inadequate individual is yoked forever to another less-than-adequate individual" (Gordon, 2009: 38). The predatory group, united in a conspiracy to absorb Robert into their company of wedded bliss, are Sarah and Harry, settling their supressed frustrations with karate chops on the living room carpet; Susan and Peter, living together amicably after their divorce; Jenny and David, tentatively experimenting with marijuana; Amy, the terrified bride-to-be, fleeing the impending wedding to her adoring, long-established Jewish boyfriend, Paul; and the intelligent, but brittle Joanne and the much-married, cynical Larry.

Company's chief thematic concern – similarly to other intimate musicals – is tied directly to its construction. Focussing on the disconnected relationships between married couples and the ambivalence of lost connections, *Company* was the first manifestation of an intimate musical using fragmentation as a device to address the ambiguities and uncertainties of intimate human experiences. In *Company*, the uncertainty manifests in an unsuccessful desire to communicate and to forge connections with each other. Their desperation for communication is highlighted by the inability of the characters to communicate with Robert. The first contact that characters make with one another is, in fact, not through direct communication, but is fragmented in distance through a buzzing and beeping telephone message:

> "*[Robert's empty apartment. Robert enters, crosses to the answering machine and hits the 'play' button.]*
> JOANNE *[Voice-over]*. Hi, this is a dirty phone call. Larry and I are going to the country, so we'll miss any birthday celebrations. Anyway, you're thirty-five. Who wants to celebrate being that old? Well, I only hope I look as good when I'm your age. *[Sound of hang-up, followed by a buzz. A beep sound.]*" (Sondheim & Furth, 2011: 3).

Each of Robert's friends call him in succession, and each subsequent voice message addresses a failed attempt at communication:

> "PETER *[Voice-over]*. Hi, Bob. It's Peter. Get those girls out of your bed and pick up the phone, will ya? Oh, God, I am so envious I can't even talk.
> *[Sound of hang-up, followed by a buzz. A beep sound.]*
> APRIL *[Voice-over]*. Hi, Robert, it's April. *[Pause.]* Oh. I forgot what I was going to say" (Sondheim & Furth, 2011: 3).

When the guests finally arrive at the party, their presence is troubled by the repetition of missed phone calls. Again underpinning Robert and his friend's disconnect, they express their failed attempts at communication through song, continually repeating lines such as

> "DAVID. Bobby, we've been trying to call you. […]
> SARAH. Angel, I've got something to tell you. […]
> AMY & PAUL. Bobby, we've been trying to reach you all day. […]

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> LARRY & JOANNE. Bobby, there was something we wanted to say" (Sondheim & Furth, 2011: 8–10).

Unable to communicate with each other, the opening party sequence becomes a restless exchange that balances two personal perspectives: "bitchy sniping and treacly sentimentality" (Gordon, 2009: 42). Although none of the guests' individual perspectives are the same, they all agree that Robert must be married because he is too isolated and alone. The celebratory atmosphere is peppered with personal perspectives that retreat from the main narrative of the scene, with acerbic asides and hostilities. Robert attempts to blow out the candles on his birthday cake, but fails. As the music begins softly under die dialogue, Robert admits to both his friends and the audience that he "cannot make himself vulnerable [and] will not expose himself to the risk of possible failure inherent in wishing too hard for anything" (Gordon, 2009: 43). As the couples slowly retreat to their individual apartments, Robert is left alone with the audience with a sense of failure in his attempts at true connection and communication within a depersonalised society. The characters and their narratives, therefore, are trapped within the confines of a society that is both cold, closed and impersonal, thereby turning its psychological lens inwards and inspecting one's *reactions* to circumstances, instead of (as in the traditional musical) to attempt to *change* one's circumstances.

Within this framework, fragmented musicals such as *Company* "literally and *intentionally* fragmented form and content to emphasize the show's inward-turning perspective" (Jones, 2004a: 270). *Company*'s focus on the self, accordingly, is a key aspect of the intimate musical. Devoid of traditional plot, the musical instead focusses its lens on "introspection" (Jones, 2004a: 272), exploring character within the confines of a closed, unchanging and unforgiving space. In this sense, fragmented musicals as a whole

> "[s]poke directly to the self-absorption [of the Me Generation] by depicting characters either asking 'Who am I?' or, alternatively, proclaiming their self-worth. In both the self-questioning and self-proclaiming, it's the feelings of the individual *as* an individual that matter" (Jones, 2004a: 272).

Jones (2004a: 272) continues by arguing that "[b]ecause of this focus on introspection, a key feature of the fragmented musical is the centrality of character, not story." In the case of *Company*, the focus is almost exclusively on the personal narratives that intersperse the scenes. They key structuring device is Robert's surprise birthday party that frames the musical by beginning and ending each act with its celebration. Beyond this, the scenes are interspersed with songs emphasising the self; looking inwards within a society that is ever more fragmented itself. Gordon (2009: 40) comments that "contemporary society has enclosed humanity in

sealed compartments. People are encouraged to retreat into their isolated cocoons and avoid the hazards of personal vulnerability and commitment." *Company*'s focus on introspection of the self is therefore directly connected to its thematic concerns of isolation; a theme that McMillan (2006: 96) calls "urban loneliness." In the case of *Company*, loneliness and isolation is tied to the space that the characters occupy. The city of New York becomes a metaphor for the non-personal space. Sondheim recollects that

> "[i]n every show there should be a secret metaphor that nobody knows except the authors. […] In *Company* we were making a comparison between a contemporary marriage and the island of Manhattan – in fact, it was even spoken about at one point. [Eventually] we decided never to let anyone know that that was what we were about." (Gordon, 2009: 39).

At least one of the songs clarifies the use of the urban metaphor. The song "Another Hundred People" is a typical moment of introspection in the face of a depersonalised and alienating society within the city of New York. Marta, one of Robert's possible love-interests, overwhelmed by the repetitive routines of the city, sings,

> "Another hundred people just got off of the train and came up through the ground
> While another hundred people just of off of the bus and are looking around
> At another hundred people who got off of the plane and are looking at us
> Who got off the train
> And the plane and the bus
> Maybe yesterday" (Sondheim & Furth, 2011: 50).

Isolated and discontent, Marta gazes inward to realise that her own isolation and loneliness is only emphasised by the sheer number of people who are each equally lonely and isolated. Each of the metaphoric hundred people are occupied by their own personal interests and narratives that simultaneously intersect and intertwine without truly connecting with one another. She realises that

> "[i]t's a city of strangers –
> Some come to work, some to play –
> A city of strangers –
> Some come to stare, some to stay,
> And everyday
> The ones who stay […]
> Meet at parties through the friends of friends
> Who they never know" (Sondheim & Furth, 2011: 50–51).

Company's dominant concern of introspection in the face of the unknown, seems to be a definite manifestation of the intimate musical's allowance for individuality and the expression of microscopically specific emotionality. In contrast to 'full-scale' or megamusicals which

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focuses its lens on the grand narratives – usually spanning several decades and dozens of characters – the intimate musical utilises 'cinema's psychological eye' to gaze inward towards the minute narratives of the self; the intimacy of introspection.

6.1.2   Reviving *Company* (2006): Exploring Introspection Through Aural/Visual Metaphor

The 2006 revival of *Company* took the abovementioned thematic idea to its inevitable and extreme aesthetic conclusion. This "very intimate and novel production" (Sommer, 2006), directed by John Doyle, did away with many of the full-scale musical trappings of the original production and utilised a unique approach that undercut the costs of the musical considerably. On a sparse black set with only a Steinway Grand piano as the central feature, the cast of *Company* (2006) doubled also as the musicians, with each actor playing an instrument and accompanying their fellow performers on stage.[25] Doyle had utilised a similar device with his 2005 revival of *Sweeney Todd*, and with *Company*'s cast of fourteen, the revival was "capitalized at around $4 million, a bit more than the $3.5 million price tag for *Sweeney [Todd]*" (Cox, 2006: 3). Doyle utilised yet another device to accentuate *Company*'s themes of isolation and loneliness by having many of the performers deliver their lines without looking at one another. One reviewer noted that

> "it's difficult to explain why the concept of actors playing musical instruments while taking part in the action – and, at other times, while seated around the periphery of the stage – works at all […]. But it sure does, in a wonderfully metaphorical way. And the fact that the performers usually look at the audience rather than at each other during their dialogue exchanges is an apt metaphor for the disconnectedness of modern urbanites" (Portantiere, 2006).

Doyle's production, therefore, utilised two interlinked metaphors that each, individually, conveyed aspects of isolation and disconnectedness: the first visual-aural metaphor of having the actors accompany themselves on instruments while simultaneously singing and acting; the second visual metaphor of having the actors rarely face each other in crucial confrontational scenes, playing forward to the audience. Both these devices underscored the central metaphor of the production and highlighted the intimacy of the performance itself.

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[25] *Company* (2006) was not the first musical to utilise this technique. Sam Mendes' revival of *Cabaret* (1993) also featured actors who played instruments, but the extent to which *Company* employed this technique is far more extensive, having all fourteen actors accompany themselves.

A review in the *Daily Variety* commented on the production's use of so-called actor-musicians, positing that

> "*Company* feels more like a rather terrifying house party made up of people whose verbal ripostes just happen to be best expressed by thumping on a xylophone. Or venting down a flute. Or bitching on a violin. Or tapping out a little ode to their spouse on a piano, cocktail in one hand, knife in the other" (Jones, 2006a).

Both visually and aurally, this added another dimension to the production's theme of personal expression amidst gruelling isolation. By connecting the instruments to particular characters, Doyle's production hoped to draw comparisons on various levels and, as Sommer (2006) contends, "the instruments serve not only the music, but as scenic and character enhancing props." The act of actors playing instruments when not speaking or singing, symbolises their desire to be heard in an aurally dense cacophony of sound and words, even when they are not the focus. By intoning on an instrument, they become part of the body of voices that accumulatively add to the sense of desperation and loneliness that the overcrowded New York landscape evokes; their "thumping," "venting," "bitching," and "tapping" thereby representing their inner tumultuous landscape of isolated frustration and anxiety.

On a visual level, the placement of the source of the music in plain sight, rather than hidden away in an orchestra pit, transforms the actors from interpreters of the music to creators of the music. The characters, in their isolation, create their own soundscape and their own cocoon of sound. On a macabre level, they are isolated and alone, and while they are intoning their need for communication on the instruments, when their cacophony of sounds is combined, they simultaneously become co-creators of their own isolation. *New York Magazine*'s Jeremy McCarter (2007) adds that

> "[i]nside Bobby's head, the instruments reinforce how alienated he is from the people around him. His friends play oboes and violins and things, but he doesn't, which is fitting for an outsider who "always looks like he's keeping score." The instruments also show how he's threatened by affection. When his friends shower him with love during the title song, Bobby stands by a white column at centre stage, hands behind him. Surrounded by woodwinds, he looks like St. Sebastian bracing for impact."

In a way, "[t]he instruments intermittently dragged and wheeled around the stage also serve as concrete illustrations of the emotional baggage with which the characters are burdened" (Sommer, 2006). *Variety* adds in its review that

> "[t]hroughout the show, considerable pleasure is to be had by *Company*-philes from the freshness of the orchestrations and the way in which the emotional truths of the show are enhanced by a character picking up a musical instrument. There's a whole other

dimension on offer with this particular title, because people really do play music to each other at social and theatrical gatherings. That creates an ease with this idea that Doyle beautifully exploits" (Jones, 2006b: 56).

This actors playing instruments also has practical implications for the intimate musical. Underpinned by an existing presentational, non-realist production style, intimate musicals may frequently employ actors that double as the band in order to magnify the sound of the production without the additional expense of an orchestra. Describing the rationale, *The Guardian* wrote that

> "[i]f the actor-musician approach seemed radical to Broadway, Doyle is the first to admit that he didn't invent the wheel. In the cash-strapped 80s and 90s, other regional theatre directors realised that if they wanted to stage big musicals then they would have to do it without huge casts and orchestras. So was born the idea that actors should not only sing but also play the instruments, dispensing with the need for an expensive orchestra. In 10 years of freelance work at the Watermill, Doyle perfected a technique born out of financial need -and, in the case of the tiny Watermill, spatial limitations" (Gardner, 2008).

On a metaphoric level, if the choices of instruments coincide on a symbolic level with the characters that are playing them, the musical takes on a doubly layered series of meanings. Therefore, while simultaneously playing the instruments *and* the characters, the characters are imbued with the quality of their instruments. The jittery Amy, for example, playing the flute, is imbued with the delicate sounds that the instrument itself produces.

By placing the instruments centrally, the audience is frequently reminded of the artifice of the musical theatre. Visually *seeing* the orchestra and – much like *The Fantasticks* – having the orchestra part of the action, constructs a staging aesthetic that allows additional explorations in non-realist techniques. This might have a slight effect of alienation, but here the artifice highlights the thematic concerns of the musical, rather than contradicting the internal logic of the musical itself. The musical's introspective lens is focussed almost exclusively on the performer's self: the emancipation from the traditional orchestra underpins the total internalisation of the characters.

The effect of intimacy, moreover, is highlighted when the performers take on additional interpretative roles. Adding an element of 'danger' to the production, the actor-musician approach depicts performers that are completely dependent on each other and themselves for the entire aural landscape of the production. There is therefore no 'unseen' orchestra or band drives tempo, rhythm or mood. All aspects of musical theatre creation happen immediately, consciously and visibly on stage. Regardless, "for all Doyle's innovations, his single greatest

strength remains his ability to present — in played and sung form — simple moments simply" (Jones, 2006b: 59).

6.2 Structuring Intimacy: Family Drama in the Intimate Musical in *March of the Falsettos* (1981) and *Falsettoland* (1990)

After *Company* popularised the fragmented musical form, another series of musicals arose that explored new ways of writing intimate musical theatre. William Finn's investigation of family dynamics in the one act musical trio *In Trousers* (1978), *March of The Falsettos* (1981) and *Falsettoland* (1990) pushed the envelope as to the social complexities that musicals could address. Although family dynamics had previously been explored with musicals such as *The Housewives' Cantata* (1980),[26] it would be Finn's depiction of domestic drama that left a lasting impression on the wider musical theatre landscape, earning him two Tony awards for his work. The Off-Broadway musical theatre landscape was itself transforming. While the giant megamusicals of the era

> "were identified by their dazzling spectacle, […] the small musicals away from the Street were not competing with that kind of entertainment. […] But it still allowed exceptional musicals to be written, to be performed, and to find an audience" (Hischak, 2011: 182).

The first musical in the series is the little-known *In Trousers* that opened on 8 December 1979 in the intimate 189-seat Playwrights Horizons. Featuring a book, score and lyrics by newcomer William Finn, this musical introduced a character named Marvin. Skipping through time, the musical concerns Marvin's desire to leave his wife for his gay lover, Whizzer. The musical ranges from his high school crush on his teacher, Miss Goldberg, then the wooing of his wife, Trina, then Marvin as a child demanding his parents to notice and love him.

Finn's artistic preoccupation is similar to Sondheim on two fronts. Firstly, Finn also "incorporated the introspective interest and methods of fragmented musicals into otherwise linear shows" (Jones, 2004a: 291). This resulted in a musical that was at once introspective and narrative-driven, playfully vacillating between these two modes. Secondly, Finn's musical

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[26] The plot of this relatively unknown musical has been described as follows: "Sisters Flora (Patti Karr), Lily (Sharon Talbot), and Heather (Forbesy Russell) are first seen in 1962 as they deal with the sexual revolution, men, and their own sisterhood. Subsequent scenes show the trio in 1972 embroiled in precarious marriages and, finally, in 1980, as mature women discovering their own identity" (Hischak, 2011: 183). Critics found this production to be too similar to the earlier *Vanities* (1976) which told a similar story with four actors, and the musical closed after twenty-four performances in three weeks after its premiere.

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aesthetic has been described as similar to Stephen Sondheim, perhaps indicating that "he is difficult to pinpoint" (Hischak, 2011: 172). Finn's music is

> "contemporary but not rock nor folk nor pop. It can be flowing and lyrical one moment then quickly turn dissonant and harsh. Similarly, the lyrics are sometimes a manic jumble of words, other times simple and pointed" (Hischak, 2011: 172).

This intimate musical, with its cast of four, would be the beginning of a crucial turning point in the subject matter of popular musical theatre. Addressing alternative family dynamics, this series focussed its lens exclusively on the delicate, violent and sometimes incoherent forces that drive contemporary families. Brantley (1998), from *The New York Times* commented that within these musicals, Finn

> "explored the dissonance in gay, straight and familial love with a sharp, deliberately jagged score and lyrics. Though clearly descended from the school of Sondheim, the show turned neurosis into song in exhilaratingly original ways. It was the tension and the sense of struggle in the music that gave it such electric life."

This topical musical addressed a theme that other musicals had not previously considered (with the exception of revues, which frequently featured risqué content, but with a satirical edge). For this reason, Pall (1998) noted that it was "Finn's brilliant form combined with the absolute topicality of his social themes first bowled critics over."

Although *In Trousers* was not deemed successful (having run twenty-eight performances), the character of Marvin would appear in the two follow-up musicals with far more success.[27] *March of the Falsettos* (1981) and *Falsettoland* (1990), both one-act musicals, are now frequently performed consecutively in one evening under the title *Falsettos* with the description,

> "[a] family drama, set in New York in 1979 and 1981, about a gay man and his relationships with his boyfriend, his ex-wife, his son and his psychiatrist" (Paulson, 2016).

6.2.1 Problematizing the Nuclear Family in *March of the Falsettos* (1981)

March of the Falsettos (1981), directed by frequent Sondheim collaborator, James Lapine, concerns the neurotic New Yorker, Marvin, who leaves his wife, Trina, and teenage son, Jason, to be with the young, attractive Whizzer. Subsequently, Trina is driven to consult her ex-husband's psychiatrist, Mendel, and the two eventually fall in love and marry. Whizzer,

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[27] Finn would describe these musicals as the "Marvin Musicals" in the program notes.

however, finds Marvin just as difficult to live with as Trina, and eventually also leaves him. Frank Rich, in his original *New York Times* review, put forward that "[h]owever slight and predictable the raw materials, Mr. Finn has transformed them into a show that is funny and tender on its own contained, anecdotal terms" (Rich, 1981). Indeed, *March of the Falsettos* "grounded [the] characters and ideas that were cleverly kicked around in *In Trousers*, […] yet there was still a frantic, sometimes surreal, tone to the whole show" (Hischak, 2011: 192).

The musical encapsulates many notions of intimacy by incorporating almost all of the previous facets of the intimate musical. With a cast of four and a band of seven musicians, this sung-through intimate musical uses non-traditional staging techniques to glance at the character's personal, introspective lives. The original set design, which is modular and fluid, never attempts to mimic the grandiose, semi-realist staging conventions typical of full-scale or megamusicals. Instead, "[a]ll the furniture is on wheels [and] [l]ocations change in the blink of an eye" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 3). The musical moves from location to location, much like *The Fantasticks*, and the locations themselves are merely suggestions of locale, thereby never truly *becoming* a space, but rather merely *representing* a space. This space is always fluid and changeable, performing duties as both metaphoric and suggestions of literal locales. The spaces that the characters occupy, consequently, are fluid and moveable, changing meaning quickly and effortlessly. In "Making a Home," for example, the titular 'home' changes meaning from moment to moment:

> "*[TRINA enters through the door; MENDEL is close behind her, carrying a lighted menorah. This is the only light in the room. WHIZZER opens his suitcase on a table and starts packing. MARVIN exits through the door.]*
> MENDEL AND TRINA. Welcome to our humble place
> *[MENDEL puts the menorah on the table.]*
> We're concerned with setting a tone
> With filling the space,
> *[TRINA sets the board for a game of chess.]*
> Making a home.
> *[MENDEL starts rearranging the furniture MARVIN threw at WHIZZER. It's their furniture now.]*
> MENDEL. She becomes a happy wife" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 82–83).

The space itself takes on dual meanings when the home of Trina and her new husband, the psychiatrist Mendel, doubles as the home for Whizzer and Marvin. The intimate musical's use of space, in this sense, is both economic and meaningful, adding layers of subtext to an already-complex social setup. Merging the couple's seemingly separate living spaces suggests to the viewer that their struggles are connected. The intimate humanity of the circumstances is

heightened by the notion that while both couples struggle individually, they are *connected* through the intensely human act of struggling itself.

Structurally, the musical moves at a frantic pace, mirroring the fragmented and tumultuous inner lives of the characters that oscillate between psychological ambivalences from moment-to-moment. The musical offers frantic, yet fleeting, glimpses into the inner psychological lives of the characters. While these glances are not long, extended gazes as in early intimate musicals such as those by Jones and Schmidt, they are instead structured as fragmented, instantaneous thoughts that mirror the freneticism of real life. Songs such as "Marvin at the Psychiatrist" encapsulate this uncertainty that manifests as freneticism wherein Mendel asks Marvin various questions, to which Marvin rarely knows the answer:

> "MENDEL. Do you love him?
> MARVIN. Sorta kinda.
> MENDEL. Do you need him?
> MARVIN. Sorta kinnda.
> He makes me smile a lot,
> Especially at mealtime.
> Makes me feel I'm sorta smart.
> MENDEL. Is he special?
> MARVIN. He's delightful.
> MENDEL. And romantic?
> MARVIN. Yes, and spiteful.
> But then it seems that so am I" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 28–29).

Later, the song is performed at almost double the pace, indicating an increased agitation as to Marvin's uncertainty. Mendel asks Marvin about his wife's sexual habits, which ignites a tumultuous exchange:

> "MENDEL. Was she a vicious woman?
> MARVIN. No.
> MENDEL. Did she beat the child?
> MARVIN. No.
> MENDEL. Did she ever drive you wild?
> MARVIN. No.
> MENDEL. Never?
> MARVIN. No.
> MENDEL. Never?
> MARVIN. No.
> MENDEL. Never, never, never, never?
> MARVIN. No.
> MENDEL. Never?
> MARVIN. No" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 32–33).

The certainty with which Marvin replies to Mendel's questions, reveals both his insecurity and his attempts to address his insecurity with a false bravado. The frantic tempo suggests his troubled agitation, highlighting the song's irony. Mendel's prying, the audience is aware, is rooted in his desire to seduce Marvin's ex-wife, complicating the scene and supplying startling layers of subtextual meaning that is at once amusing and unsettling.

Both the design and structure of the production served to highlight the musical's central thematic concern. Thematically, *March of the Falsettos* explores the various complexities of intimate social relationships; in this case, the *most* intimate social relationship: the family. *March of the Falsetto*'s focus on the smallest and, indeed, "the most basic social unit" (Thomas, 2009: 50) allows the musical to explore subject matter that is exceptionally emotionally potent. By focussing on the family, the musical becomes emotionally potent exactly because of the intimacy of its central focus. In an article titled *Discovering Family Values in 'Falsettos'*, Frank Rich of *The New York Times* commented that the musical ignited important and intense discussions as to the very notion of family itself:

> "I was […] grateful to take my children to a show that depicts homosexuals neither as abject victims of prejudice or disease nor campy figures of fun but as sometimes likable, sometimes smarmy, sometimes witty, sometimes fallible, sometimes juvenile, sometimes noble people no more or less extraordinary than the rest of us. In other words, gay people are just part of the family in *Falsettos*, and the values of Marvin's family are those of any other" (Rich, 1992).

The centrality of the nuclear family unit is doubly accentuated in *March of the Falsettos* because it "was the first successful musical to depict a gay male relationship" (Jones, 2004a: 335). The musical, however, never focusses its lens on the *issue* of the gay relationship, but rather addresses the complexities of characters attempting to reconfigure their expectations and their preconceived notions of the ideal familial unit in the face of unexpected circumstances. As Rich (1981) posits, the "show's hetero- and homosexual couples both suffer from the same anxieties, loneliness and neuroses," underscoring the universality of the central family drama. Marvin's panicked neuroses arising from his actions manifests in self-destructive behaviour that, ironically, both positively and negatively affects the wider scope of the nuclear family unit; albeit, in this case, an unconventional family unit composed of both gay and straight couples unexpectedly intertwining.

This musical's introspective lens is so finely focussed that the protagonist almost drowns within his own unfulfilled desires and obsessions. Marvin's self-absorption, consequently, is the musical's core from which the family drama is witnessed. Indeed, as Jones (2004a: 335) posits,

"[a] musical about a man leaving his wife for another woman would be fairly conventional; for him to leave his wife for a man is less so." The musical, therefore, deconstructs the very *notion* of the family, steadily dissecting its various meanings and contemplating the various ways in which the individual stands in relation to his/her family unit. After the violent opening number "Four Jews in a Room Bitching," Marvin sings "A Tight-Knit Family," unpacking his wish for his ideal family:

> "But I want a tight-knit family.
> I want a group that harmonizes.
> I want my wife and kid and friend
> To pretend
> Time will mend
> Our pain" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 12).

Referring to his ex-wife, his son and his lover as one familial unit, Marvin already problematizes the notion of the traditional nuclear family unit. The nuclear family, consisting usually of a father, a mother and their children, is here extended to his 'friend,' Whizzer, whom he wishes will 'harmonise' with his existing familial unit. Additionally, he expresses that

> "we don't go by the book.
> We all eat as one –
> Wife, friend, and son" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 12).

It is in the intimate act of eating – of communion – that Marvin's desperation to "want it all" (Finn, 2010: 13) is acutely established. The shared familial activity – although not explicitly demonstrated – represents Marvin's desire to reconfigure the definitions of 'family' itself. Mendel continues this metaphor in the song "Love is Blind," wherein Trina, subsequent to the divorce, sees Marvin's psychiatrist. Agitated, Trina proposes,

> "Love isn't sex.
> That's a thing my husband once told me.
> Marvin, my ex –
> You've seen him for years –
> Told me over the phone to tell you my fears.
> Do you only treat queers?" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 14).

Mendel, attempting to calm her, advises that her individual suffering is just as important as the anti-hero, Marvin:

> "Breathe deep, my dear –
> You'll find me understanding.
> Your pain is *a priori*;
> Unfold your untold story.
> Now to break bread" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 14).

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Various unconventional familial relationships are explored extensively in *March of the Falsettos*. Traditional notions of familial love are steadily deconstructed, configuring and reconfiguring the puzzling nature of conventional family ties. In *March of the Falsettos*, familial love is never a simple affair of pure devotion between parents and children or lovers for each other, but rather a complex web of intersecting and conflicting feelings. This manifests in a desire for familial (or romantic) love, but is weighted in equal measure by an agitated aversion to the fear that the revelation of unrequited familial love will inevitably evoke. In "I Never Wanted to Love You," all the characters expose their feelings about whether or not to risk loving someone. Mendel is fretting over his strong, yet forbidden, feelings for Trina; he crosses to Trina, singing,

> "I love you more than I meant to.
> In my profession one's love stays unexpressed.
> Here we stand.
> Take my hand.
> God, I'm distressed" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 91).

His admittance that his love crosses the proverbial professional border, accentuates the musical's agenda of reconfiguring the family unit. Traditional boundaries are disturbed by forbidden desires that, at its core, proposes that love – in this case romantic love – is at once 'distressing' and "the most beautiful thing in the world" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 38). Furthermore, Trina reveals to Marvin her ambivalent and conflicted feelings for him, both when they were married and now, post-divorce:

> "I never wanted to love you.
> I only want to love and not be blamed.
> Let me go.
> You should know
> I'm not ashamed to have loved you" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 90).

Underscoring the notion of non-traditional familial love, Trina's admits that despite her best intentions, she 'never wanted to love' her husband. Forced into the marriage by her father, her relationship with Marvin was instantaneously problematic. She sings,

> "I'm everything he wanted.
> It's time I put it all together.
> My hands were tied.
> My father cried: 'You'll marry!'
> I married" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 92).

Despite the circumstances of her marriage, she still feels 'unashamed' to have loved Marvin. Speaking now, post-divorce, the use of the past tense ("to have loved you") might seem to

suggest that their love is ended, however she surreptitiously (in the present tense) adds throughout the song, "He's mine. / He's mine" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 92) while other characters are singing. Although now tied to Mendel, her love for Marvin is still present, albeit now in altered form. The conventional expectation that she had of a family, is now forever disrupted. Even Whizzer and Marvin's love is a tied into the complex web of intersecting and conflicting familial ties. Whizzer argues that his love for Marvin was never meant to imply monogamy:

> "I never wanted ''til death do we two part.'
> Condescend.
> Stay my friend.
> How do I start not to love you?" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 92).

The expectation of family and the resultant reality come crashing into one another in the musical's climactic song. As all the characters desperately try to define the parameters of the 'new' family, and failing, turns inwards to confront their own desires and obsessions, now at the emotional cost of the family itself. Marvin, revealing the extent of his self-obsession, proclaims to his son:

> "I never wanted to love you.
> I only wanted to see my face in yours" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 92).

Unlike the other adults, Marvin aims his remarks at more than one person. He attacks Trina for remarrying ["It really killed me when you took those vows," he argues (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 93)], and in a Freudian-slip lyric he also exposes his mixed feelings towards Whizzer:

> "I never wanted
> I wanted
> I never never never never never
> Never wanted to love you" (Finn & Lapine, 1993: 93).

It is in the string of six 'never's that Marvin attempts to deflect the accidental "I wanted." His conflicting feelings illustrate the intimate musical's ability to focus on the deeply private and conflicting personal narratives. By focussing its lens exclusively on the family unit – a societal setup that is immediately and inherently understood by the audience – the musical can deeply explore the delicate, contradictory and frequently fragmented psychology of human experience. Much as in *Company* (1970), there is an express, introspective focus on the self in relation to a societal unit. Where *Company* examines the individual in relation to his friends *before* marriage, *March of the Falsettos* examines the individual in relation to the family *after* marriage. Its narrower focus is indicative of the possibilities of the truly intimate musical;

indeed, the cast is smaller and the focus is arguably even more introspective and deeply personal because the societal microcosm of the family is undeniably smaller and more intimate than that of a social circle of friends. The family, therefore, seems to be an excellent social tool in which to create intimate musicals in the proportionate scale that Galloway (2010) proposes, especially in the era of megamusicals where narrative and presentational scopes are increasing to such enormous proportions as *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011).

6.3   The Intimate Musical Meeting the Megamusical: *Next to Normal* (2008)

Many of the intimate musicals that I had discussed up to this point deliberately repudiated the pervasive aesthetics that large-scale megamusicals had incorporated. Most intimate musicals, owing in part to the intimacy of the performance space, had rejected the large soundscapes of rock-and-roll. Indeed, intimate musicals utilise acoustic music and singing to heighten its sense of intimate immediacy; the characters, therefore, usually speak and sing at a volume that mimics the volume of real life. This contrasts with the amplified soundscapes of megamusicals that are designed as amplified, somewhat exaggerated theatrical experiences. More than an ideological repudiation, its use of unamplified instruments and voices is also a practical consideration: by amplifying instruments, similar amplification of the voice becomes increasingly necessary. This has the effect of removing the immediate, intimate sound and the "intensive effects of *sotto voce* and spoken lyrics, even whispers" (Galloway, 2010: 106) that characterises the intimate musical. Furthermore, such amplification in a small, intimate venue might seem disruptive to desired intimate effect, exaggerating the natural volume of the voice. The expansive sounds of amplified electronic instruments, such as those found in *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971) and *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* (2011) is, for the most part, unsuited to an intimate performance space.

This feature, however, changes when an intimate musical deliberately evokes the soundscapes of the megamusical. In the case of *Next to Normal* (2008),[28] "the music attacked rather than seduced" (Hischak, 2011: 389), consciously conjuring the superabundant aesthetics of the megamusical in an ostensibly intimate musical. *Next to Normal*, yet another family drama set to music, serves as an excellent example where the aesthetics of both the megamusical and the intimate musical clash to deliberate and striking effect. A reading of this musical, therefore,

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[28] I am here referring to the Off-Broadway opening of 2008, and not the Broadway opening of 2009.

becomes crucial to completely appreciate the impact of the megamusical's aesthetics; especially on a form that mostly repudiates the latter's aesthetic qualities.

Next to Normal opened on 13 February 2008 in the 296-seat Second Stage Theatre. Labelled as "a rock musical about mental illness" (Bernardo, 2009), *Next to Normal* integrated many of the stylistic features of the megamusical while simultaneously attempting to relate the intimate complexities of a family coping with a mother's bi-polar depression. The mother, Diana, had lost her first-born son, Gabe, when he was still a baby. The audience, unaware of Gabe's death, sees him interacting with his mother throughout the musical until the song "He's Not Here," wherein her husband, Dan, reminds her of his death. Diana spirals into despair as she refuses to take her medication, thereby opting for various other treatment measures that inevitably fail: hypnotherapy and electro-shock therapy. Meanwhile, Diana and Dan's daughter, Natalie, attempts to live a 'normal' life and falls in love with a light drug user, Henry. With a cast of six characters, the musical seems to fit the intimate mould; increasingly so because *Next to Normal* "is steeped in an inescapable, aching compassion for people crippled by pain" (Brantley, 2008). The stylistic execution of the subject matter, however, problematizes a simple reading of an intimate musical in the vein of *The Fantasticks* (1960). Indeed, Brantley (2008), in his review of the original 2008 Off-Broadway production asked,

> "how could it be otherwise with a show that suggests a hybrid of fractured-family soapers like *Ordinary People* and *The Who's Tommy*, the 1969 rock opera of illness and nonconformity?"

Produced for $4 million (Cox, 2010: 2), *Next to Normal* is an unusually expensive musical, considering the cast size. Much of the budget, however, was spent on the musical's fairly elaborate set, which utilised a combination of practical lighting rigs, projections and three-storey scaffolding to illustrate both the house of the Goodman family and the private spheres of the character's thoughts. Rejecting the simple design language of previous intimate musicals, Mark Wendland's "gleaming, antiseptic tri-level set" (Bernardo, 2009) employed many of the of megamusical's 'superabundant' features, opting for electronically-powered fixtures that makes the musical function like a narrative rock-concert, much like *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1970). Wendland comments that

> "[w]e wanted to create an environment that would allow them all to experience these things simultaneously – and at the same time, have the ability to funnel down tightly for intimacy" (Wendland & Adams, 2009: 44).

This is similar to *March of the Falsettos*' (1988) use of stage space which is malleable and movable to accommodate overlapping scenes, however the crucial difference lies in *Next to Normal*'s implementation. Utilising a much larger set than a typical intimate musical, Wendland admits that "the idea of levels, of stacking the rooms, seemed natural and organic." The set itself, according to a review by the *Associated Press*, "quickly transforms itself from suburban home to doctor's office and serves as the nesting area for the musical's small band" (Kuchwara, 2009). Its transformative abilities are constructed not simply through imaginative interplay between the spectator and the actor (as in the *Fantasticks* or *March of the Falsettos*), but also through a combination of projections and motorised modular units.

Wendland, describing Diana's electroshock therapy scene, relates that

> "the giant eyes on the second level convey her heightened, almost hallucinatory state of mind. You see her son, Gabe, who is a linchpin character in her struggle, hanging out on the third level, almost like an image in her brain" (Wendland & Adams, 2009: 44).

Diana's eyes, overblown to cover the entire second storey of the set, are projected onto movable screens that intermittently shift in and out as needed. This effect utilises many stage technologies that are usually reserved as the underpinning of a technologically advanced megamusical with its electronically powered cinematic montage of effects. Here, however, the projections are utilised to ironically visualise Diana's psychosis: the very electronics that are used to ease her turmoil, are also used to *present* her turmoil. Adams's lighting design visualises the surging electricity of the treatment itself. He describes that

> "[f]or *Next to Normal*, I was interested in having a series of long, horizontal lines of light. I had just designed a big wall-sized plane of bulbs for the musical *Passing Strange*, so my impulse was to dismantle the plane into lines, and have the lines developed into ceilings and walls" (Wendland & Adams, 2009: 44).

Linking the show to its megamusical sibling, he explains that

> "[t]he show has 800 MR16 bulbs and another 200 or so coloured compact fluorescent bulbs (which don't dim, just pop on and off, which works well with the show's rock score)" (Wendland & Adams, 2009: 44).

In a review for the *Associated Press*, Kuchwara (2009) commented on the lighting design, noting that

> "[t]he stage has been blindingly lighted by Kevin Adams, whose array of powerful, coloured lights give off an unnerving sense of dislocation that suggests the fragile state of the lead character's mind."

by the same rock 'n' roll jaggedness and vitality that animated Duncan Sheik's score for *Spring Awakening*, another musical about love and pain.)"

Indeed, Lloyd Webber utilised a similar postmodern referential style in *Jesus Christ Superstar* with songs such as "Herod's Song" that references the "British music hall" tradition (Miller, 2011: 120). Such stylistic intertextual quoting is frequently used in the megamusical as a form of emotional shorthand, evoking the megamusical's tendency of dramatizing the familiar (as outlined in chapter three). As example, the song "My Psychopharmacologist and I," from *Next to Normal*, contains a rock-infused quote of Rodgers and Hammerstein's score for *The Sound of Music*, where both music and lyrics reference the latter's "My Favourite Things:"

> "Zoloft and Paxil and Buspar and Xanax…
> Depakote, Klonopin, Ambien, Prozac…
> Ativan calms me when I see the bills –
> These are a few of my favourite pills" (Yorkey & Kitt, 2010: 18).

The music of *Next to Normal*, consequently, is inherently affected by the superabundant styles of the megamusical. With a band of six musicians on electronic instruments, the songs

> "[s]ometimes […] lean toward gooey, big-voiced sentimentality (as in the finale, which repeats "Let There Be Light" at over-amped volume until you're worn to a pulp). But Mr. Kitt works adroitly in a number of musical idioms here, from country-western ballads (for Diana's elegy to the heady highs of her illness) to stadium power-rock (for – gulp! – the electro-shock sequence)" (Brantley, 2008).

The musical, however, keeps returning in some ways to the intimate musical idiom. Much like *March of the Falsettos*, *Next to Normal* focuses its narrative lens exclusively and intimately on the family, albeit more loudly than *March of the Falsettos*. Opening with a rock anthem serving as exposition, the musical limits its own narrative scope by clearly defining its narrative boundaries:

> "DIANA. They're the perfect loving fam'ly, so adoring…
> And I love them ev'ry day of ev'ry week.
> So my son's a little shit, my husband's boring,
> And my daughter, though a genius, is a freak.
> Still I help them love each other
> Father, mother, sister, brother,
> Cheek to cheek" (Yorkey & Kitt, 2010: 8–9).

The musical, additionally, contains aspects of fragmentation, similar in function as in *Company* and *March of the Falsettos*. The characters occasionally transform into spectres of Diana's sub-conscious that intermittently comment on her anguish. When Diana visits Doctor Fine in "My

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Psychopharmacologist and I," the family transform into "the voices" (Yorkey & Kitt, 2010: 18), singing, for example, the side-effects of the medication while juggling pill bottles:

> "DOCTOR FINE AND VOICES. May cause the following side effects,
> One or more:
> DOCTOR FINE.   VOICES.
> Dizziness, drowsiness,
> Sexual dysfunction,
> Headaches and tremors,   Diarrhoea, constipation,
> And nightmares and seizures.   Nervous laughter, palpitations"
> (Yorkey & Kitt, 2010: 19–20).

This is clearly an action that is out of character for the family, but the function of the scene (and arguably the entire musical) is not to provide an objective view of each character's narrative journey. Where musicals such as *Company* focussed its lens on introspection, *Next to Normal* transcends introspection to complete subjectivity. Much of the musical, in essence, is viewed from the subjective perspective of Diana. This is evidenced by the scenic design and the projections that display Diana's eyes on stage, as though the audience is gazing into her mind. Additionally, the inclusion of the character Gabe underscores this point. Throughout much of the first act, Gabe is presented as a regular character on-stage. It is only in the number "He's Not Here" that Dan reveals to both Diana and the audience that Gabe is

> "not here…
> He's not here.
> Love, I know you know.
> Do you feel
> He's still real?
> Love, it's just not so.
> Why is it you still belive?
> Do you dream or do you grieve?
> You've got to let him go.
> He's been dead
> All these years…
> No, my love, he's not here" (Yorkey & Kitt, 2010: 31).

This revelation is another indication that the musical is subjectively viewed through Diana's perspective. When Diana changes doctors, this effect is amplified. Doctor Madden is played by the same actor that portrayed Doctor Fine,[29] which has the dual effect of further concentrating and concatenating the musical's metatheatrical scope, as well as confusing

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[29] The pun of the two doctors' names should not escape notice: Constantly teetering on the border between 'Fine' and 'Mad' (or 'insane'), the two doctors also represent Diana's dual perspectives on reality and her fantasies.

Diana's (and our) subjective perspectives. When Doctor Madden greets Diana for the first time, the stage directions describe a jarring occurrence:

> DOCTOR MADDEN. Diana? This way please.
> *[She walks past him into his inner office, studying him. Once she's past him – much, a chord, lights hit – and he's briefly a rock star.]*
> Yeah…!
> DIANA *[Spins around; lights restore]*. What did you just say?
> DOCTOR MADDEN *[A Doctor again]*. I said welcome. Have a seat. It's nice to meet you.

The musical's perspectives are only somewhat restored in the song "Seconds and Years" when Diana's treatment seems to be working:

> "DOCTOR MADDEN. Is life less cloudy than it was before?
> DIANA. Yes.
> DOCTOR MADDEN. Do you still feel your head is filled with concrete?
> DIANA. No.
> And you're not a scary rockstar anymore" (Yorkey & Kitt, 2010: 69).

Next to Normal, consequently, represents the intersection between the intimate musical and the aesthetics of the megamusical. Utilising stylistic and aesthetic cues from both forms, *Next to Normal* problematizes Galloway's (2010) original definition of the intimate musical. Although it features a small cast and arguably 'humanistic treatment of characters,' its use of aesthetic principles rooted in the megamusical, disrupts such a reading. Certain staging conventions, such as the inclusion of the band onstage and the fluid and presentational use of the performance space, leans towards the intimate, however the instrumentation of the band and the extensive use of amplification and motorised stage mechanics vetoes simple categorisation.

Conversely, the musical amplifies other aspects of intimacy by focussing its narrative lens to such a degree that the narrative transcends introspection, however this can also be read as an inherent feature of the plot and not a stylistic choice rooted in aspirations for intimacy. Regardless, *Next to Normal* represents a troubled example of an intimate musical that has been affected by the wide-spread proliferation of the megamusical form. The aesthetic and stylistic features of the megamusical has, in *Next to Normal*, been re-imagined to a significantly smaller scale. This is indubitably different than in the case of the bonsai musical which is intrinsically a re-imagining of a large-scale performance (often a megamusical); *Next to Normal*, in contrast, was *conceived* with this aesthetic.

To this end, Michael Feingold (2009) from *The Village Voice* adds that *Next to Normal* is "an ambitious, challenging, and often moving small-scale musical [that] toys with delusion and

vision through a device that makes it tricky to categorise." Indeed, while other intimate musicals repudiate the megamusical's conventions, *Next to Normal* deconstructs and utilises these very conventions to its advantage. Moreover, it also employs many conventions of the intimate musical, such as the small cast size and a concentrated narrative focussed on a single family, but again its implementation and presentation as a miniaturised narrative rock concert in the vein of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark* serves to illustrate the far-reaching impact of the megamusical form.

6.4   Conclusion: The Contemporary Intimate Musical

The intimate musical, I have argued, is a complex and varied form that is difficult to compound into singular, set criteria. To this end, I have examined various small-scale musicals that each present a particular feature of an intimate musical, using Galloway's initial (2010) assessment as to the form as a foundation. I have categorised the resulting aesthetic principles according to three overarching categories, namely 1) Content, 2) Form and 3) the eventual Production. These categories, however, are used mostly for the sake of clarity. Practitioners may perhaps not necessarily have divided the aesthetic principles in this way, however by separating and systematically discussing these inherently interlinked aspects, one might be able to better understand how they act in conjunction to form the wider aesthetic framework.

Moreover, not all intimate musicals utilise each individual aspect of intimacy, and certain intimate musicals are weighted more towards one aspect than another. The outline below is a rough estimation of the features that many, but not all, intimate musicals share. This outline should not be considered an all-encompassing reading of the aesthetics of the intimate musical because many of the intricacies of the form are here omitted for brevity. Instead, it should be considered as short-hand to enable further discussion and exploration.
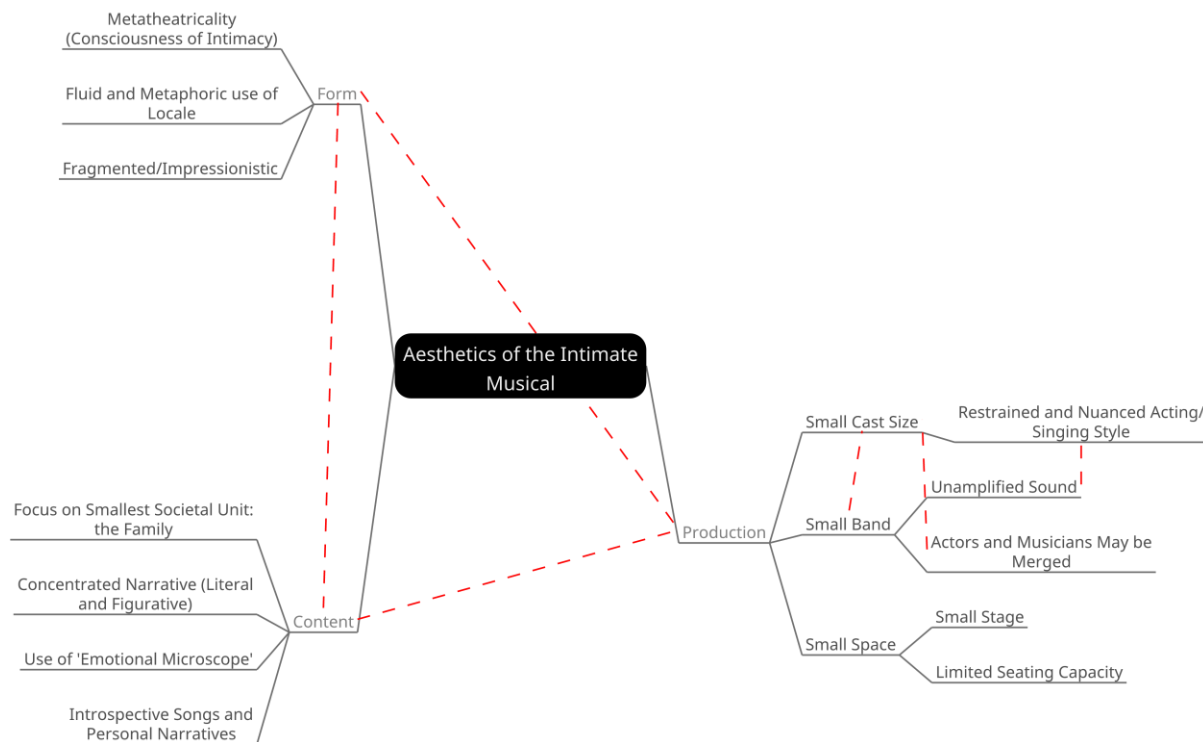
Figure 6.1

The intimate musical, through a complex web of interconnected aesthetic principles, has positioned itself as a direct aesthetic alternative to the megamusical form. While some intimate musicals, such as *Next to Normal* (2008), may borrow aesthetic features from the megamusical, most productions tend to favour an alternative approach. This approach manifests in three interlinking facets of the performance itself. The first aspect dictates the form that the musical will take, the second aspect describes the subject matter or the content of the eventual production, and the third aspect considers the practical presentation of the eventual production. The aspects are both cyclic and interlinked, meaning that they cannot stand in isolation from another and a decision in one aspect will inevitably influence considerations in another aspect.

6.4.1   The Intimate Musical: Form

One of the first true intimate musicals, *The Fantasticks* (1960), pioneered the use of metatheatricality in the form. Significantly, the intimate musical carries an awareness of its own state of intimacy which frequently manifests as a recognition of its inherent theatricality. Financial and aesthetic considerations of the form dictate that the intimate musical – unsuited to superabundant presentational forms – instead acknowledge its own limitations and through content, form and presentation utilise its limitations to its advantage. This consciousness might, for example, result in the inclusion of the band in the stage action or by admitting their presence, such as in *The Fantasticks*. The acknowledgement of the audience, also in *The*

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Fantasticks, allows the audience to be collaborators in the intimate event, creating an enclosed performative system wherein both actors *and* audience are united in co-creation, evoking an intensely intimate theatrical experience.

This usually results in a presentational use of the stage space which veers away from a realistic depiction of the narrative events. The stage, therefore, becomes a metaphoric realm of multiple meanings and changeable interpretations. The metatheatricality of the performance event allows the space to transform from moment to moment to represent any needed realm. These realms are sometimes literal spaces, and sometimes symbolic spaces which can intersect at crucial moments of the production. In *The Fantasticks*, for example, the performance space is doubled as a theatrical space (the characters construct a small stage upon the stage), as well as the suggestive space in which the action takes place (the walled garden, for example, where the stick represents the wall). This notion is also present in *Company* (1970), for example, where the spaces are at once the private realms of the character's minds (where they might unwittingly sing commentary on another character's scene in a different space) or the literal rooms in the houses. Sometimes, the spaces intersect and in "Being Alive," for example, *Company*'s characters, each within their own literal spaces, enter Robert's psychological realm to urge him on to make crucial marital decisions. This fluid and suggestive use of space allows the production to widen its dramatic possibilities; where the megamusical uses stage mechanics to literally alter the space in a cinematic manner, the intimate musical's metatheatrical admittance of its scale, allows the space to transform at will, without the use of expensive stage mechanics.

Company, furthermore, developed the notion of fragmentation within the musical theatre which is itself a useful component of the intimate musical, although not exclusive to the form itself. The fragmented musical, according to Jones (2004a: 270) dramatize "the splintered, inward-turning tendencies of the 'Me Generation.'" He later continues by arguing that

> "the Me Generation evolved from what had begun as healthy, perhaps necessary introspection; but among many, this inward-turning became a kind of hedonistic narcissism. Fragmented musicals spoke directly to this self-absorption by depicting characters either asking "Who am I?" or, alternatively, proclaiming their self-worth. In both the self-questioning and self-proclaiming, it's the feelings of the individual *as* an individual that matter" (Jones, 2004a: 272).

The notion of fragmentation is itself connected to various other aspects of the intimate musical, as Figure 6.1 suggests. However, in isolation it is necessary to understand that this fragmented form's central focus is on the deconstructed and often tumultuous personalities of character

rather than narrative, hence the term 'fragmented.' Intimate musicals, therefore, frequently employ techniques that offer impressions of characters from moment to moment, reflecting their own perspectives and feelings. This idea ties closely with notions of content which dictates that the intimate musical frequently manifests as studies of character and their personal narratives, rather than driven by an overarching narrative.

Fragmentation, furthermore, allows the previously-discussed aspects of intimacy to interlink in a fluid and non-disruptive manner. By fragmenting narrative with introspection, the intimate musical's similarly fragmented and presentational use of space becomes ever more exempted within the performance itself. Moreover, by consciously dissecting (or fragmenting, as it were) the aspects of musical theatre (music, lyrics, book and performance) and turning towards itself (becoming introspectively metatheatrical), the intimate musical becomes a form of self-conscious impressions of intimate human experiences.

6.4.2   The Intimate Musical: Content

These aforementioned aspects affect the content of the intimate musical in significant ways. If the form itself is concerned with intimate human experiences, the content of the intimate musical equally reflects these notions. One of the most efficient means in which the intimate musical can focus on these experiences is the use of narratives that centre on the family as evidenced by the sheer volume of intimate musicals with this narrative focus.

The family, one may argue, is the central societal unit around which society on a macro scale is structured and serves as a convenient emotional microcosm that, in many ways, represent other societal units. Mitterauer and Sieder (1984: 131), for example, argue that contemporary interest in the family stem from the nineteenth century, noting that

> "[i]n the nineteenth century public interest in the family increased, as is clear from contemporary political discussion. The population at large, the state and even industrial enterprises were often characterized metaphorically by the expression 'family.' The family, it was always claimed, was the foundation of society – of bourgeois society."

Anderson and Guernsey (1985: vii) provide further justification for the intimate musical's frequent focus on the family above other societal units, arguing that

> "[e]very human being is in some way connected to another person or persons. This is a necessary social reality […] for being connected means being human, and being human means being part of a family."

Almost all intimate musicals, therefore, in some way focus on families (however non-traditional these families might be). If the family is not the central dramatic drive, then the focus either shifts to the creation of families, or the absence of families, such as in the case of *Company* (1970). The nuclear family, furthermore, provides practical benefits, including a small cast and immediate emotionally recognizable circumstances.

The focus on the family helps focus the narrative of the intimate musical which – whether fragmented or of a more traditional nature – is concentrated to a limited sphere in order to allow enable satisfactory exploration of the conflict presented in the narrative itself. Galloway (2010: 105) initially argued that "the story [of the intimate musical] is concentrated into a small space, both figuratively and literally." Practically, this translates to a somewhat restricted storytelling framework wherein the characters are usually confined to limited spatial configurations.

In many intimate musicals, characters and their narratives are bound to limited locales. *The Fantasticks* (1960), therefore, is limited to the theatre-making space of the outer play that also frames the inner play wherein the narrative similarly plays out mostly in the garden of the respective houses. When the narrative shifts to other locales (such as in the rape scene), the intimate musical's use of fluid and metaphoric space allows this motion to be seamless. Another example is *I Do! I Do!* (1966) wherein the space is literally limited to the couple's bedroom for the duration of the musical; the narrative, therefore, is bound to and focuses on the shared intimacy of the locale. Even the more obviously fragmented forms such as *Company* (1970) and *March of the Falsettos* (1981) concentrate their narratives to the spaces that the characters usually occupy: each other's houses. In these musicals, where the narrative frequently turns inwards to examine internal psychology, the effect of concentration becomes figurative, rather than literal. The 'concentrated space,' in these circumstances, is bound to the character itself, narrowing its focus even more than in literal locals. Many contemporary intimate musicals, therefore, focus the events on limited spaces that might melt into one another and interlink through metaphoric and symbolic means.

When a lens of a musical is concentrated to such a degree as to examine the miniature dramas of the individual psyche, it utilises Brantley's (2007) notion of the 'emotional microscope.' Rather than expressing the extremities of particular feelings and emotions, the musical focusses on the delicate intricacies of human experience; depicting the small changes and oscillations within particular circumstances.

The emotional microscope refers to a specific quality in both a musical's narrative and score. This quality is defined by content that is "gentle [and] threadbare" (Brantley, 2007), relying not on grand emotive gestures, but rather on the intricate motions within each emotional state. A character, for example, would rarely declare an emotion state or idea, but would rather consider and unpack each idea intricately and systematically, thereby experiencing each small, successive moment in isolation. This results in drama, that "depends on the reflection in a man's eyes [or] on the sudden suspension of a breath in a woman's breast" (Richards, 1992) rather than an exclamation of grandiose emotion. As Brantley noted in *110 in the Shade*, the emotions are so intricate and delicate that they "[seem] to melt away even as it's being performed" (Brantley, 2007).

This results in songs that are mostly personal and introspective in form. The nature of the intimate musical allows an almost cinematic close-up of a character's psyche. In addition, the close proximity between the audience and the actor means that the content is frequently focussed on the individual in reaction to particular circumstances as the audience can easily see the various minute emotions that the performer exhibits. The lens of the production is focussed on the self, thereby enabling songs that are less driven by narrative, and more by a personal (and often private) *reaction* to narrative. The audience is given a glimpse as to the intricacies of the character's inner feelings. Although this feature is present in many musicals, this feature comes especially to the forefront when placed in combination with the aforementioned facet of the emotional microscope.

Consequently, the narrative of the intimate musical frequently concerns characters experiencing emotional turmoil and sometimes, as in the case of *Company* and *March of the Falsettos*, overwhelmed by their experiences, can depict the often ambivalent and contradicting facets of a narrative. The narratives of the intimate musical – in conjunction with the physical aspect of a small cast – can explore each personal narrative of the characters individually. A large-scale musical that features dozens of characters, such as *The Sound of Music* (1959), cannot explore the intricate personal narratives of each character owing to practical considerations such as running time. Here, the intimate musical provides a manner to depict extremely personal perspectives, potentially resulting in musicals with possibly a greater sense of emotional nuance.

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6.4.3 The Intimate Musical: Production Aspects

When an intimate musical is produced, it usually carries particular physical features that are tied by three main facets: the cast, the band and the performance space. These three aspects work in conjunction to also minimise the costs of the production, making the intimate musical a cost-friendly alternative to other musical theatre forms, especially the megamusical, especially within the South African market.

The cast size of an intimate musical is usually dictated by the societal unit that the musical presents. This, of course, may vary and it might not be helpful to define it with a particular number of actors. Nonetheless, Galloway has proposed that usually the intimate musical contains six characters. This is a helpful guideline if one considers that an intimate musical can within the space of its running time consider six personal narratives. While it is, of course, possible for the intimate musical to have a larger cast, the larger the cast will undoubtedly effect the extent to which the proverbial 'emotional microscope' can be focussed. A smaller cast, such as in the two-character musical *I Do! I Do!* (1966), allows deeper exploration into each character's personal perspective. In addition, this has practical implications with regard to the acting and singing style of the performance which can be far more restrained and nuanced than in a venue designed for megamusical performances.

The actors, furthermore, is mostly accompanied by a very small ensemble of musicians. This allows the actors to sing unamplified and intensifies the intimacy of the performance event. In certain cases, the actors may also double the musicians, becoming actor-musicians. John Doyle has utilised this approach to notable effect in his productions, such as *Sweeney Todd* (2005) and *Company* (2006). These aspects, however, work best when performed in an intimate performance space that allows for unamplified sound that remains audible. The smaller space also allows for greater intimacy in detail in the actor's performances, allowing them to perform in a more restrained (and almost filmic) manner.

Within South Africa, these combined facets could be a potent way in which to create musical theatre with an alternative, yet possibly equal, emotive potential as the popular and pervasive megamusical form. In the next chapter, I will utilise the facets that I have outlined in the previous two chapters to apply a reading of a new intimate musical that encapsulate the salient features of the contemporary intimate musical.

Chapter 7: Creating a New Intimate Musical: *Fees* (Festival)

Throughout the research, one of the central goals was the creation of a new text that locates the intimate musical within a South African context. Especially in South Africa's fiscal climate (examined in chapter four), the intimate musical as a form seems to be the most suited to the limited resources that practitioners have at their disposal. Rather than viewing this as an obstacle, practitioners may indeed regard the intimate musical as an opportunity to construct musical theatre in a manner that is aesthetically uncompromising in its vision, and that utilises its limited scope not as a hindrance, but rather as a crucial dramatic and artistic component.

Fees[30], in this sense, represents a proposal as to the form that such a musical might take. As a creative endeavour and a case study, therefore, *Fees* should not be considered an aesthetic *ideal*, but rather an initial framework from which further explorations of the form can be done. The production serves, consequently, as a single exploration of an aesthetic possibility rather than a definitive result. In much the same way as *The Fantasticks* (1960) disrupted the small-format musical theatre and *Company* (1970) disrupted notions of narrative within this aesthetic mode, *Fees* proposes that musical theatre within the South African context might neither be prohibitively expensive nor compromising in its aesthetic and emotive scope.

Freely utilising the outlines from the previous chapters (see Figure 6.1), this chapter will outline the prominent aesthetic features of *Fees,* as well as highlight selected thematic ideas that the musical explores. I will intermittently refer to other intimate musicals that serve as possible aesthetic relatives to *Fees*, noting how aspects of intimacy within the musical have been explored, utilised and, at times, expanded upon.

7.1 Background and Introduction

Fees was created through a collaborative process between myself – the researcher – and composer David Wolfswinkel. It was performed by Drama students from Stellenbosch University Drama department under my direction, and the composer doubled as the pianist for the production. Owing to the nature of the research as well as the chosen methodology, the background study pertaining to the qualities of intimacy in the intimate musical occurred simultaneously to the creation of the text, with each discovery interchangeably informing both

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[30] In English, the direct translation of *Fees* is *Festival*. The Afrikaans word, however, carries various connotations that could potentially be lost in translation. The most significant connotation is certainly to the word 'Kersfees' (Christmas) that both evokes the image of a familial gathering and the (ironic) joyful festivities of this usually intimate event.

praxis and theory. The production was conceived with a narrative outline rooted in family drama and was systematically constructed while rehearsals were underway, with the performers' strengths influencing its performative possibilities. Aspects such as the performers' musical abilities allowed, for example, the production to utilise Doyle's actor-musician approach. Various theoretical components, furthermore, also influenced *Fees*'s aesthetic qualities, such as the presentational style wherein the actors present the narrative in a non-realist mode of forward-facing performance. Finally, the physical production and performance space framed the production's physical intimacy, an aspect that affected all other modes of production.

7.2 Intimacy in Content

7.2.1 Reconfiguring the Christian Family in *Fees*

The central narrative paradigm around which *Fees* is structured is that of the domestic – or family – drama. Karen, a mother, concerned with the psychological and spiritual well-being of her son (Johan) that moved away from Bloemfontein to Stellenbosch, invites him home for Christmas. Johan consequently invites his boyfriend, Pieter, that he met on Tinder (an online social network for dating) to accompany him. Pieter, a devout atheist, already distressed that he must attend the festivities, is surprised by another attendee: Johan's ex-girlfriend, Brigitte. Karen, visibly upset owing to Pieter presence, constantly prompts Johan to reconnect with Brigitte, asking her husband, Albert, to support her objective of reclaiming her son. Johan, lured by the comfort of the home he left behind, sleeps with Brigitte and throughout the remainder of the musical, contemplates the decision whether to rekindle his relationship with Brigitte and, by extension, his family, or to return to Stellenbosch with his boyfriend, Pieter.

A recurring theme that frequently resonates throughout the research regarding the intimate musical is its focus on extremely small societal unit. Drawing on the narrative tradition of intimate musicals such as *March of the Falsettos* (1981) and *Next to Normal* (2009), *Fees* focusses its 'emotional microscope' on the smallest possible societal unit: the delicate intricacies of the family. In previous research (Gerber, 2014), I had already explored the importance of the family as a societal unit in dramatic literature. The importance of the family is underscored through sociological theorists that claim that "[e]very human being is in some way connected to another person or persons. This is a necessary social reality [...] for being connected means being human, and being human means being part of a family (Anderson & Guernsey, 1985: vii). I subsequently argued that

"it is perhaps owing to this reason that the family forms the central paradigm around which we structure our intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships and, on a larger scale, even our lives. A phrase such as 'a family that prays together stays together' highlights the family's significance in shaping an individual's sense of belonging within a wider cultural framework" (Gerber, 2014: 15).

This initial research had shaped the conception of the musical from the outset. As a personal research query, my focus on the family as a central dramatic unit within drama (in its wider non-musical scope) resulted in a musical that is expressly a 'family drama musical.' Research, therefore, derived from plays (without music) influenced the creation of *Fees* which musicalizes this existing preoccupation. In his central work on dramatic literate, James Thomas (2009: 50) argues that

"the most common social group, and the most important one in the majority of modern plays, is the family. This is logical because we are all sons, daughters, sisters, and brothers before we are anything else. And since the family is the most basic social unit, playwrights cannot stray too far from it without losing touch with their audiences."

Fees, therefore, underscores this point by focussing its dramatic lens within this essential societal frame. The reasoning here is tied towards the dialectic relationship between cast size and emotive economy. With relatively few characters – a crucial aspect of the intimate musical – a practitioner can create a work of great emotional evocative intensity without resorting to practices tied towards visual and aural overstimulation – such as those found within the megamusical. Whereas *The Phantom of the Opera* achieves emotional intensity through sweeping, romantic melodies sung by operatic voices and accompanied by a large orchestra with continual visual stimulus, the family drama must find its emotive evocativeness within the confines of unfiltered relationships. Thomas (2009: 50) argues that "[t]he dramatic importance of families lies in the emotional quality that attends specific social relationships, such as love between husband and wife, pressures between parent and child, and competition among siblings." In this sense, the family drama can, by virtue of its close ties to indispensable human experience, prove just as effective in its evocation of emotive reactions from the spectator. Furthermore, quoting again from previous research, one can argue that

"[t]he family […] owing to this immense social importance, is clearly an effective vehicle for discussing not only issues of the family, but also 'the organization of other realms of life, such as economics, politics and religion' (Mintz, 1983: 2). […] Therefore, […] plays that revolve around domestic issues are able to address social concerns in a much wider spectrum than simply those that are immediately present within the family unit itself" (Gerber, 2014: 68).

Fees's central narrative preoccupation is the troubled reconfiguration of the (Afrikaans Christian) nuclear family unit. The Huyshamen household, follows a traditional Christian "[w]estern conception of the family – with the father as the central figure, and the rest of the family surrounding him in a descending hierarchy; [a conception] based firmly upon the biblical proposal of the structure of the family" (Gerber, 2014: 16). This familial narrative provides a certain safety to the characters that, upon its disruption, creates the central dramatic conflict of the musical.

The relative comfort and safety that traditional notions of the family provide are upset and distorted in *Fees*. Much like *March of the Falsettos* (1981), the dominant dramatic crisis is centred around a gay man and his lover. In this case, however, Johan has many unresolved psychological issues surrounding his homosexuality that are directly tied to guilt regarding his parents; a guilt rooted in Calvinist doctrine of patriarchal familial expectations. Both his parents reject his homosexuality in two differing, but equally traumatic ways. His father seems to reject his homosexuality in the most overt manner and, in relating a bullying incident to Brigitte, Johan admits:

> "My pa het niks gesê nie. Net stilgebly. Maar ek weet hy't dit gehoor want na die tyd, toe ons in die kar klim, toe bly hy lank stil. Hy't net voor homself uitgestaar. Ek het later gedink ek moet net jammer sê, of iets. Maar hy praat toe… 'as jy ooit weer gay porn op my laptop kyk, sal ek jou reguit bliksem'" (Addendum A).[31]

Johan's mother, similarly to his father, also repudiates Johan's homosexuality, admitting to Albert her conservative views:

> "KAREN. Regardt het nog net Asiatiese vroumense hier aangebring en Katrien is verloof aan 'n geskeide man. Ek… Ek wil net een kind hê wat die regte besluite neem" (Addendum A).[32]

While Albert's reasoning regarding his rejection of his son's homosexuality is not explicitly stated, Karen's is tied (at least on the surface) to her conservative religious views. In an early discussion with Pieter, Karen finds out about Pieter's (and therefore her son's) rejection of the church and its implied traditional family values:

> "KAREN. Nee, dan is dit goed. Ons gaan Sondag kerk toe, so as jy enige klere het wat jy wil hê ek moet was, los dit sommer buite die deur.

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[31] My dad didn't say anything. Just kept quiet. But I know he heard me because afterwards, when we climbed in the car, he didn't speak for a long while. He just stared out in front of him. Later, I thought I should just apologise, or something. But then he spoke… 'if you ever watch gay porn on my laptop again, I'll beat you straight.'

[32] KAREN. Regardt has only ever brought home Asian women and Katrien is engaged to a divorcee. I… I just want one child that will make the right decisions.

PIETER. O… uh… dankie.
KAREN. Ek weet nie watter kerk julle na toe gaan nie, maar ons is by die klipkerk by die straat af. Die diens is nege-uur, so ons gaan sommer…
PIETER. Ons gaan nie kerk toe nie, tannie.
KAREN. Ekskuus?" (Addendum A).[33]

Later, Karen reiterates her desire for traditionalism, pondering in "Besluite,"

"Kies jy wasmiddel C of wasmiddel D?
C was net wit en die ander was kleur.
Kleur varieer, so hoe weet jy dis skoon?
Wit distilleer dit tot skoon monotoon.
Jy weet wat jy kry, en met alle respek,
Ja, wit is voorspelbaar, maar jy weet dis korrek" (Addendum A).[34]

Her rejection of her son's homosexuality is consequently tied on the one hand to her traditional Christian doctrine, as well as instinct to protect the integrity of the family unit that, she believes, will be disrupted should Johan commit to Pieter. Her fears, perhaps, are rooted more in the dilapidation of her marriage to Albert which she no longer knows how to salvage. Attempting to bridge the chasm in their marriage, she begs Albert in "Ek Het Jou Nodig"

"Ek het jou nou nodig,
Albert
Ek het jou nodig by my.
Ek nodig dat jy
My kant kies,
Albert.
Ek het jou nodig want ek
Is die enigste een wat baklei.
Albert, Albert!
Praat met my,
Albert!" (Addendum A).[35]

The repetition of the name 'Albert' signifies her dependence to her husband. Karen, unable to envision a family not tied to traditional Christian doctrine, continually looks towards the

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[33] KAREN. No, then it's fine. We go to church on Sundays, so if you have any clothes you want me to wash, just leave it outside the door.
PIETER. O… uh… thank you.
KAREN. I don't know what church you attend, but we go to the church down the road. The service is at nine, so we'll just…
PIETER. We don't go to church, *tannie*. *
KAREN. Excuse me?
Tannie literally translates to 'aunty,' but does not refer to familial status, but is rather a sign of respect. The same applies to *oom*, which translates to 'uncle.'

[34] Do you choose wash powder C of wash powder D? / C washes only white and the other washes colour. / Colour varies, so how do you know if it's clean? / White distils it to clean monochrome. / You know what you get, and with all due respect, / Yes, white is predictable, but you know it's correct.

[35] I need you, / Albert. / I need you with me. / I need that you should / choose my side, / Albert. / I need you because I / am the only one who's fighting. / Albert, Albert! / Speak to me, / Albert!

patriarchy for clarification and support. This traditional Christian familial arrangement is simultaneously mirrored and troubled by Brigitte who continually refers to herself as Maria. In the song "Ek, Jou Maria" this reference is both lyrically and musically significant:

Figure 7.1

The reference here serves several purposes. By melodically referencing the "Maria" theme from *West Side Story* (1957), the link is made to yet another troubled family where culture and opposing religious views forms dividing chasms. *West Side Story*, however, is itself a reference to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and Brigitte, hoping to rekindle the love between her and Johan, reminds him of these romantic entanglements. Her revelations, however, are inherently problematic. While both *Romeo and Juliet* and *West Side Story* focus on romantic relationships, both end tragically for the parties involved. The music and lyrics, therefore, in its fantasy of an ideal family unit, is troubled by the irony of the disrupted narrative of the original text.

Brigitte's reference to Maria, however, is also rooted in her sincere religious views that, in many ways, are similar to Karen's. Evoking the imagery of the Virgin Mary,[36] Brigitte sings in "Maria se Droom"

> "Maar die Here stuur aan Maria 'n engel
> Wat nou vir haar 'n goeie tyding bring.
> Die engel sal Maria help vereffen
> Aan haar skuld. En sy sing:
>
> 'Ek het 'n seun. Sy naam is Tony.
> Hy het in die nag verdwyn
> Maar ek weet dat hy nie wou nie.
> Die breë weg het hom verlei.
> En as ek jou nou help
> En jou studies klaar betaal
> En ek koop vir jou 'n kar
> Dan moet jy my kind gaan haal.
> Uit die donker gaan haal'" (Addendum A).[37]

Here the imagery of Maria in *West Side Story* as well as the biblical Maria are interlinked, producing a troubling perspective on the patriarchal expectation of the nuclear family. Brigitte herself seems to, at times, take on the masculine role (of Tony), commenting on the inherently fluid nature of sexuality and gender. When Johan chooses her above his current boyfriend, harking towards the acceptance of his (traditional) family, Brigitte promises that

> "[e]k sal jou help. Ek sal mooi wees. Ek sal make-up dra. Ek sal elke dag gaan draf. Ons sal saam kerk toe gaan. Ek sal jou hand vashou en ek sal sterk wees wanneer ek weet jy sukkel. Belowe my…
>
> Dat ek is Maria
> Maria!
> Maria!
> Ek is joune, Maria!" (Addendum A)[38]

Her promise to enter the feminine role (much like Karen) is problematized by her song wherein she initially proposes that *she* is Maria. By the end of her request, however, she no longer names herself Maria, but rather uses the word as a proper noun to describe Johan; a device she

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[36] While the English translation of the Bible refers to Mary, the Afrikaans translation refers to Maria, hence the use of the Afrikaans name in the musical, binding these two figures closely together.

[37] But God sent unto Maria an angel / that now brings her good tidings. / The angel will help Maria settle / her debt. And she sings: / 'I have a son. His name is Tony. / He disappeared into the night, / but I know that he didn't want to. / The broad road tempted him. / And if I help you now / and I pay your studies / and I buy you a car, / then you need to save my child.' / Save him from the darkness.

[38] I'll help you. I'll be pretty. I'll wear make-up. I'll jog every day. We can go to church together. I'll hold your hand and I'll be strong when I know you struggle. Promise me… / That I am Maria / Maria! / Maria! / I am yours, Maria!

had used previously in "Ek, Jou Maria" (Figure 7.1). This serves as a reminder that their relationship and conception of the family is equally problematic and unstable as Albert and Karen's. While both her and Karen's wishes have been granted, the viewer is aware of the irony of the troubled – and ultimately doomed – relationship. The traditional conception of the patriarchal Christian family, in other words, is increasingly unstable.

7.2.2   The Concentrated Narrative and the Family Home

Besides the focus on the domestic societal unit, *Fees* comprises several other features of the intimate musical. The narrative of the musical is concentrated in both a literal and figurative level. Referring to *The Fantasticks* (1960), Galloway (2010: 105–106) comments that this feature "can be seen as both a reflection of the more typical musical (a conventional love story, a traditional book) and as a precursor of newer forms (sparse set, small cast, minimalist orchestra)." On a figurative and narrative level, by never leaving the confines of the Huyshamen household, the musical navigates the intimate personal spheres of the private family home. The house, in *Fees*, literally represents the safety of the traditional family unit. By focussing narrative perspective to a singular space, much like in *I Do! I Do!* (1966), *Fees* attempts to construct linkage between the intimacy of locale and the intimacy of narrative focus. This 'concentrated' perspective imbues the production with a tightly-focussed lens that disallows venture into spaces that will widen the musical's narrative concentration.

The household, therefore, forms a crucial narrative boundary in the production and serves several thematic purposes. In the opening song, "Dieselfde, Maar Beter," Karen mentions that she is currently building additions to the house. When Johan and Pieter arrive and speak to Karen, Johan also refers to these additions, reminding the audience of its significance. Later, the inclusion of the house as metaphoric device is developed in Albert's confessional song, "'n Baie Groot Huis." After the revelation of his online affair, he confesses to the audience:

> "Die huis is groot,
> Ons huwelik… oud.
> Die Vrystaat is warm,
> Maar tog kry ek koud.
> So koud soos die vrou
> En die huis wat sy bou:
> Die mure om my uit haar lewe te hou…" (Addendum A).[39]

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[39] The house is big, / our marriage… old. / The Free state is warm, / but still I am cold. As cold as my wife / and the house she is building: / The walls to keep me out of her life.

The family's house consequently becomes an active metaphor that encapsulates both the family's physical parameters, as well as their emotive landscape. By limiting the drama to the household itself, the musical's intimacy is achieved through a dialectic 'concentrated' relationship between locale and the action of the narrative.

The use of lighting in the production further aided the focus of the narrative to the household spaces. Five specials, focussed on the five actors, intermittently switched in order to designate the parties involved in a scene. The audience, through implication, are to infer the space that the characters occupy. This imaginative co-authorship with the audience – a crucial aspect of the intimate musical – aided the intensity and concentration of the narrative space. This had the additional effect of concentrating the narrative to only the parties involved in a scene, as well as aiding narrative rhythm. Scenes can jump from one to the other without any scene changes or interruption that might break the crucial relationship between the spectators and the action.

7.2.3   The Emotional Microscope and Failed Communication

Fees also utilises the construct of the 'emotional microscope' as epitomised in *110 in the Shade* (1963). In *110 in the Shade*, the 'microscope' is focused on the emotional intricacies of family's desire for redemption, with the eventual rain signifying a purification. In *Fees*, the 'emotional microscope' is focussed on the central theme of failed communication and the various and varied responses to the resulting isolation. In both cases, the crucial point of the 'emotional microscope' is to focus on the smallest intricacies of a particular emotionality; thereby decreasing scope, but increasing the depth of emotive perception.

Figure 7.2

This sense is created even from the outset in the opening song "Dieselfde, Maar Beter" (Figure 7.2) which begins with a simple melodic motif that encapsulates a central thematic idea of failed communication and isolation within the Huyshamen household. The simplicity of the opening melodic moments, heightened by the rests interspersed throughout the melodic line, captures the loneliness of the character. The solitary piano accompaniment underscores the simplicity of the opening measures, signalling that the emotionalities that are to be explored are concentrated (even microscopically so) to the sensitive intricacies of deep-seated emotive experience.

The opening bar deliberately evokes the sound of a ringing cellular phone, specifically the default Apple iPhone call alert, which immediately alerts a perceptive audience that a cellular phone call is being made, foreshadowing the imminent exploration of (failed) communication. Without any visual signification (as Karen does not physically hold a cellular phone), this plot device is instead communicated through suggestion in music and, directly after that, with the lyric.

Figure 7.3

When Karen sings the opening lines in Figure 7.3, the audience is alerted to the fact that she and the person to whom she is speaking are separated in some way. Moreover, her repetition of the greeting, indicating a reticence to speak, foreshadows her tentative relationship to the

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listener (her son, Johan). The greeting, in this case, is also a question rather than a statement, opening the musical with a cautious query, underlining the reserved sensitivity of the request. This doubles to underscore the fragility of the character as well as to highlight the delicate intimacy of the performance event.

The lyric, in its diminished form of a request, almost serves to ask the audience to join the act of theatrical creation. In this way, it functions similarly to *The Fantasticks'* "Try to Remember" wherein El Gallo also opens the production with a gentle invitation. The call alert tone, originally in G-major, transforms into an ostinato theme in the fourth measure. Now in G-minor, the music underscores Karen's deep uncertainty regarding the forthcoming festivities. Moreover, the music, now with a driving tempo, provides structure to the almost deconstructed nature of her requests.

Later, Karen directly asks her listener to help her to fix her messaging application, WhatsApp, which seems to be malfunctioning:

> "As jy hier kom, moet jy kyk na my WhatApp
> Ek weet nie eintlik of dit werk nie.
> Want as ek vir jou pa iets wil tik,
> Soos 'Haai, ek is hier' of 'Haai, ek is daar'
> Of 'Gaan jy dalk vanaand met my draf;'
> Want jy weet jou pa is baie onfiks.
> Ek sê vir hom, 'Albert, jy weet jy's onfiks'
> Maar, Johan, hoor my, ek sweer dit help niks.
> So kyk asseblief na my WhatsApp" (Addendum A).[40]

Here the theme of failed communication is explicitly demonstrated, with the "asseblief" diminishing the appeal from a demand to a gentle request. The music, furthermore, decrescendos from *fortissimo* to *piano*, underscoring the gentleness of the emotion. Much like in *110 in the Shade*, the drama depends on the "mellow songs [and] the gentle, low-key way they express real feelings" (Rooney, 2007: 2).

Many other songs also demonstrate the feature of the emotional microscope and its connection to failed communication, most notably "Vyf-en-Dertig Jaar." Here Karen confesses to her husband why she has been so distant in their marriage. After the revelation of his adulterous affair, she asks

> "Is ek dieselfde vrou wat ek was

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[40] When you arrive, you must look at my WhatsApp. / I don't really know if it's working. / Because if I want to type something to your father, / like 'Hi, I am here' or 'Hi, I am there.' / or 'Are you going to jog with me tonight;' / Because you know your father is very unfit. / And I say to him, 'Albert, you know you're unfit,' / but Johan, hear me, I swear it helps nothing. / So please have a look at my WhatsApp.

Die dag toe ons getrou het?
Die vrou met die lus?
Die vrou met die dryf?
Want na vyf-en-dertig jaar
Is ons uiteindelik weer alleen.
Die kinders is weg.
Dis net ek en jy.
En ek is bang,
Albert,
Dat as jy my weer leer ken
Met die plooie en letsels van 'n ouer vrou
Dat jy ons vyf-en dertig jaar,
Albert,
Sal berou" (Addendum A).[41]

The distance between her and her husband (that Albert attributes to the literal and figurative walls), is captured in this confessional moment. The music, furthermore, underscores the emotional distance of their relationship.

Figure 7.4

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[41] Am I the same wife I was / the day when we married? / The wife with the need? / The wife with the drive? / Because after thirty-five years / we're finally alone again. / The children are gone. / It's just you and me. / And I'm scared, / Albert, / that if you get to know me again / with the wrinkles and the scars of an older woman / that our thirty-five years, / Albert, / you'll regret.

Wolfswinkel's composition here is filled with rests that separate the central melody. The pauses signal both Karen's distress and symbolises the distance between her and her husband. The simplicity of the accompaniment, here mostly silent supplying only the necessary chord, underscores the delicacy of the scene, allowing the character's emotions to take centre stage. This is also one of the only moments in the musical wherein the character abandons rhyme for emotional accuracy. Karen's softly queries their relationship, and the delicacy of the moment asks for a more naturalistic rhythm of speech. The simplicity of the melody, therefore, along with the lyrics that almost mimic natural speech, exemplify the notion of the 'emotional microscope' at its most deeply focussed.

7.2.4 Introspection and Personal Narratives in Monologue Songs

The narrative of the self is most acutely demonstrated in songs that take the form of internal monologues. Many songs in *Fees* do not feature singing dialogue – in other words, characters speaking to each other in song.[42] Instead, the emphasis is on the centrality of the self. Much like in *Company* (1970), songs frequently take the form of confessionals to the audience, expressing secret desires. Another feature of these songs is their emphasis on the intricacies of internal thought, along with the often-contradictory nature of one's private, internal monologues.

In the song "Dis Nie Dat Ek Karen Vermy Nie," Albert speaks to the audience. He begins by admitting that he had indeed received Karen's WhatsApp (referred to in "Dieselfde, Maar Beter"), but choses to ignore it.

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[42] Except for "Ek, Jou Maria" which is exclusively dialogue-driven. Here, the characters freely move from singing to speaking without interruption.

Figure 7.5

The inclusion of the various "uhm"-sounds signals the character's reticence to speak to the audience. The use of this natural speech sound is a relatively uncommon occurrence in traditional musical theatre songs where characters – usually for the sake of clarity and brevity – express themselves with a poetic succinctness. The "uhm"-sounds, in addition, contributes a sense of verisimilitude to the song, mimicking the rhythms of real internal thoughts after they manifest as speech. The narrative of the song, therefore, through the inclusion of speech errors, adds a certain sense of vulnerability to the performance that suddenly seems more personal and introspective in its linguistically flawed expression.

Another device utilised in the song to add to its introspective quality is the notion of retrospective realisation. This occurs when Albert sings about his wife:

> "Ek… uhm… doen waardering,
> Soos plase, en huise, jy weet.
> En meeste van die tyd kom Karen met my.
> Dan ry ons waarookal die pad ons na lei.
> Dan wonder ek hoekom Karen nog bly…
> So ek meng maar werk en plesier.
> Dis meestal maar werk,
> Maar daar's tog plesier.
> Kyk, ons is daar om te werk,
> Die plesier bly maar hier" (Addendum A).[43]

In this moment, Albert makes a statement about his and his wife's relationship. He continues speaking without stopping, finally mistakenly admitting that his original assessment was incorrect when he sings, "Kyk, ons is daar om te werk / Die plesier bly maar hier." In this moment, Albert realises that his marriage to Karen is more nebulous than even he himself had

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[43] I… um… do appraisals, / like farms and houses, you know. / And most of the time Karen comes with me. / Then we drive wherever the road takes us. / Then I wonder why Karen still stays… / So I mix work and pleasure. / It's mostly work, / but there's still some pleasure. / Look, we're there to work, / the pleasure stays here.

anticipated. The resultant pause in the music carries a truly introspective moment wherein he considers the effect of his own realisation.

Furthermore, the centrality of the self is increasingly evident in the music and lyrics of *Fees*. Very few songs take on the function of interchanges, thereby making most songs introspective in nature, with an intense focus on the self in relation to the surrounding circumstances. The characters delve ever more deeply into their own thoughts and continually examine and re-examine them. An example of this is "Geskenke" wherein Johan decides between his boyfriend, Pieter, and his ex-girlfriend, Brigitte. The song begins with a central philosophical proposition:

> "Geluk is soos 'n geskenk.
> Dis 'n geskenk wat dubbeld beloon.
> Een keer vir jou, dan die ander persoon:
> Vir jou en…" (Addendum A).[44]

Thereafter, Johan turns his focus ever more inwardly towards the effect that his decision will have on his family, personalising the initial proposition:

> "Dan moet jy vra wie die meeste gaan baat
> Is dit jyself, of dalk Pieter,
> Of is dit Brigitte, jou Pa en jou Ma?" (Addendum A)[45]

In his penultimate verse in the song, he probes his own thoughts even more deeply, asking

> "En is ek wat hy regtig soek?
> Is hy regtig gelukkig
> Of net gelukkig genoeg?" (Addendum A).[46]

Johan, in a final moment of internal realisation, returns to his original philosophical proposition, but this time with the perspective of a character that has introspectively probed his own wishes and desires.

> "Die beste geskenk wat ek hom kan gee
> Is om uit sy lewe te tree" (Addendum A).[47]

The fact that one is left with the sense that his logic and eventual choice is flawed, serves to underscore the importance of the introspective song within the intimate musical. While the eventual insight that the character reaches is not necessarily correct, the audience is meant to

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[44] Happiness is like a gift. / It's a gift that gives twice. / Once unto you, then the other person: / For you and…

[45] Then you must ask who has the most to gain. / Is it you, or maybe Pieter, / or is it Brigitte, your dad and your mom?

[46] And am I what he truly wants? / Is he truly happy / or just happy enough?

[47] The best gift I can give him / is to walk out of his life.

understand this as part of his Johan's own flawed human nature. Indeed, the character's internal flaws are self-justified through intense personal scrutiny, and by placing them under the microscope, Johan justifies his decisions for both himself and the audience. The lyrics, therefore, do not at any moment express objective truth, but rather exceedingly subjective opinion. All the lyrics, in this sense, provide impressions of the self, never objectively narrating narrative. The centrality of the personal narrative, much like in *March of the Falsettos* (1981), and the use of internal investigative self-reflective monologue songs, is a critical method in which the intimate musical attempts to forge an emotionally potent bond between flawed characters and the audience.

7.3 Intimacy in Form: Metatheatricality, Fluidity of Space and Fragmentation

Fees follows many of the outlines regarding the intimate musical's form and these features are utilised to underscore the intimate narrative focus. Borrowing aesthetic cues from other pioneering intimate musicals, *Fees* attempts to experiment with form within the confines of the Afrikaans family drama narrative. The point, however, must be reiterated that the manifestation of the form that the intimate musical takes, cannot be separated from considerations regarding content and presentation. The form, therefore, is inherently tied to the presented narrative itself. Furthermore, these features (metatheatricality, fluid use of locale and a fragmented style) are frequently utilised by other musical forms; however, they can be particularly useful in the intimate musical to navigate the form's inherent limitations. The discussions below, therefore, must be read in conjunction with the previously-outlined features and not in isolation or as a separate entity.

7.3.1 Metatheatricality and Presentational Style

Metatheatricality, while not a crucial component of the intimate musical, is still a helpful device to manage the confines of the form. Intimate musicals such as *I Do! I Do!* (1968) need not concern itself with metatheatricality as the setting that the characters occupy are at least somewhat 'realistic' and confined, therefore never shifting spaces or locales. Furthermore, in the original production, the orchestra was safely hidden from view, perpetuating the illusionary nature of traditional musicals where the desire for verisimilitude and realism outweighs the external reality of the performance event itself. In many megamusicals, it is precisely this illusionary nature that provides the visual thrill of the production. Lacking this feature, the

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intimate musical may comprise a certain self-awareness regarding its own intimacy that allows the audience to appreciate *suggestion* over *declaration* regarding presentation.

The overall effect of metatheatrical devices is partially to illuminate the performative nature of the event. In contrast with Brechtian metatheatricality, the effect is not meant to be alienating, but rather more inclusionary through the admittance of its own theatricality. As in *The Fantasticks* (1960), *Fees* utilises an overtly metatheatrical presentational style, not limiting itself to the confines of realism, deconstructing the space and allowing alternative interpretations of the narrative events not bound by the limiting lens of realist staging. The first image that greets the audience is that of the singular pianist upstage, and five chairs facing the audience with the five characters seated on them. From left to right, the characters are seated accordingly: Albert, Brigitte, Johan, Pieter and Karen (Figure 7.6).

Figure 7.6

The narrative of the musical, therefore, is presented in such a way that all of the characters are in continuous view of the audience, allowing the spectator to see each character's reaction and emotive journey individually, even when they are not part of a particular scene. This presentational style is deliberately utilised to accentuate the previously discussed theme of isolation and disconnectedness. By never allowing the characters to see each other, and by facing forward to the audience, we – the audience – can see each character's reaction to

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particular events or revelations; however the characters themselves are not privy to this same information.[48]

In terms of metatheatricality, this move away from realism mirrors John Doyle's utilisation of the same technique in 2006's revival of *Company*. By presenting this production in this way, the audience is reminded of the illusionary nature of the performance event. Indeed, by removing the artifice of realist staging, the audience is indeed shown *more* of the character's internal motivations and experiences. The musical, therefore, rejects the boundaries of 'natural' blocking to, in a way, become even more 'real' to the spectator. The visual arrangement and placement of the actors, therefore, comment on the musical's own inherent artificiality; and through this overt visual admittance thereof, the action becomes emotively ever more potent and, one may argue, intimate. It is for this reason that Hornby argues that metatheatrical techniques

> "always has the effect of drastically realigning the audience's perception of the drama, forcing them to examine consciously the assumptions that lie behind and control their response to the world of the play" (Hornby, 1986: 117).

Finally, metatheatrical staging devices has the additional benefit of allowing the audience to "in effect become collaborators with the writer, filling in the 'white spaces' of the text, or expanding that text into the larger context of our culture, and thereby continuing a creative process initiated by the author" (Homan, 1989: 12). This has a galvanising effect on an audience who, in the act of co-creation, might connect even more intimately with the subject and the subject matter that the characters portray. By becoming co-conspirators in the stage action, the audience becomes intimately woven into the dramatic arc of the story. By placing the actors in continuous view, the characters are made vulnerable to scrutiny by the audience, making the audience an active participant in the drama. This, in combination with the fact that many of the songs are aimed directly at the audience (sometimes even in the form of a question, as in "Altyd Spyt"), places the audience in participatory position, intensifying the intimacy of the performance.

Of course, the point must be made that there certainly exists many other methods of metatheatrical staging besides the specific choices made in *Fees*, and these considerations are for the designer and director to make. This particular method, therefore, was merely one of the various options utilised for this particular performance.

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[48] I have utilised this technique in prior research (Gerber, 2014). In this iteration, the aesthetic had been developed and explored further.

7.3.2 Fluidity of Space

This subtle admittance of its own status as a musical performance has the added benefit of allowing the space to instantaneously transform from moment to moment to become the specifically needed locale. Without needing to conform to conventions of realist presentation, spaces can freely transform, morph and intersect. In one of the first ensemble scenes in the first act, two spaces interlink and transform as needed by the drama:

> "*[Binne. Die kombuis. KAREN en BRIGITTE. JOHAN in.]*
> JOHAN. Ma, pa wil hoor of julle wyn wil hê?
> KAREN. Hoe laat is dit?
> BRIGITTE. Sesuur.
> KAREN. O. Watter wyn is dit?
> JOHAN. Four Cousins.
> BRIGITTE. O, dis goeie wyn, tannie.
> KAREN. O. Gaan julle twee neem?
> JOHAN. Ek gaan, maar Pieter drink nie wyn nie.
> KAREN. Nie hy nie, ek meen julle tweetjies?
> BRIGITTE. Ja, ek sal bietjie neem, tannie.
> *[Buite. Die braai. ALBERT en PIETER.]*
> ALBERT. Wag, so hoekom drink jy nie wyn nie?
> PIETER. Ek bant, oom.
> ALBERT. Watse goed?
> PIETER. Dis 'n diet.
> ALBERT. Nee, fok, mannetjie, jy's al klaar te maer. Is dit 'n moffie ding?
> *[Die ruimtes oorvleuel in die volgende ses spreekbeurte.]*
> KAREN. Julle kinders kan maar drink.
> PIETER. Nee, ek was nogal oorgewig.
> KAREN. Ek het in elk geval 'n migraine.
> JOHAN. Kan almal nou asseblief buitetoe kom!?
> BRIGITTE. Ek dink die slaai is klaar, tannie.
> ALBERT. Wel, ek hou van my Four Cousins. Laat hy val waar hy wil."[49]

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[49] *[Inside. The kitchen. KAREN and BRIGITTE. Enter JOHAN.]*
JOHAN. Mom, dad wants to know if you want wine?
KAREN. What time is it?
BRIGITTE. Six o'clock.
KAREN. O. What wine?
JOHAN. Four Cousins.
BRIGITTE. O, that's very good wine, *tannie*.
KAREN. O. Are you two going to have some?
JOHAN. I will, but Pieter doesn't drink wine.
KAREN. Not him, I mean you two.
BRIGITTE. Yes, I'll have some, *tannie*.
[Outside. The braai. *ALBERT and PIETER.]*
ALBERT. Wait, so why don't you drink wine?
PIETER. I bant, *oom*.
ALBERT. What?
PIETER. It's a diet.

In this scene, two spaces are simultaneously presented to the audience, all while the actors are still facing forward. Through changes in lighting cues, the actors are intermittently lit as required to isolate them from the other performers. The two spaces, however, are only ever implied to the audience. Without the use of décor or stage properties, the audience infers the location of the actors by virtue of their respective behaviour in the space.

Eventually, the spaces intersect, and the audience – now aware of the difference in imagined spatial arrangement – can perceive the merging of the spaces as a natural progression of the scene. The dialogue itself allows further metaphoric linkage to be created between the two spaces. By splicing the dialogue in this way – connected by topic only – the characters and their pre-occupations remain clear while the spaces in which they occupy can shift and alter continually without set-pieces aiding indication.

This is a crucial aspect of the intimate musical, if the musical does not limit itself to a single locale. This use of space as a site of instantaneous changeability underscores the shared imaginative enterprise of the event, in effect underpinning its intimate preoccupations. Furthermore, this has practical benefits by allowing the musical to cover a greater spectrum of possible locales within the Huyshamen household without sacrificing narrative pace and rhythm. The overall effect, therefore, is almost filmic in its use of montage-like spliced editing, but simultaneously invites active imaginative participation from the spectator who must imagine the constantly shifting localities along with the performers.

7.3.3 Fragmentation and Instrumentation

One of the key tools of the intimate musical is Jones's (2004a: 272) conception of fragmentation. This device, frequently used by Hal Prince and Stephen Sondheim, is usually associated with a focus on introspection. This aspect, however, is not the only aspect of fragmentation in the musical form. Indeed, frequently this aspect manifests as musicals with very little plot or musicals concentrated on a theme. Another way in which this feature manifests is by replacing narrative or presentational 'realism' with

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ALBERT. No, fuck, boy, you're already too skinny. Is it a *moffie* thing? *
[The spaces intersect in the following section.]
KAREN. You kids can drink.
PIETER. No, I just used to be overweight.
KAREN. In any case, I have a migraine.
JOHAN. Can everyone please come outside!
BRIGITTE. I think the salad is finished, *tannie*.
ALBERT. Well, I like my Four Cousins. Cheers!
* *Moffie* is a derogatory term for 'gay man' in Afrikaans.

"what may appear to the viewer as a series of seemingly (and sometimes in fact) haphazardly ordered songs, dance numbers, monologues, dialogue scenes, and visual images and effects, each of which exists to convey an aspect of the musical's central theme" (Jones, 2004a: 272–273).

In *Fees*, besides the visual arrangement of the actors, fragmentation of narrative logic occurs through the inclusion of instrumentation. Borrowing John Doyle's actor-musician approach from *Company* (2006), both Albert and Karen – the two parents framing the action on opposite ends of the stage – play instruments that accompany the main action in crucial narrative moments. Clearly stepping outside the boundaries of realism, this utilises Jones's abovementioned fragmentation through the use of a fragmentative *effect*.

The parents – the supposed cornerstone of a family – play instruments that, at certain times, comments on the main action of the narrative. Additionally, the instruments comments on the quality and nature of the characters themselves. In this production, the character Karen plays the flute and Albert plays the double-bass. Karen – uncertain in her patriarchal family – seems doubly uncertain when her soprano-like flute is placed in comparison with Albert's double-bass.

Figure 7.7

The fragmentation, however, reaches its peak in the musical when at a moment of crisis, words escape the characters and they must abandon song and speech entirely. In "Ek Het Jou Nodig," (Figure 7.7) after Karen confronts Albert about her fears, a seminal moment in the musical occurs that defies narrative logic and cohesion. Desperately looking for a way to redeem the marriage, Albert raises his double-bass and, ignoring words or language (both spoken and sung) suddenly consciously plays music.

Up until this moment, the instruments had served decorative purposes that mostly passively commented on narrative. In this moment, however, Albert abandons the logic of the production and the uses the instrument in a crucially self-aware manner. The instrument, here, becomes an

extension of himself, and the simple melody he plays, replaces any words that he might have spoken or sung.

The instrument itself, at that moment, transcends its objective meaning as a sound-generating device. Fragmenting its material meaning, the instrument transforms into Albert's desires, his subconscious and his perpetually denied need for communication. Until this point in the musical, the lack of communication in their marriage had caused much of the conflict; now, completely abandoning verbal (and logical) communication, the marriage surpasses linguistic expression and confinement; fragmenting into a universal system of meaning that is at once *less* and *more* expressive in its visual and aural symbolism.

Figure 7.8

When Karen delivers her wordless reply (Figure 7.8), the poignancy of the moment is underscored and heightened by the absence of traditional lyric or dialogue. The audience, by now associating both characters with their respective instruments, understand that language is no longer sufficient to express the emotional intricacies of the titular thirty-five years of marriage. The various conflicting and contradictory emotions of the moment are inexpressible through traditional communicative modes; therefore, by fragmenting the musical form in this way, *Fees* heightens the intimate fragility of the character in the dramatic circumstances. Emotionality that might have been achieved through spectacle in the megamusical form, is now achieved through subtle nuance in semiotic meaning in relation to character, simplistic décor and functional stage properties.

7.4   Intimacy in Production

Fees was performed at the Stellenbosch University DramaLab[50] in September 2016. Meeting Galloway's (2010: 104) outline wherein the performance space must not exceed 150 seats, this 40-seat theatre provided an intensely intimate physical performance space where "the locus of any scene is the entire stage itself" (Galloway, 2010: 106). Doing away with a traditional proscenium arch, the venue allowed the five actors to play with a sense of directness and immediacy that would not be possible in a larger performance space. It is indeed true within such a performance space, as Galloway argues, that the actors "cannot be passive – the audience is close enough to notice subtle facial expressions and even the focus point of an actor's eyes" (Galloway, 2010: 106).

The extremely intimate nature of the DramaLab – wherein the spectators are about a metre-and-a-half away from the actors – allowed the production to be played precisely according to Galloway's (2010: 106) requirement of "restrained intensity" of almost filmic acting. The proximal relationship between the actor and the spectator is so near that the production practically had an overwhelmingly intimate effect. Indeed, when considering audience reaction, the proximity between the actors and the audience strengthened the perceived immediacy and effect of the drama. The exceptionally responsive reactions of the audience might, perhaps, be attributed to the extreme proximity to the actors.

On a narrative level, the diminutive literal space mirrored the almost-claustrophobic figurative space in the musical itself. While all the characters are confined to the limiting space of the house, so too are the actors themselves limited to the confines of the equally small physical space. This mirroring of the spaces (on both a literal and figurative level) is yet another strength of the intimate musical, and suggests that musicals of this nature might consciously make use of its status as an intimate musical when performed within an intimate space. As Galloway (2010: 109) notes, "[t]he definition of intimate musical has more to do with intention and design as opposed to the happenstance of production and availability."

The venue size itself had the added effect of allowing the actors to perform without the aid of amplification. Indeed, the production was performed in this case with a single piano and the accompanying duo of double-bass and flute (played by Albert and Karen respectively). The reduced musical ensemble had the added benefit of allowing the actors to sing in various subtle

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[50] The performance space, located in central Stellenbosch, was the temporary location of the University of Stellenbosch's Drama Department during 2016 while maintenance work was executed on the main building.

musical styles that a larger venue and orchestra would not allow. Subtle vocal styles such as *sotto voce* in "Vyf-en-Dertig Jaar" and soft expressive qualities such as the '*doloroso, espressivo'* in "Kan Ouma Dalk My Kruis Sien?" are staple examples of this crucial benefit. Galloway (2010: 106) cautions that "[h]ealthy singing and clear articulation with proper breath support is still necessary, of course, but the dynamics can be subdued and the nuances made much more subtle."

The use of a singular piano player along with actor-musician approach, lastly, makes the production both more cost-effective and narratively nuanced. The various metaphoric meanings associated with the instrumentation permeates the experience of the production; accumulating the intimate effect within the boundaries of economy.

7.5 Conclusion

Tying together many aspects of the intimate musical tradition, *Fees* attempted to transpose and appropriate these features within a South African – and especially Afrikaans – context. As important as it is to appreciate the initial seeds of the overarching musical theatre tradition – *The Black Crook* (1866) – so too it is important to understand the seeds of the contemporary intimate musical. *The Fantasticks* (1960), a seminal work within this discourse, opened vistas of opportunities for practitioners to create work that might not be commercially as viable in a larger format. Indeed, while commercial viability might be a burdensome consideration for any artist, one cannot ignore the economic implications of staging work that is financially insolvent.

In South Africa especially, economic circumstances are such that the staging of large-scale performances is prohibitively expensive. While the intimate musical provides no guarantee of larger profit margins, one may merely recall that *The Fantasticks* made a 19 465% return on its initial investment (Osborne, 2002: 26). Although it does not nearly match the overall profits of *The Phantom of the Opera*, the comparatively small initial investment of $16,500 is significantly less than that of *Phantom of the Opera*'s $8 million (Harrison, 2011: 133).[51]

Beyond financial restrictions, the intimate musical also poses specific aesthetic and artistic challenges to a practitioner. The navigation of narrative and the construction of form become increasingly challenging when working with the limited resources that the intimate musical allows. *Fees*, for example, had to navigate certain practical challenges (such as presenting multi-room scenes in quick successive order) through creative staging techniques.

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[51] Per Toerien (2016), producing *The Phantom of the Opera* in South Africa will currently cost an estimated R16 million.

Emotionalities that may have been evoked through the use of a large orchestra must now instead be achieved through the creative and deliberate use of instrumentation. Visual effects must now be achieved through selective lighting and minimal design, rather than through evocatively elaborate stage mechanics. The intimate musical as a whole, indeed, encourages solutions to theatrical obstacles that might not otherwise be necessary when allowed larger budgets. In effect, *Fees* – and the entire tradition of the intimate musical – becomes a challenging exercise in ascetic principles, repudiating certain aspects that are traditionally associated with musical theatre, such as those overabundantly supplied by the megamusical tradition.

While *Fees* as an experiment was mostly successful in its application of the intimate musical aesthetics, the central challenge lies in the relative difficulty of the form. Owing to the prominence of the actor and narrative, performers must be exceptionally skilled to successfully sustain the performative requirements of the intimate musical. Due to the centrality of the actor, "[the actors] cannot be passive – the audience is close enough to notice subtle facial expressions and even the focus point of an actor's eyes" (Galloway, 2010: 106). Particularly in *Fees*, where the actors are continually facing the audience, this aspect is of crucial importance. Indeed, while the actors certainly had not performed with a lack of focus, their relative inexperience influenced the overall impression of the production.

Especially when the actor-musician approach is utilised, the required skill-sets become increasingly demanding. The use of the double-bass and flute, while exceedingly effective, was not necessarily part of the initial conception of the musical. Indeed, the actors originally had to each play instruments (Johan on French Horn, Pieter on Clarinet and Brigitte on Djembe), but this proved too difficult for the performers involved. Moreover, while the current instrumentation is metaphorically effective, one imagines that even greater nuance and subtlety in meaning could have been achieved had this aspect been further developed.

Galloway (2010: 106) also warns that "[w]hile the sparseness of the typical set in an intimate musical means that the audience will be focused by default on the actors, it also allows little room for error with the space and set pieces." Indeed, owing to the minimal use of décor in *Fees*, these considerations were not necessarily problematic itself. It bears repeating, however, that within such a confined space, attention must be given to the quality of a particular costume or prop. These considerations especially affect the overall professionalism of the production and, because of the small scale, is a crucial component of a successful intimate musical. Any anomalies of this nature, therefore, will have adverse consequences on the production and "any

wrong choice in set or props becomes glaring and possibly irritating to the audience" (Galloway, 2010: 106).

The process of the practical research was itself tremendously stimulating owing to the cyclic nature of the research. Discoveries pertaining to, for example, *Company* (2006), lead to the inclusion of these qualities in the production (including the active use of instrumentation as performance props). Narrative strategies found in *110 in the Shade* (1966), for example, also featured in the production's song structures. Thematic considerations in *March of the Falsettos* (1981) affected the treatment of similar themes in *Fees*, such as the construct of homosexuality within the family unit. The warning one must certainly append is that while each of these aesthetic inclusions is arguably motivated in *Fees*, practitioners must be wary of producing work that stays too rigorously within these parameters. The outline of the intimate musical, therefore, should be considered a proposed outline only, and not a rule or an unchangeable principle. Further experimentation with the form, therefore, is still necessary to further query its aesthetic scope. Unexplored aspects such as intimacy in ritual – a critical component of Jones and Schmidt's *Celebration* (1969) – remain open to exploration and experimentation.

Fees, moreover, was created within an environment where sufficient rehearsal time was allotted for the production. The extended rehearsal time meant that much work could be done on rewrites as the material matured. Furthermore, a crucial 'preview' period allowed additional changes to enhance and grant greater focus to the musical. As a notable example, at least one song and scene was cut during the creative process when presented before an audience. Realising that these moments do not necessarily strengthen the dramatic impact of the piece, "Altyd Spyt" and its accompanying scene (with Albert and Johan discussing the effect of the contract) was cut from act three. The song and scene are included in Addendums A and B for the sake of comprehensiveness, but these two moments can easily be removed for future performances. This workshop-style is not necessarily always possible or practical, but it certainly allows for greater nuance in the work itself. The intimate musical is created usually on a more manageable scale, so creative workshops might still be possible for developmental work.

One of the other illuminating aspects of *Fees* is the cultural framework of the work itself. Placed in an Afrikaans milieu, the production stimulates discussion on two fronts: firstly, regarding thematic socio-religious concerns in the white Afrikaans culture and, secondly, regarding the genre of musical theatre in the Afrikaans theatrical context. On the first front, *Fees* prompted interesting discussion among audiences where reactions were mostly

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tremendously positive. At least one spectator found the production as a whole to be 'socially irresponsible' with regards to its thematic queries, finding the production homophobic and promotive of conservative religious ideologies. This reaction, although thought-provoking, is an exceptional response considering that most spectators were cognizant of the irony that the production employed. The point, however, must be made that these debates are especially potent considering the immensely intimate nature of the performance, where volatile matters such as gender and sexuality become especially inflamed. It might be argued that the intense close proximity between actors and audience and the audience with each other, lures equally intense emotional reactions when paired with potentially volatile subject matter.

On the second front, there exist very few contemporary Afrikaans musicals (see Katzke (2014) for a discussion on these), and the intimate musical seems to be an exceedingly appropriate form within this somewhat marginal linguistic-cultural sphere. The form itself might be useful as it is a relatively inexpensive mode of musical creation. By doing away with all the trappings of the full-scale or megamusical, an intimate musical such as *Fees* promotes creation without unnecessary and expensive contrivances.

Finally, speaking of *The Last Five Years* (2012), Galloway's (2010: 109) description of the artistic impulses are similar to *Fees*: "a desire for direct expression of emotion, at close range to the audience, with little stagecraft intervening." Indeed, through theatrical asceticism, *Fees* encapsulates many of the aspects of the newly-defined intimate musical.

Chapter 8: Final Conclusions

Owing to the cyclic nature of preceding investigation, this chapter will provide a succinct conclusion on the various findings of the study. Smith and Dean's iterative cyclic web (outlined in chapter one), allows a cyclical research method that prompts easier synthesis of information in separate conclusive sections. As Smith and Dean (2009: 22) argue, "[i]n the process of selection the researcher/practitioner decides which are the best or most useful realisations derived from the task." At the end of each preceding chapter, therefore, extensive conclusions were drawn and synthesis of each preceding aspect of the data was shaped. Further discussions of these conclusions would consequently be superfluous. Consequently, this conclusive chapter's brevity is motivated by the iterative and cyclic nature of the research methods. Accordingly, this chapter will only be a brief summation of the overall research outcome, especially as it relates to the overarching aesthetic principles of the mega- and intimate musical forms.

When examining the two opposing forms of musical theatre, one can clearly appreciate how these contrasting forms are in a dialectic relationship that may, at times, not be immediately evident by viewing each in isolation. The prominence of the large-scale performance form (whether in the guise of the post 1970s megamusical or earlier extravaganzas) forced musical theatre practitioners to explore other modes of musical theatre creation in circumstances where finances might be limited, or the particular musical does not warrant a large-scale treatment.

From a South African practitioner's perspective, these considerations become increasingly important. The popularity of the megamusical, although undisputed, is ever more under threat owing to the increasing discrepancy between ticket prices and production costs. Even large-scale productions that might not be expressly 'mega' in its description, require expensively large casts that are problematic for the same reasons. Of course, many practitioners (including Pieter Toerien) circumvent this problem to a certain degree through the use of doubling or electronic backtracks that supplement a smaller band or ensemble. While this might alleviate certain economic restrictions, the cost of such a production is increasingly uncertain, in part owing the fact that the productions are imported and payed for in Dollars or Pounds Sterling. The instability of international markets makes musicals of this scale a hazardous investment.

One solution is to create what has now been loosely termed the 'bonsai' musical. While these musicals-in-miniature might certainly have immense artistic merit and allow the production of otherwise-unaffordable musicals, they instead circumvent the problem without finding a truly

alternative solution. Furthermore, these 'bonsai' musicals can only reproduce existing musicals; the production costs associated with this particular form still places it outside the reach of many artists.

For this reason, the intimate musical can be a crucial form in which to create new work that is at once economically viable and artistically meritorious. Both internationally and within South Africa, this form of musical theatre provides many crucial benefits (both artistically and financially) over more popular large-scale forms. This is, of course, not to say that these large-scale forms are inherently less artistically pivotal in the wider field of musical theatre, but their popularity and resultant success leaves alternative options, such as the intimate musical, in an underappreciated position.

Landmark intimate musicals, such as those by Jones and Schmidt, paved the way for many contemporary intimate musicals that utilised and reshaped the basic premise of the form itself. Prior to this study, definitions the intimate musical largely remains within the parameters of Galloway's (2010) original classification. Her definition, however, only covers the physical production features of the intimate musical, including a small cast, small band as well as modest production costs. One of the only allusions she makes to other features (such as form and content) is the of "humanistic, transparent treatment of characters" (Galloway, 2010: 104). This study concludes that there are undoubtedly other aspects of intimacy that a practitioner of the intimate musical may utilise in constructing an intimate musical. This includes aspects that are respectively categorised such as form, content and production features (see Figure 6.1). These findings were also a result of the practical exploration in the writing of the book, lyrics and performance of the production, *Fees*.

Of special note in this study are the parameters relating to form and content. Through the use of metatheatrical techniques, the fluid use of stage space and a fragmented style, the intimate musical can convey various emotive and narrative complexities through inventive use of form. Indeed, by veering away from realist presentational modes (and especially the popular cinematic mode employed by megamusicals), the intimate musical encourages imaginative interplay between itself and the spectator. Through such a use of form, the intimate musical can circumvent expensive production costs that are frequently associated with the aggregation of superabundant effects (as in the case of the megamusical).

The narratives of intimate musicals, although frequently grounded in domestic drama, can either be linear (as in the case of *Fees*), or completely fragmented, showing impressions of

characters outside the borders of narrative [as in *Company* (1970)]. Nonetheless, in both cases the narrative is concentrated in some literal or figurative manner so that the lyrics, book and music can focus intensely on the intricacies of character (termed here the 'emotional microscope') instead of extraneous features such as unnecessary décor. Finally, the use of introspective songs and the prominence of personal narratives are especially important within the intimate musical. In the absence of large-scale effects (either visual or aural), the form's central focus must be on character and their individual narratives. The intimacy of the performance text, therefore, is constructed through the complex relationship between emotional 'transparency' and intricate 'humanity' (to borrow Galloway's terminology) within the characters themselves.

The practical component of this study (*Fees*) serves as a tentative template detailing some of the aspects that an intimate musical might take. It incorporates many of the features of the intimate musical that I had outlined in chapters five and six, framing certain aesthetic possibilities. The production, however, served the dual purpose of opening the discourse within an Afrikaans theatrical milieu. This makes the crucial point that these aesthetic features are not limited to the 'American' musical tradition, but are easily transposable with alternative cultural cues. With a few exceptions, Afrikaans musicals are particularly rare; indeed, the cost of a traditional musical frequently outweighs the possible audience pool. By creating intimate musicals in Afrikaans, this particular challenge is at least partially resolved. Moreover, this opens possibilities of further creation and research within this particular subset of South Africa's theatre industry.

To broaden the scope of the study, further research can now be conducted with greater nuance that examines other intimate musicals that could not be examined in this dissertation. While focus in this study was placed on seminal productions that added certain aspects of intimacy to the overall discourse, there exist many other musicals that either have similar preoccupations or add substantially to the form's basic aesthetics. Musicals such as *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* (1967), *They're Playing Our Song* (1978), *Romance/Romance* (1987), *The Last Five Years* (2012) and many others all feature the crucial aesthetics of the intimate musical in varying degrees. These productions, however, fell outside the scope of this study that, by necessity, could only do close readings on musicals that originally contributed certain qualities.

Furthermore, research on the dialectic relationship between musical forms on a wider spectrum can still be conducted. There are very few studies that place musical forms in relation to one another, and while this study attempts to examine linkage between the mega- and intimate

forms, further analysis on their dialectic relationship can be researched. An especially crucial aspect is this dialectic relationship within South Africa's theatrical climate where the economy of theatrical production is under-researched – in particular the Afrikaans industry where musicals are almost entirely absent from theatrical discourse.

In conclusion, one can clearly appreciate that the intimate musical has developed and matured as a form since the pioneering work of Jones and Schmidt. Influenced by superabundant aggregate movements in the large-scale musical, the intimate form assumed and transformed these features into the aesthetics that are currently found within the smaller format. While the megamusical is increasingly affecting the aesthetics of intimate musicals and the overall expectations of a musical's perceived aesthetic qualities, the intimate musical steadfastly continues to adapt and transform as needed. In South Africa, as a practitioner of musical theatre, the intimate musical can be an empowering form that permits explorative creation, even within a limiting economic framework. Partially freed from the economic boundaries of full-scale productions, the intimate musical truly is an artistically viable and exciting form; even framed by the increasing popularity of the megamusical.

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Addendum A: *Fees* **(2016)**

Fees
'n Intieme Musikale Familiedrama

Teks en Lirieke:	**André Gerber**
Musiek:	**David Wolfswinkel**

10.1 Opsomming

Kom, alle getuie! Jy is hartlik uitgenooi na 'n snikhete Kersfees in Bloemfontein. Die sweet drup-drup soos die vlamme van die nuwe braai jou tjop gaarbrand, nés jy daarvan hou. En almal gaan daar wees: Johan, sy nuwe kêrel, sy paranosiese ma en sy mismoedige pa. Ten minste is sy eks-meisie ook daar om die kole te stook. Pas net op, want die vet gaan spat wanneer iemand in die vuur gegooi word. Kom geniet 'n musikale Kersfees soos jy nog nooit vantevore beleef het nie.

10.2 Summary

Come, all ye faithful! You are cordially invited to a sweltering Christmas in Bloemfontein. The sweat drips as the flames of the new braai burns your chop extra-crispy, exactly as you like it. And everyone is going to be there: Johan, his new boyfriend, his paranoid mom and his despondent father. At least his ex-girlfriend is also there to stoke the fire. Just be careful, because the fat is going to fly when someone is thrown in the fire. Come enjoy a musical Christmas like never before!

10.3 Rolverdeling / Character Descriptions

Albert – die Pa van die Huyshamen-gesin

Karen – die Ma van die Huyshamen-gesin

Johan – die jongste Seun

Pieter – Johan se huidige kêrel

Brigitte – Johan se ex-meisie

10.4 Liedjies / Songs

BEDRYF EEN

1.	*DIESELFDE, MAAR BETER*	Karen
2.	*DIS NIE DAT EK KAREN VERMY NIE*	Albert
3.	*[DAAR'S IETS AAN DIE NAAM] BRIGITTE*	Pieter
4.	*MY SEUN IS GAY. WAT NOU?*	Johan en Geselskap
5.	*BESLUITE*	Geselskap
6.	*BESLUITE 2*	Brigitte

BEDRYF TWEE

7.	*KAN OUMA DALK MY KRUIS SIEN?*	Pieter
8.	*EK, JOU MARIA*	Brigitte en Johan
9.	*SOMTYDS GELUKKIG*	Pieter
10.	*EK HET JOU NODIG*	Karen en Albert
11.	*ALTYD SPYT*	Geselskap
12.	*GESKENKE*	Johan

BEDRYF DRIE

13.	*'N BAIE GROOT HUIS*	Albert
14.	*VYF-EN-DERTIG JAAR*	Karen
15.	*MARIA SE DROOM*	Brigitte

10.5 *Fees* Toneelteks / *Fees* Script

BEDRYF EEN

[Vyf stoele op die verhoog wat eweredig gespasieer is. Die vyf akteurs sit daarop en sing en praat voortdurend met die gehoor. Twee van die karakters speel ook musiekinstrumente: KAREN speel dwarsfluit en ALBERT speel kontrabas. Deurlopend, soos deur die MUSIEK aangedui, speel hulle hul instrumente saam met die pianis. Die pianis is agter hulle geplaas, effe na die regterkant. MUSIEK begin. KAREN belig. ALBERT effe belig soos hy sy kontrabas optel.]

01 DIESELFDE, MAAR BETER

1.   **KAREN**   HALLO?
EK WIL HOOR OF JULLE AL GERY HET?
HOE LYK DIE PAD VAN STELLENBOSCH?
DIE DING MET DIE VERKEER IS DAT AS JULLE RY,
VERAL HIERDIE TYD VAN DIE JAAR AS JY RY
IS DAT JY GLAD NIE DIE VERKEER KAN VERMY NIE.
SO, ASSEBLIEF, WEES VEILIG.

AS JY HIER KOM, MOET JY KYK NA MY WHATSAPP
EK WEET NIE EINTLIK OF DIT WERK NIE.
WANT AS EK VIR JOU PA IETS WIL TIK,
SOOS 'HAAI, EK IS HIER' OF 'HAAI, EK IS DAAR'
OF 'GAAN JY DALK VANAAND MET MY DRAF;'
WANT JY WEET JOU PA IS BAIE ONFIKS.
EK SÊ VIR HOM, 'ALBERT, JY WEET JY'S ONFIKS'
MAAR, JOHAN, HOOR MY, EK SWEER DIT HELP NIKS.
SO KYK ASSEBLIEF NA MY WHATSAPP.

WAG… EK DINK DAAR WAS NOG IETS…
LAAT EK GOU DINK…

O, STOP BY DIE WIMPY. JY WEET WATTER EEN.
DIE EEN MET DIE TENT EN DIE SPELETJIEPEN.
DIE EEN WAAR ONS ALTYD GESTOP HET.
GESTOP HET…
EK KAN NIE PRESIES ONTHOU WAAR DIT IS NIE.
DIS OP DIE N1? AG WAT! DIS 'N WIMPY!
JY SAL WEET DIS 'N WIMPY WANT DAAR STAAN BAIE
GROOT 'WIMPY.'
ANYWAY, DIS OP DIE N1.

EK WEET HULLE SÊ DIS 'N CHAIN, MAAR DIT IS NIE
WANT DAAR'S IETS ANDERS, ANDERS AAN DAAI WIMPY
DIE, UHM…
DIE KOS PROE VIR MY BETER. EK MEEN, DIS NET BETER.
DIS DIESELFDE, MAAR BETER.

DIESELFDE, MAAR BETER.

EN HOEVEEL WIMPY'S KAN DAAR NOU WEES?

HIER IS ALLES DIESELFDE.
JY SAL MAAR SIEN AS JY KOM.
JOU PA IS NET VET EN MA IS NOU OUER
DIE BOUWERK KOM AAN, MAAR EK HAAT DAARDIE BOUER
EK PROBEER VIR HOM SÊ, 'HIER KOM MENSE, MAAK GOUER.'
MAAR ANDERS IS ALLES DIESELFDE.
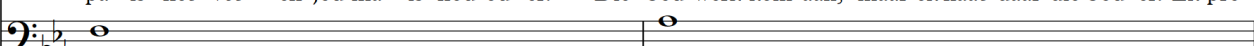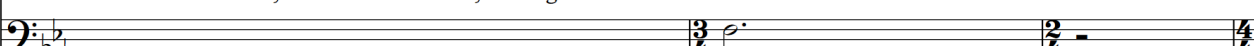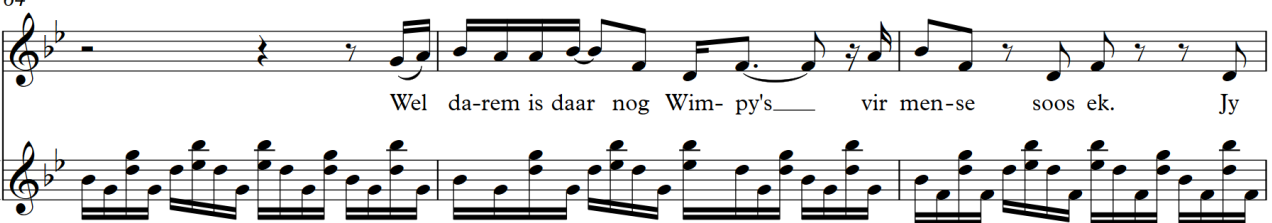
BEHALWE DIE WHATSAPP WAT EK NIE VERSTAAN NIE.
WEL, DAREM IS DAAR NOG WIMPY'S
VIR MENSE SOOS EK.
EK WEET DIS 'N CHAIN. JY WEET WAT JY KRY.
EN EK WEET DAAR'S HONDERDE ANDER VAN MY.
DIESELFDE, MAAR BETER.
DIESELFDE, MAAR BETER.
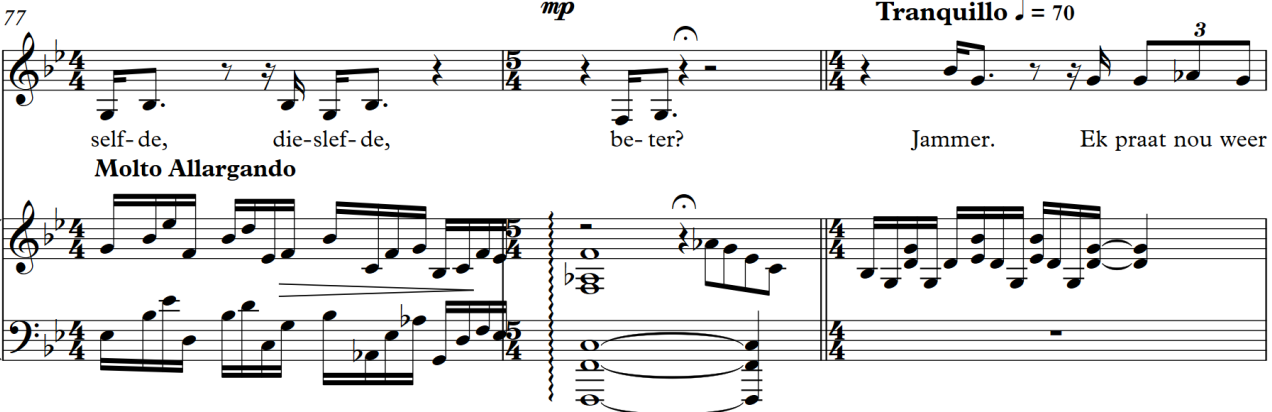
TERWYL ALLES OM MY VERANDER,
BLY EK MAAR DIESELFDE.
DIESELFDE. DIESELFDE.
BETER?

JAMMER. EK PRAAT NOU WEER LANK.
SIEN JULLE VANAAND.
EK'S NOGAL MOEG.
DIE BOUERY.

SAL JULLE ASSEBLIEF VEILIG RY.

[PIETER en JOHAN belig. Hulle het nounet by die huis aangekom.]

3.	**JOHAN**	Dit was my ma.
4.	**PIETER**	Waar is almal?
5.	**JOHAN**	Ons het baie vinnig gery. Hoe laat is dit?
6.	**PIETER**	Dis weird. Jy weet dis weird dat hier mense by 'n huis aankom en hier's niemand nie.
7.	**JOHAN**	Hoekom is jy so opgewerk?
8.	**PIETER**	Ek is nie opgewerk nie.
9.	**JOHAN**	Jy is.
10.	**PIETER**	Ek is nie.

11.	**JOHAN**	Jy lyk opgewerk.

12.	**PIETER**	Nee, ek doen nie. Dis my neutrale gesig. Ek lyk net so. Dis hoe ek lyk. Jammer, ek voel net vuil. Moet ek die tasse gaan haal?

13.	**JOHAN**	Moenie so stres nie. Jy moes net vir my gesê het as jy nie wou kom nie.

14.	**PIETER**	Ek het vir jou gesê dat ek wou kom! Ek is mos nou hier! God! Jammer. Dis net… dis die eerste keer wat my ouma Kersfees alleen is… en… Ek weet nie… Ek voel skuldig. Ons het laasjaar by De Cameron geëet. Ek het soos ses missed-calles.

15.	**JOHAN**	Waar dink sy is jy?

16.	**PIETER**	Saam met Riaan in Darling om grafte te kyk.

17.	**JOHAN**	Jy hoef nie te gekom het nie…

18.	**PIETER**	Ek wou. Ek wou kom.

19.	**JOHAN**	Ok…

20.	**PIETER**	So? Tasse?

21.	**JOHAN**	Ja.

22.	**PIETER**	Dink jy ons is in aparte kamers?

23.	**JOHAN**	Wat dink jy? 'Hi, ma, kan ek en my gay lover asseblief gay seks in my gay bed hê sodat ons gay babas kan kry?'

[Musiek in terwyl ligte oorskakel na ALBERT. Hy is in sy kantoor. KAREN effe belig soos sy begelei op haar dwarsfluit.]

02 DIS NIE DAT EK KAREN VERMY NIE

24.	**ALBERT**	DIT… UHM… IS 'N WHATSAPP DIS NIE DAT EK KAREN VERMY NIE. EK MAAK ASOF EK DIT NIE KRY NIE. DIE… UHM… DIE WHATSAPP. DIS NET DAT EK WEET WAT SY GAAN VRA WANT DIS ALTYD DIESELFDE, DIESELFDE OU VRAE: 'ALBERT, WAAR IS JY? ALBERT, WAT MAAK JY? ONTHOU DAT JOU KIND VANDAG UIT DIE KAAP RY. ALBERT, ALBERT, AL EWIGE ALBERT.' EK… UHM… IS 'N PROKUREUR EN EK… UHM… IS DIE BESTUURDER VAN 'N PRAKTYK. UHM… HUYSHAMEN EN VENNOTE. JAMMER, MY KOP IS NET DOL.

HUMAN EN JOOSTE.
DIS MY VENNOTE.
EN ONS REGISTERS IS REDELIK VOL.

EK… UHM… DOEN WAARDERING,
SOOS PLASE, EN HUISE, JY WEET.
EN MEESTE VAN DIE TYD KOM KAREN MET MY.
DAN RY ONS WAAROOKAL DIE PAD ONS NA LEI.
DAN WONDER EK HOEKOM KAREN NOG BLY…
SO EK MENG MAAR MY WERK EN PLESIER.
DIS MEESTAL MAAR WERK,
MAAR DAAR'S TOG PLESIER.
KYK, ONS IS DAAR OM TE WERK,
DIE PLESIER BLY MAAR HIER.

HOE LAAT IS DIT NOU?
DIS VYFUUR.

MAAR EK… UHM
HET NOG WERK OM TE DOEN.
DIE EEN SAAK IS KLAAR, MAAR DAN IS DAAR NOG.
EN AS DIT NIE MOORD IS NIE, DAN'S DIT BEDROG.
DIS HOE DIT GAAN BY HUMAN EN JOOSTE
(HET EK GENOEM DAT DIS MY VENNOTE?)
HUMAN EN JOOSTE. HUMAN EN JOOSTE.
JOOSTE SE SEUN IS 'N MOFFIE.

JAMMER…
JY WEET?

KERSFEES IS 'N MOEILIKE TYD.
JY MOET LEEF SAAM MET MENSE WAT JY OOK VERWYT.
IN TEORIE IS DIT FINE, MAAR IN DIE PRAKTYK…
WEL, MOORDE IS EEN DING, MAAR DAN IS DAAR KERSFEES
DIE WET IS REGVERDIG, MAAR DAN IS DAAR KERSFEES
EN KAREN IS MAL, VERAL TYDENS KERSFEES.

JAMMER, EK PRAAT NOU WEER KAK.
DANK VADER VIR SAUVIGNON BLANC.

[Weer in die huis. KAREN kom nounet by die huis aan.]

25. **JOHAN**   Ma!

26. **KAREN**   O, is julle al hier?

27. **JOHAN**   Ja, ons het nogal vinnig gery.

28. **KAREN**   Dis hoekom ek gevra het hoe laat julle… kyk nou hoe lyk ek. Ek is nog nie eens Woolies toe nie.

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29.	**PIETER**	Haai, tannie!
30.	**JOHAN**	O, uhm, dis – dis Pieter.
31.	**PIETER**	Haai, tannie. Aangename kennis. Tannie het 'n baie mooi huis.
32.	**KAREN**	O, dankie. Ja, ons doen maar wat ons kan, nè?
33.	**JOHAN**	Ek sien julle het gebou.
34.	**PIETER**	Ek is mal oor die potte.
35.	**KAREN**	Ja, maar die swartes hier langsaan het nou weer 'n probleem met alles want hulle wil nie hê ons moet die boom afkap nie, en… ag… niks verander nie.
36.	**JOHAN**	Waar's pa?
37.	**KAREN**	Ek weet nie. By die werk, seker. Nie dat ek sal weet nie. Kom my Whatsapp by jou uit?
38.	**JOHAN**	Ma moet dat Pieter kyk. Hy doen sy doktorsgraad in IT en goed.
39.	**KAREN**	Dis… oulik.
40.	**PIETER**	Dankie, tannie.
41.	**JOHAN**	Kom Regardt of Katrien?
42.	**KAREN**	Ekskuus?
43.	**JOHAN**	Ek sien daar's nog 'n slaapkamer toe dog ek…?
44.	**KAREN**	O, Nee, nee. Uhm, dis –
45.	**PIETER**	Ja, ek dog hulle's in Korea?
46.	**JOHAN**	Ja, maar dis hoekom ek nou gewonder het, want –

[BRIGITTE tree die huis binne.]

48.	**BRIGITTE**	[op die melodie van "Maria" van *West Side Story*] JOHAN…
49.	**JOHAN**	Brigitte?
50.	**BRIGITTE**	Komaan! JOHAN…
51.	**JOHAN**	BRIGITTE. I JUST MET A GIRL CALLED BRIGITTE.
52.	**BEIDE**	AND SUDDENLY I'VE FOUND HOW WONDERFUL A SOUND CAN BE… *[JOHAN en BRIGITTE lag vir hul grappie.]*
53.	**BRIGITTE**	Jy kan nou nog nie daai noot sing nie.

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54.	**JOHAN**	Jy lyk amazing. Jy't so baie gewig verloor!
55.	**BRIGITTE**	Dankie! Jy's mos nog in Stellenbosch, nè?
56.	**JOHAN**	Ja, ek's 'n musiekjuffrou.
57.	**KAREN**	Jy bedoel jy's 'n musiek meneer.
58.	**BRIGITTE**	Aw! Dis awesome. Ek trek volgende jaar na jou toe.
59.	**JOHAN**	Regtig?
60.	**PIETER**	Haai.
61.	**JOHAN**	O, Brigitte. Dit is my… uhm… Pieter. Pieter. Dis my Pieter.
62.	**PIETER**	Jou Pieter?
63.	**BRIGITTE**	Haai, Pieter.
64.	**JOHAN**	Wat maak jy hier?
65.	**BRIGITTE**	O… uhm… jou ma het my genooi.
66.	**JOHAN**	Regtig?
67.	**BRIGITTE**	Dankie, tannie, weereens dat ek kon kom.
68.	**KAREN**	Dis net 'n plesier my kind. Johan, help haar gou met haar tasse dan wys ek Pieter waar hy gaan slaap. Brigitte, jy weet tog waar jou kamer is?
69.	**BRIGITTE**	Natuurlik, tannie.
70.	**JOHAN**	Haai, ek sien jy't 'n nuwe kar!

[PIETER vinnig alleen. ALBERT effe belig soos hy begelei op die kontrabas.]

03 [DAAR'S IETS AAN DIE NAAM] BRIGITTE

71.	**PIETER**	BRIGITTE… DAAR'S IETS AAN DIE NAAM… 'BRIGITTE.' NEE, PIETER. DIE BELANGRIKSTE DING IS OM KALM TE BLY. JY'S HIER VIR DRIE DAE EN DAN KAN ONS RY. *[Met KAREN.]* EK EN JOHAN. EK EN JOHAN.
72.	**KAREN**	*[Met PIETER.]* HY EN JOHAN. HY EN JOHAN.
73.	**PIETER**	*[Alleen.]* EN BRIGITTE…

[JOHAN en BRIGITTE buite by kar.]

75.	**JOHAN**	So wat doen jy deesdae?

76. **BRIGITTE** Wel, ek's nou officially 'n aktuaris!

77. **JOHAN** Ek kan nie glo jy't dit actually reggekry nie.

78. **BRIGITTE** Ja, maar nou't ek baie skuld om af te betaal.

79. **JOHAN** Wel, jy gaan ryker as ek wees.

80. **BRIGITTE** Maar ag, geld was nog nooit vir my belangrik nie.

81. **JOHAN** Jy is 'n beter mens as ek.

82. **BRIGITTE** Johan, ek is jammer. Ek wil nie hê dit moet awkward wees nie. Jou ma't my genooi en toe kon ek nie nee sê nie… hulle is so nice… en…

83. **JOHAN** Dit is nie. Dit is nie awkward nie! Kalmeer! Dis net awkward as ons dit awkward maak.

84. **BRIGITTE** Weet… uhm…?

85. **JOHAN** Pieter?

86. **BRIGITTE** Ja.

87. **JOHAN** Nee. Dit was lank gelede, so ek het nie gedink…

88. **BRIGITTE** Dit was nie só lank gelede nie…

89. **JOHAN** Punt is; hy weet nie.

90. **BRIGITTE** Johan…

91. **JOHAN** Ja?

92. **BRIGITTE** Ek het jou regtig gemis. Hierdie gaan 'n awesome Kersfees wees. Ek kan dit voel.

93. **JOHAN** Ek dink ook so.

94. **BRIGITTE** Regtig?

95. **JOHAN** Regtig.

['n Ander deel van die huis. 'n Slaapkamer.]

96. **KAREN** Goed, so jy slaap hier. Die stort hieronder is stukkend, so jy moet maar die huishulp s'n gebruik. Dis af by die trappe in die garage.

97. **PIETER** Baie dankie, tannie.

98. **KAREN** Ek dink dis dit. Ons versamel water vir die droogte van Anna se stort. Maak net seker die water val in die emmers. Goed, het jy enigiets anders nodig?

99.	**PIETER**	O, nee, tannie. Dis perfek.

100.	**KAREN**	Nee, dan is dit goed. Ons gaan Sondag kerk toe, so as jy enige klere het wat jy wil hê ek moet was, los dit sommer buite die deur.

101.	**PIETER**	O… uh… dankie.

102.	**KAREN**	Ek weet nie watter kerk julle na toe gaan nie, maar ons is by die klipkerk by die straat af. Die diens is nege-uur, so ons gaan sommer…

103.	**PIETER**	Ons gaan nie kerk toe nie, tannie.

104.	**KAREN**	Ekskuus?

[Die volgende liedjie en die gepaardgaande dialoog word tegelyktydig gevoer. Dit vloei soomloos by mekaar in.]

04 MY SEUN IS GAY. WAT NOU?

[JOHAN sing half vir PIETER en half vir die GEHOOR. Dit speel af in die verlede. Voor hulle gery het, moontlik.]

105.	**JOHAN**	MY MA… WEL, MY MA IS… MAAR MY PA IS… UHM… WAT EK BEDOEL IS…

[KAREN en ALBERT in hulle kamer.]

106.	**KAREN**	Dank die vader jy's terug, Albert.

107.	**ALBERT**	Jammer. Die Godfrey-saak trek nog die heeltyd aan.

108.	**KAREN**	Wel, ek het hom ontmoet.

109.	**ALBERT**	Godfrey?

110.	**KAREN**	Nog erger!

[JOHAN en PIETER.]

111.	**JOHAN**	EK WAS IN HOËRSKOOL NOG VROEG… SOOS GRAAD AG? DIT WAS WARM. OKTOBER. DIS LAAT IN DIE DAG. EN EK SIT IN DIE KAR EN DIE SWEET TAP MY AF MAAR MY MA HOU AAN DRAF. JY SIEN, SY RIG SPORT AF. EN SY ROEP MY EN SÊ, KOM JOHAN, KOM DRAF SAAM. MAAR EK WAS NET DIKBEK. DALK BIETJIE SKAAM WANT EK KON NIE DRAF NIE. NIE SAAM MET HAAR DRAF NIE…

[KAREN en ALBERT.]

112. **ALBERT**   Lientjie, jy kan darem vreeslik oordryf.

113. **KAREN**   Blykbaar gaan hulle nie eens kerk toe nie!

114. **ALBERT**   Het jy jou pille geneem?

[PIETER en JOHAN.]

115. **JOHAN**   EK SOEK OM MY ROND. EK'S VERVEELD EN EK'S KWAAD
DIE HITTE, DIE JETTA. DIE SWEET. DIS AL LAAT.
MAAR DAAR IN DIE HOEK LÊ 'N TEKENPRENTBOEK
EN EK BLAAI DIE BOEK OOP. DIE AGTERSTE DEEL.
DAAR'S TEKENPRENTSEUNTJIES WAT BUITEKANT SPEEL.
HULLE TEKENPRENTSPEEL. HULLE'S TEKENPRENT LAF.
DIS WARM, MAAR HULLE IS BUITE EN DRAF
MY MA EN DIE SEUNS IS BUITE EN DRAF

[KAREN en ALBERT.]

116. **KAREN**   Ek weet nie of ek hiervoor kans sien nie, Albert.

117. **ALBERT**   Lientjie, luister vir my: daar is nou niks wat jy kan doen nie. Asseblief, los dit net. Jy wil nie weer 'n episode hê nie.

[PIETER en JOHAN.]

118. **JOHAN**   Ek wil baie graag hê my ouers moet van jou hou.

119. **PIETER**   Jy ken my duidelik nie. Ek is amazing met tannies.

120. **JOHAN**   Ek weet, ek weet. Dis net…

121. **PIETER**   O fok.

122. **JOHAN**   My ma… Sy is baie sensitief.

123. **PIETER**   Ok?

124. **JOHAN**   Jy gaan dit nou verkeerd opvat, en dan gaan dit 'n issue wees.

125. **PIETER**   Dit gaan nie – dit gaan nie 'n issue wees nie.

126. **JOHAN**   PIETER, JY WEET DAT EK IS LIEF VIR JOU,
MAAR PARTYKEER IS DAAR BIETJIE BAIE VAN JOU
EN MY MA EN MY PA, HULLE IS KLEIN
AG, EK BEDOEL, HULLE'S MIN. DAAR MINDER VAN HULLE
AS WAT DAAR VAN JOU IS.
SO PIETER, MY LIEFDE, WEES BIETJIE MINDER DIE JY WAT JY
IS.

[KAREN en ALBERT.]

127. **ALBERT**   Ons moet maar die beste van die situasie probeer maak.

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128. **KAREN** Ek verdien dit nie, Albert.

[Net JOHAN.]

129. **JOHAN** WANT AL WAT EK WIL WEES
IS DIE SEUN WAARMEE SY KAN DRAF

MAAR TOE EK DIE BOEKIE TOEMAAK
IN DIE HITTE, DIE JETTA, DIE SWEET EN VREES
TOE WEET EK AL KLAAR WAT OP DIE VOORBLAD SAL WEES:

[JOHAN en PIETER.]

130. **PIETER** So wat? Moet ek nie myself wees nie? Ek gaan mos nie vir jou ma sê "God is Dood" nie! Of is dit iets anders?

131. **JOHAN** Jy sien, nou's dit 'n issue.

132. **PIETER** Dis nie 'n issue nie. Ek verstaan net nie hoekom jy my nou target nie. Jy weet ek is klaar gespanne hieroor en…

133. **JOHAN** Asseblief, ek wil net nie enige… issues hê nie. Kan ons asseblief probeer om nie issues te maak nie?

[Almal is skielik sigbaar. 'n Tipe cantata.]

134. **ALMAL** MY SEUN IS GAY. WAT NOU?

[Later daardie aand. Die volgende tonele speel af afwisselend buite by 'n braai-area en binne in 'n kombuis. JOHAN wandel tussen die twee ruimtes. Die kombuis.]

135. **ALBERT** Kyk, julle kan nou hier rondstaan en mekaar se hare vleg, maar ek gaan 'n braai opsit.

136. **KAREN** Het jy die ding al aan die werk gekry?

137. **ALBERT** Gaan dit nou doen. Pieter, jy ken mos sulke goed?

138. **KAREN** Moet asseblief nie mors nie. Ek wil nie vet oral gespat hê nie.

139. **PIETER** Nee, ek weet maar min van braai, oom.

140. **JOHAN** Dis 'n elektriese braai.

141. **ALBERT** Ja, 'n man moet mos kan braai, of hoe?

142. **PIETER** Wel, as dit elektries is…

143. **KAREN** Wees net versigtig. Ek wil nie 'n gemors hê nie.

144. **ALBERT** Kom kyk, ek het vir my hierdie nuwe braai gekoop by Kloppers. Die Megamaster 300 vir R4000.

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145. **PIETER**   Ek dink ek het so een op Takealot gesien vir R3000.

[ALBERT en PIETER uit.]

146. **KAREN**   Jy moet dalk gaan help daarbuite, Johan.

147. **JOHAN**   Ek sal. Ek sal nou gaan.

148. **KAREN**   Gaan hoor net by jou pa wat hy wil braai want ek het nou niks ondooi nie en…

149. **JOHAN**   Ma, ontspan asseblief. Jy is net so gespanne soos Pieter. Ek dink hy's meer bang as ma om…

150. **KAREN**   Johan, moenie nonsens praat nie. Ek het net nog baie kwartaalbeplanning om te doen en…

151. **JOHAN**   Maar dis nou eers Desember…

152. **KAREN**   Ja, en dan is dit Januarie en dan begin die skool. Ek…

153. **JOHAN**   Ma. Mamma. Asseblief. Ontspan. As julle hom eers leer ken, dan…

154. **KAREN**   Johan, nie nou nie. Gaan hoor by jou pa wat hy wil braai.

[Buite. Die braai. ALBERT en PIETER.]

155. **PIETER**   So dit was eintlik 'n groot ongeluk want as ek nie daai Windows 95 rekenaar gebreek het nie, sou ek nie vandag in IT gewees het nie.

156. **ALBERT**   Wel, dan moet jy definitief na my rekenaar kyk. Ek weet nou nie watter Windows dit het nie, maar daar is die heeltyd sulke advertensies wat opkom.

157. **PIETER**   Aan die regterkant?

158. **ALBERT**   Nee, dit kan ek nou nie vir jou sê nie.

159. **PIETER**   H'm. Dis moontlik Malware. Mens moet maar net oppas watter websites mens toe gaan.

160. **ALBERT**   Solank dit nie my rekenaar verder uit*ware* nie.

161. **PIETER**   *[Probeer lag.]*

[Binne. Die kombuis. KAREN en BRIGITTE.]

162. **KAREN**   Ek het gedink om maar 'n aartappelslaai te maak.

163. **BRIGITTE**   O, dis 'n goeie idee. Dis Johan se gunsteling.

164. **KAREN**   Nou goed, dan moet jy dit sommer maak.

[Buite. Die braai. JOHAN, ALBERT en PIETER.]

165.	**JOHAN**	Pa, ma wil weet watter vleis sy uit die vrieskas moet haal.
166.	**ALBERT**	Nee, fok, ek weet nie. Wat eet julle? Jy's mos 'n Jood, of hoe, Pieter? Vark of bees?
167.	**PIETER**	Uhm, nee oom. Ek's nie 'n Jood nie.
168.	**ALBERT**	Nou goed, skaaptjops.
169.	**JOHAN**	Hoeveel moet ek uithaal?
170.	**ALBERT**	Kry sommer genoeg vir more ook.
171.	**JOHAN**	Ok!

[JOHAN uit.]

172.	**ALBERT**	Nou ek weet nie van jou nie, Pieter, maar ek het 'n stewige dop nodig. Mag Jode drink?

[Binne. Die kombuis. JOHAN, KAREN en BRIGITTE.]

173.	**JOHAN**	Ma, pa sê ons moet skaaptjops maak.
174.	**KAREN**	Ag nee, jou pa maak dit nooit gaar genoeg nie. Sê vir hom hy moet dit gaar genoeg maak.
175.	**JOHAN**	Wag, wat maak julle?
176.	**BRIGITTE**	Jy gaan die slaai opmors!
177.	**JOHAN**	Is dit aartappelslaai?
178.	**BRIGITTE**	Loop nou!

[Buite. Die braai. PIETER en ALBERT.]

179.	**PIETER**	En dis juis die lekker ding van Stellenbosch.
180.	**ALBERT**	Nog steeds te fokken duur as jy my vra.
181.	**PIETER**	Dit is so.
182.	**ALBERT**	Ek meen, raai gou hoeveel het hierdie huis gekos?
183.	**PIETER**	Hoeveel slaap…
184.	**ALBERT**	Vier skaapkamers. Twee badkamers.
185.	**PIETER**	Ek raai altyd te laag en dan's dit awkward.
186.	**ALBERT**	Nee, ek try jou.

187.   **PIETER**   Ok. Twee miljoen?

188.   **ALBERT**   Drie. Dit was drie miljoen.

[JOHAN in.]

189.   **JOHAN**   Pa, ma sê dat pa die skaaptjop gaar moet maak.

190.   **ALBERT**   Gaan sê vir jou ma ek sal háár tjop vanaand gaarmaak.

191.   **PIETER**   *[Probeer lag.]*

192.   **JOHAN**   Dis 'n kak sad joke.

193.   **ALBERT**   Ek hoop jy vloek so voor jou ma nie.

194.   **PIETER**   Ons praat nounet van eiendomspryse.

195.   **JOHAN**   O, het jy al my pa gesê?

196.   **PIETER**   Nee, ek kom nog daarby.

197.   **JOHAN**   O, het jy die papiere saamgebring?

198.   **ALBERT**   Het enigiemand 'n probleem met witwyn? Weet nou nie wat mens dit noem nie. Julle Stellenbossers sal nou weet. Maar dis vir my heel lekker.

199.   **PIETER**   Dis Four Cousins.

200.   **ALBERT**   Goeie wyn?

201.   **PIETER**   ...Ja.

202.   **ALBERT**   Ag fok weet, alle wyn doen die selfde ding.

[Binne. Die kombuis. BRIGITTE en KAREN.]

203.   **BRIGITTE**   Pieter lyk anders as wat hy doen op Facebook.

204.   **KAREN**   Moenie dat dit jou afskrik nie.

205.   **BRIGITTE**   Nee, ek sê maar net, tannie. Hy's nogal maer nou.

206.   **KAREN**   Nou, jy't ook gewig verloor?

207.   **BRIGITTE**   Ja, maar hy lyk regtig maer.

208.   **KAREN**   Is dit 'n probleem?

209.   **BRIGITTE**   Nee. Nee, ek dink nie so nie.

210.   **KAREN**   Nou goed. Hoe vorder daai aartappels?

[JOHAN in.]

211. **JOHAN** Ma, pa wil hoor of julle wyn wil hê?

212. **KAREN** Hoe laat is dit?

213. **BRIGITTE** Sesuur.

214. **KAREN** O. Watter wyn is dit?

215. **JOHAN** Four Cousins.

216. **BRIGITTE** O, dis goeie wyn, tannie.

217. **KAREN** O. Gaan julle twee neem?

218. **JOHAN** Ek gaan, maar Pieter drink nie wyn nie.

219. **KAREN** Nie hy nie, ek meen julle tweetjies?

220. **BRIGITTE** Ja, ek sal bietjie neem, tannie.

[Buite. Die braai. ALBERT en PIETER.]

221. **ALBERT** Wag, so hoekom drink jy nie wyn nie?

222. **PIETER** Ek bant, oom.

223. **ALBERT** Watse goed?

224. **PIETER** Dis 'n diet.

225. **ALBERT** Nee, fok, mannetjie, jy's al klaar te maer. Is dit 'n moffie ding?

[Die ruimtes oorvleuel in die volgende ses spreekbeurte.]

226. **KAREN** Julle kinders kan maar drink.

227. **PIETER** Nee, ek was nogal oorgewig.

228. **KAREN** Ek het in elk geval 'n migraine.

229. **JOHAN** Kan almal nou asseblief buitetoe kom!?

230. **BRIGITTE** Ek dink die slaai is klaar, tannie.

231. **ALBERT** Wel, ek hou van my Four Cousins. Laat hy val waar hy wil.

[KAREN en BRIGITTE eenkant.]

232. **KAREN** En Brigitte.

233. **BRIGITTE** Ja, tannie?

234. **KAREN** Jy's net so goed soos jou laaste slaai. Onthou dit.

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[Buite by die braai. ALMAL.]

235.	**JOHAN**	Dankie tog, nou kan ons almal ontspan.
236.	**KAREN**	Werk die ding al?
237.	**ALBERT**	Ja, die mannetjie het dit aan die gang gekry.
238.	**KAREN**	Wel, Brigitte het 'n wonderlike aartappelslaai gemaak.
239.	**BRIGITTE**	Dis Johan se resep…
240.	**JOHAN**	Wag, is dit die een met die knoffel wat ons gemaak het na…
241.	**BRI + JOH**	Ekstravaganza 2009!
242.	**JOHAN**	Ek kan nou nog nie Potency drink nie.
243.	**PIETER**	Sies. Potency is net vir kommen mense.

[Pouse.]

244.	**KAREN**	Wel, ek hoop darem die vleis gaan gaar wees.

05 BESLUITE

[PIETER alleen belig, totdat ALMAL geleidelik bykom soos hulle onderskeidelik "Besluite" sing.]

245.	**PIETER**	LIEWE OUMA EK SIT IN DARLING EN DINK AAN JOU BY DIE GRAFTE. EN EK KAN NIE HELP MAAR WONDER AS EK NA DIE GRAFTE KYK OOR DIE MENSE DAARONDER EN PRESIES HOE HET HULLE DOOD GELYK? EN WAS DIT DALK BY 'n BRAAI? 'n BRAAI IS 'n REEKS BESLUITE. 'n REEKS GESLOTE BESLUITE.

[PIETER en JOHAN belig.]

246.	**JOHAN**	BESLUITE.

[PIETER, JOHAN en BRIGITTE belig.]

247.	**BRIGITTE**	BESLUITE.

[PIETER, JOHAN, BRIGITTE en KAREN belig.]

248.	**KAREN**	BESLUITE.

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[ALMAL belig.]

249.   **ALBERT**   BESLUITE.

250.   **ALMAL**   NA, NA, NA, NA, BESLUIT.

[Kwaliteit van beligting verander. Skielik meer helder.]

251.   **ALBERT**   Hierdie braai het vyf funksies.

252.   **KAREN**   Jy moet net asseblief die ding gebruik, Albert. Jou pa koop mos goed en dan gaar dit stof op. En wie moet dit skoonmaak?

253.   **JOHAN**   Anna?

254.   **KAREN**   Die vloerlap!

[JOHAN alleen. Dan PIETER alleen.]

255.   **JOHAN**   BESLUITE.

256.   **PIETER**   BESLUITE.

[ALBERT alleen.]

257.   **ALBERT**   KIES JY BRAAI MODEL A OF BRAAI MODEL B
DIE VOORDEEL VAN A IS HY'S GROTER AS B?
A BRAND MET VONKE EN B BRAND MET VUUR
MAAR BRAAI JY GENOEG WANT A IS WEL DUUR?
ONS VRIENDE KOM NOOIT NIE. SO WAT MAAK DIT SAAK?
OF JY A KIES OF B KIES. VIR WIE GAAN DIT TRAAK?

[ALMAL belig.]

258.   **JOHAN**   Nou wat het geword van tannie Viljoen-hulle?
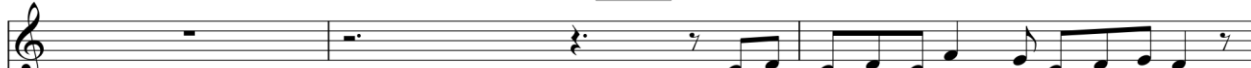
259.   **ALBERT**   Nee, niemand kom ooit meer vir ons kuier nie. Dis net ek en jou ma.

260.   **KAREN**   Ons is besig die afgelope…
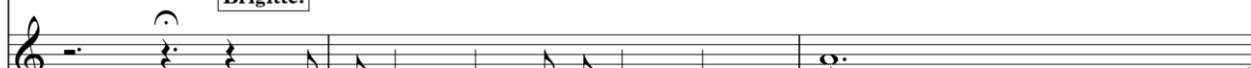
261.   **ALBERT**   Twee jaar, Lientjie. Dis wanneer laas mense by ons was.
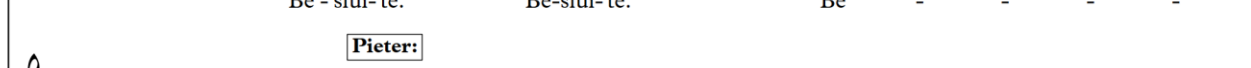
[BRIGITTE en PIETER belig.]

262.   **BRIGITTE**   BESLUITE.

263.   **PIETER**   BESLUITE.

264.   **BRIGITTE**   BESLUITE.

265.   **PIETER**   BESLUITE.

[KAREN alleen.]

266. **KAREN**   KIES JY WASMIDDEL C OF WASMIDDEL D?
C WAS NET WIT EN DIE ANDER WAS KLEUR.
KLEUR VARIEER, SO HOE WEET JY DIS SKOON?
WIT DISTILLEER DIT TOT SKOON MONOTOON.
JY WEET WAT JY KRY, EN MET ALLE RESPEK,
JA, WIT IS VOORSPELBAAR, MAAR JY WEET DIS KORREK.

[ALMAL belig.]

267. **JOHAN**   Maar julle het altyd gebraai?

268. **KAREN**   Ek is jammer, maar dit is nie my werk om ander mense konstant te entertain nie.

269. **JOHAN**   Dan hoekom is ons hier?

270. **KAREN**   Ag, moenie laf wees nie, Johan. Jy weet my kinders is altyd welkom.

271. **JOHAN**   Hoe moet Brigitte en Pieter voel?

272. **KAREN**   Maar Brigitte is soos 'n dogter vir my.

[BRIGITTE alleen.]

273. **BRIGITTE** KIES JY E, DIE VERLEDE OF F – DIE NOU?
WEL, SONDER VIR E OM F TE BOU
SOU F NIE BESTAAN NIE. EN WAT EK BESEF
DIE KEUSES VAN GISTER BEPAAL TOG VIR F?
DIE DAAD IS GEDOEN. JY WEET WAT'S JOU TAAK.
DIE SKULD IS VEREFFEN. DIE SLAAI IS GEMAAK.

[ALMAL belig.]

274. **PIETER**   So dis hoekom ek nie aartappels eet nie.

275. **KAREN**   Dis wat gebeur as jy die gewig te vinnig verloor. Mens kan nie dit volhou nie.

276. **JOHAN**   Maar hoe't jy dit reggekry?

277. **BRIGITTE** Ek het met jou ma gaan draf.

278. **KAREN**   Darem wil iemand met my draf.

279. **PIETER**   Ek sal moreoggend met tannie gaan draf.

[KAREN, JOHAN en ALBERT belig.]

280. **KAREN**   BESLUITE.

281. **JOHAN**   BESLUITE.

282. **ALBERT**   BESLUITE.

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[PIETER alleen.]

283.   **PIETER**   KIES JY G, JY PROBEER EN JY DOEN WAT JY KAN
                         KIES JY H, JY GEE OP. VAT DIE PAD EN JY GAAN.

[BRIGITTE alleen.]

284.   **BRIGITTE** EK EN JOHAN…

[PIETER alleen.]

285.   **PIETER**   KIES JY G WAT JY GLO OF H WAT JY WEET
                         DIE VRAAG IS WAT REG IS EN WAT IS VERKEERD?

[ALMAL belig.]

286.   **KAREN**   Jou pa het hierdie verskriklike duur rekenaar gekoop en hy weet nie eens hoe die ding werk nie.

287.   **ALBERT**   Die man by die winkel het my gesê dis was op special.

288.   **KAREN**   Dis nie 'n goeie special nie.

289.   **PIETER**   Dis maar hoeveel die goed kos, tannie.

290.   **BRIGITTE** Ek dink ons almal probeer maar geld spaar.

[Kwaliteit van beligting verander. Skielik meer helder op almal.]

291.   **ALMAL**   STOOK DIE KOOL IN DIE VLAM. STEEK DIE BRAAI AAN DIE BRAND
                         WRING DIE VLOERLAPPE UIT. MAAK DIE HUIS AAN DIE KANT.
                         PAK DIE EETGEREI REG. MAAK DIE AARTAPPELSLAAI.
                         KERSFEES IS HIER EN DIS TYD OM TE BRAAI.

[Ietwat dowwer beligting. Dis later in die aand.]

292.   **ALBERT**   Wel, ek weet nou nie van julle nie, maar ek kan doen met nog 'n bottel.

293.   **KAREN**   Is jy seker jy wil nog drink, Albert?

294.   **ALBERT**   *[sug.]* Nee, dis reg.

295.   **KAREN**   Ek moet seker hier skoonmaak.

296.   **ALBERT**   Lientjie, los dit. Die kinders kan mos nou later.

297.   **KAREN**   Ja, maar ek wil nie vlieë lok nie.

298.   **PIETER**   Tannie, ek sal help.

299.	**JOHAN**	My ma wil nie hê mense moet haar help skoonmaak nie. Niemand is goed genoeg nie.
300.	**KAREN**	Brigitte, jy kan my help.
301.	**JOHAN**	Ok, maar wag net gou. Ek en Pieter wil iets met julle deel. En… dis nogal belangrik.
302.	**KAREN**	Johan, ek het 'n verskiklike kopseer. Kan ek net gou…
303.	**JOHAN**	Ma… asseblief. Ek en Pieter date nou al vir nege maande…
304.	**PIETER**	Nee. Dis tien maande.
305.	**JOHAN**	Nee, dit is nie? Dis vyf, ses, sewe…
306.	**PIETER**	Nee, dink nou mooi. Maart, April…
307.	**JOHAN**	Ek tel nie Maart nie.
308.	**PIETER**	Hoekom nie?
309.	**JOHAN**	Moet jy dit nou doen? Asseblief?
310.	**PIETER**	Jammer.
311.	**JOHAN**	Anyway, nege of tien maande en… uh… soos julle weet is die eiendomspryse in Stellenbosch nogal hoog.
312.	**KAREN**	Johan, ek wil net vinnig my pilletjies gaan haal.
313.	**JOHAN**	En ons het toe besluit om saam in te trek om, soos, geld te spaar.
314.	**KAREN**	Maar my kind, julle is nog nie…
315.	**JOHAN**	Maar Katrien is ook nie getroud nie, so ek verstaan nie hoekom jy nou 'n issue maak nie?
316.	**KAREN**	Maar ek weet ook nie of dít reg is nie?
317.	**ALBERT**	Het julle al die kontrak geteken?
318.	**JOHAN**	Nee, dis nou juis die ding. Ek wil hoor of pa nie asseblief die kontrak sal deurgaan om te kyk op als in orde is nie.
319.	**PIETER**	Ja, dis die goedkoopste plek wat ons kon kry en die plek is nogal dodge…
320.	**JOHAN**	Dis nie só dodge nie…?
321.	**PIETER**	Nee, dis nogal dodge…
322.	**JOHAN**	Wel, dis nie onveilig nie.

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323.	**PIETER**	Ek sê nie dis onveilig nie. Ek sê net…
324.	**JOHAN**	Maar jy sê dan dis dodge, so ek weet nou nie?
325.	**PIETER**	Oom, ons wil net hê oom moet bietjie deur die kontrak kyk om te sien of dit ok is?
326.	**ALBERT**	Wie's die agent?
327.	**JOHAN**	Dis nie deur 'n agent nie. Dis 'n random tannie se seun wat die plek geërf het, of iets. Ons het dit op Gumtree gekry. Ons moet die kontrak teken en indien voor die einde van die maand.
328.	**ALBERT**	Dis oor 'n paar dae?
329.	**PIETER**	Ja, ons moet dit indien as ons teruggaan.
330.	**JOHAN**	Anders het ons nie blyplek nie.
331.	**KAREN**	En julle wil saambly?
332.	**JOHAN**	Ja… Ek en Pieter… ons is…
333.	**KAREN**	O, my migraine is nogal erg nou. Ek gaan bietjie lê. Brigitte, help my gou met hierdie goedjies.
334.	**JOHAN**	Ma…

[KAREN en BRIGITTE uit.]

335.	**ALBERT**	Ek sal more daarna kyk. Pieter, jy kan dan sommer na my rekenaar kyk.
336.	**PIETER**	Dis reg oom.
337.	**JOHAN**	Pa?
338.	**ALBERT**	H'm?
339.	**JOHAN**	Pa lyk regtig gespanne. Pa moenie dat sy jou onderkry nie.
340.	**ALBERT**	Jy moenie so oor jou ma praat nie. Sy's ook maar angstig, hoor.
341.	**JOHAN**	Wat gaan aan?
342.	**ALBERT**	Ek weet nie. Hierdie bouery het meer gekos as wat ons gedink het, en nou… ag wat. Maak seker nie saak nie.
343.	**JOHAN**	Gaan julle ok wees?
344.	**ALBERT**	Moenie jy jou bekommer nie. Ek sal dit uitsorteer. En Pieter…
345.	**PIETER**	Ja, oom?
346.	**ALBERT**	Wees versigtig vir dié een. Hy's 'n Huyshamen.

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347. **PIETER** Ja, oom. Ek sal.

[ALBERT uit. Ligte verander dan skielik van kwaliteit. 'n Bietjie later daardie nag. Buite by die braai.]

348. **BRIGITTE** Nog een!

349. **JOHAN** Sjj! My ma-hulle slaap!

350. **BRIGITTE** Wanneer het jy so kak geword?! Wat het geword van die aande wat ons…

351. **JOHAN** Dis fokken lank gelede. Ek's nou 'n ou man.

352. **BRIGITTE** Ag, asseblief. Ek gaan nie rus tot ons nie nog 'n bottel oopgemaak het nie.

353. **JOHAN** Nee, wag!

354. **PIETER** Ek dink ek gaan net 'n koffietjie drink.

355. **BRIGITTE** Ah! Komaan! Julle kan nie al twee so sad wees nie!

356. **PIETER** Jy kan kon drink as jy wil. Moet ek vir jou 'n Whiskey oopmaak?

357. **JOHAN** Nee, jy's reg. Ek moenie.

358. **BRIGITTE** Hoekom date jy so 'n ou tannie met 'n nat broek?

359. **PIETER** Ek het nie 'n nat broek nie. Ek dink net ook nie ons moet so loud wees nie. Dis al na middernag.

360. **BRIGITTE** Hy klink soos 'n dominee.

361. **JOHAN** Ek weet, nè?

362. **PIETER** Ek doen nie. Ek… toemaar.

363. **BRIGITTE** JOHAN…

364. **JOHAN** BRIGITTE…

365. **PIETER** Waar kom dit vandaan?

366. **BRIGITTE** Dis *West Side Story*. Dit was ons eerste musical.

367. **JOHAN** Ek was op tweede keyboard…

368. **BRIGITTE** Ja, en die conducter was altyd fokken dronk…

369. **JOHAN** Maar soos fucked…

370. **BRIGITTE** En toe't hy nooit opgedaag vanaf soos week twee nie.

371.   **JOHAN**   Ok, maar dit wás soos 'n sad hoërskool konsert…

372.   **BRIGITTE** Ja, maar nogsteeds…

373.   **JOHAN**   Anyway, ek moes toe die fokken ding conduct op opening.

374.   **BRIGITTE** En jy was amazing!

375.   **JOHAN**   Behalwe dat ek letterlik net die keyboard twee parte geken het.

376.   **BRIGITTE** Anyway, ek het Maria gespeel en toe moes Johan my die musiek leer…

377.   **JOHAN**   En dis toe ons mekaar leer ken het.

378.   **BRIGITTE** Ah! Onthou jy nog daai kak sad repetisielokaal!

379.   **JOHAN**   Met die Casio keyboard wat…

380.   **BRIGITTE** En daai een aand wat ons albei was soos…

381.   **JOH + BRI** Wie de fok is Bernstein?! *[Hulle lag vir hul herinnering.]*

382.   **BRIGITTE** Ek mis dit, Johan.

383.   **JOHAN**   Ja, maar jy gaan mos Stellenbosch toe trek?

384.   **BRIGITTE** Ek moet net nog 'n flat kry.

385.   **JOHAN**   O my fuck!

386.   **BRIGITTE** Wat!?

387.   **JOHAN**   Letterlik, ek het nou 'n braingasm gekry.

388.   **BRIGITTE** Wat!? Wat!?

389.   **JOHAN**   Ok, hoor hier. Jy gaan dink ek is mal. Maar regtig. Nee, fok… dit gaan nie werk nie. Nee, wag. Ok… Hoekom… Hoekom kom bly jy nie by ons nie!?

390.   **BRIGITTE** *[Snak lank na haar asem.]* Nee!

391.   **PIETER**   Dink jy nie dalk die flat wat ons nou het, is 'n bietjie klein nie?

392.   **JOHAN**   Ja, maar ons het nog nie vir hom geteken nie? My pa moet nog eers na die kontrak kyk.

393.   **PIETER**   Ek hoor jou, maar dan moet ons 'n ander plek vind en dit gaan mos nou duurder wees?

394.   **JOHAN**   Ja, maar dan is ons drie mense?

395.   **PIETER**   Dit gaan nog steeds duurder wees…

396.	**BRIGITTE**	Ek mind nie om te betaal nie?
397.	**JOHAN**	*[Aan PIETER.]* Moet nou nie so wees nie.
398.	**PIETER**	Nee, ek sê net dat…
399.	**JOHAN**	Wil jy nie met Brigitte bly nie?
400.	**PIETER**	Nee, ek het niks teen haar…
401.	**JOHAN**	Dis nou waarvan ek gepraat het.
402.	**BRIGITTE**	Dit sal lekker wees!
403.	**JOHAN**	Sien?
404.	**PIETER**	Ja, maar die plek wat is nou het, is te klein!
405.	**JOHAN**	Dan kry ons 'n groter plek!
406.	**PIETER**	Maar dit gaan mos aansienlik duurder wees!?
407.	**JOHAN**	Jy kan in elk geval nie die huur betaal nie! *[Stilte.]*
408.	**PIETER**	Ok… Ek dink… Ek's nogal moeg.
409.	**JOHAN**	Pieter… Jammer, ek het nie…
410.	**PIETER**	Nag. Sien julle more.

[PIETER uit.]

411.	**BRIGITTE**	Gaan hy OK wees?
412.	**JOHAN**	Ja, ag, hy's nou net weer 'n drama queen.
413.	**BRIGITTE**	Wat's die issue?
414.	**JOHAN**	Ag, dis niks.
415.	**BRIGITTE**	Komaan, jy kan vir my sê…
416.	**JOHAN**	Pieter is mos nog besig om te studeer…
417.	**BRIGITTE**	Ja?
418.	**JOHAN**	So hy betaal nog sy studies af en goed. So… ek… onderhou hom kind-of.
419.	**BRIGITTE**	Hoe bedoel jy?
420.	**JOHAN**	Hy eet amper altyd by my. Ek betaal as ons uitgaan. As ons fliek. Hy dra my skoene.

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421.	**BRIGITTE**	Ek het nogal gewonder waar hy daai nice skoene gekry het.
422.	**JOHAN**	Ek weet, nè?
423.	**BRIGITTE**	Johan… Jy's ongelooflik onselfsugtig.
424.	**JOHAN**	Awww…
425.	**BRIGITTE**	Nee, ek bedoel dit. Jy kry dit van jou ma, jy weet.
426.	**JOHAN**	Ag asseblief! Daai vrou is 'n 100% bitch!
427.	**BRIGITTE**	Sies, Johan! Dit is so! Jy weet hoe baie hulle vir my gedoen het. En nou doen jy dieselfde.
428.	**JOHAN**	Jy't nog altyd geweet hoe om my te laat bloos… *[Pouse.]*
429.	**BRIGITTE**	Sjoe. Dis nogal koelerig nou.
430.	**JOHAN**	Kom sit bietjie nader.
431.	**BRIGITTE**	Jy was nog altyd 'n kooltjie. *[Pouse.]* Is jy gelukkig, Johan?
432.	**JOHAN**	Hoe bedoel jy?
433.	**BRIGITTE**	Ek meen… is jy gelukkig met waar jy nou is? *[Pouse.]*
434.	**JOHAN**	Ek weet nie. Ek suppose ek het ander drome gehad…
435.	**BRIGITTE**	Soos wat?
436.	**JOHAN**	Ek weet nie… Vrou en twee kinders. *[Pouse.]* Mens voel mens moet.
437.	**BRIGITTE**	Ai, Johan. Dis nie jou skuld nie.
438.	**JOHAN**	Ag, dis seker nie so erg nie. Dis net dat ek weet my ma haat my. Sy verwyt my.
439.	**BRIGITTE**	Dis nie waar nie, Johan.
440.	**JOHAN**	O regtig? Het jy agter gekom hoe koud sy was vandag ons hier aangekom het?
441.	**BRIGITTE**	Sy doen baie vir jou, Johan. Op haar manier.
442.	**JOHAN**	Ja, wel, fok weet wat dit beteken.
443.	**BRIGITTE**	Toe, sit bietjie nader. Ek kry nog steeds koud.
444.	**JOHAN**	Daarso. *[Pouse.]*
445.	**BRIGITTE**	Ons het darem lekker tye saam gehad, nè? *[Pouse.]*
446.	**JOHAN**	Ja, ons het. *[Pouse.]*

447.   **BRIGITTE** Dink jy ooit aan… daai dae? *[Pouse.]*

448.   **JOHAN** Partykeer. *[Pouse.]*

449.   **BRIGITTE** Ek ook.

450.   **JOHAN** Dit was lekker tye.

451.   **BRIGITTE** Ons was fokken gelukkig.

452.   **JOHAN** Ons was.

453.   **BRIGITTE** Hoekom het ons ooit…

454.   **JOHAN** Gustav.

455.   **BRIGITTE** O, ja. Ek onthou Gustav. *[pouse.]* Onthou jy ons het nog die volgende oggend moes belydenis van geloof aflê.

456.   **JOHAN** Dit was kak awkward.

457.   **BRIGITTE** Ja… dit was. *[Pouse.]*

458.   **JOHAN** Jy weet dat ek altyd lief was vir jou. *[Pouse.]*

459.   **BRIGITTE** Is jy nog steeds lief vir my? *[Pouse.]*

460.   **JOHAN** Ja. *[Stilte.]*

461.   **BRIGITTE** Ek ook.

462.   **JOHAN** Het ek jou ooit vertel hoe my pa uitgevind het?

463.   **BRIGITTE** Nee?

464.   **JOHAN** Dit was by 'n rugbywedstryd by Grey en ek moes die fokken ding bywoon. En ek loop toe na die veld en my pa loop agter my. Ek dink hy was daar want sy firma het die sakke geborg, of iets. Anyway, ek loop toe en hy loop so bietjie agter my en… onthou jy vir Matthys Mouton?

465.   **BRIGITTE** Volstruis Matthys?

466.   **JOHAN** Anyway, hy en sy vriende was daar en skree toe vir my. Hulle het nie geweet dat my pa het agter my geloop nie. Maar hulle skree goed soos, 'Gaan jy my kom suig na die game? Jy like mos Volstruis-piel.'

467.   **BRIGITTE** Hy was nog altyd 'n doos.

468.   **JOHAN** My pa het niks gesê nie. Net stilgebly. Maar ek weet hy't dit gehoor want na die tyd, toe ons in die kar klim, toe bly hy lank stil. Hy't net voor homself uitgestaar. Ek het later gedink ek moet net jammer sê, of iets. Maar hy praat toe… 'as jy ooit weer gay porn op my laptop kyk, sal ek jou reguit bliksem.'

469.   **BRIGITTE** Aw, Johan!

470.   **JOHAN**   Ek het dit nie bedoel nie. Dit was net die enigste rekenaar met internet.

471.   **BRIGITTE** Ai, Johan.

472.   **JOHAN**   Ek het te veel gedrink. Ek moet seker gaan slaap.

473.   **BRIGITTE** Kom, loop saam met my.

474.   **JOHAN**   Dis aande soos dit was mens slegte besluite maak.

475.   **BRIGITTE** Dalk goeie besluite.

[ALBERT en KAREN in die studeerkamer.]

476.   **KAREN**   Gaan jy kom slaap, Albert?

477.   **ALBERT**   Ja, ek kom nou-nou.

478.   **KAREN**   Dis al na middernag.

479.   **ALBERT**   Ek werk net nog. *[Pouse.]*

480.   **KAREN**   Partykeer voel ek jy't daai gebreekte rekenaar meer lief as vir my.

[JOHAN en BRIGITTE alleen in BRIGITTE se slaapkamer. Sy begin stadig haar klere uittrek.]

481.   **JOHAN**   Maar wat van Pieter?

482.   **BRIGITTE** JY'S SO VINNIG OM BESLUITE TE NEEM
A OF B OF C… D.
SOMTYDS IS DIE BESLUIT MEER KOMPLEKS AS 'n "OF."
KIES AL TWEE BESLUITE.
KIES EERDER 'n "EN…"
EN JOHAN
EN JOHAN
EN JOHAN
EN JOHAN
EN JOHAN EN…

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BEDRYF TWEE

[Dieselfde as voorheen. Die toneel bloei direk uit die vorige een. PIETER alleen in sy slaapkamer.]

07 KAN OUMA DALK MY KRUIS SIEN?

483.   **PIETER**   EN JOHAN.
EN JOHAN.
EN JOHAN.
EN OUMA…

LIEWE OUMA.
DIE SEIN IN DARLING IS SLEG.
MENS KAN AMPER NIE KOMMUNIKEER NIE.
EN DIS NIE DAT EK NIE PROBEER NIE.
EK… EK MEEN… DIS MOEILIK.
DIS MOEILIK AS IETSIE JOU PLA
SOOS 'n KRUIS. DIS 'N KRUIS WAT JY SAAM MET JOU DRA.
EN DAAR'S NIEMAND WAT JY KAN VERTEL NIE.

KAN OUMA DALK MY KRUIS SIEN?

SO LIEF SOOS EK OUMA HET
SO LIEF IS EK OOK VIR JOHAN.
DIS NET DAT EK WEET DAT DIS ONVERSOENBAAR:
DIE LIEFDE VIR HOM EN DIE LIEFDE VIR OUMA.
EK MEEN… DIS SWAAR…
HIERDIE KRUIS.
WANT OUMA IS REG, OM TE LIEG IS VERKEERD.
DIE PAD NA DIE HEL IS MET LEUENS GEPOLEERD
MAAR
KAN OUMA DALK MY KRUIS SIEN?

EK IS LIEF VIR MY KRUIS
MY KRUIS GENAAMD JOHAN.
EK WEET DIS VERKEERD EN EK WEET DIS 'n LEUEN,
MAAR SONDER MY KRUIS IS EK WERKLIK ALLEEN.

DIS AS HY MY VASHOU. DIS AS HY SOEN.
DIS WANNEER EK WEET
WAT OUMA BEDOEL:
ALMAL HET SEKER HUL KRUIS.
EK WENS NET EK KON VIR OUMA
MYNE WYS…

[BRIGITTE en JOHAN vroegoggend in BRIGITTE se slaapkamer.]

08 EK, JOU MARIA

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484.	**BRIGITTE**	Kom lê nog ŉ bietjie. Toe. Die son is nog nie eens op nie.

484. **BRIGITTE** Kom lê nog ŉ bietjie. Toe. Die son is nog nie eens op nie.

485. **JOHAN** My ma gaan my wasgoed buite die deur soek. As ek nie in my kamer is nie, gaan sy agter kom.

486. **BRIGITTE** O…

487. **JOHAN** Brigitte…

488. **BRIGITTE** Ja, Johan?

489. **JOHAN** Ek is jammer.

490. **BRIGITTE** Hoekom is jy jammer?

491. **JOHAN** Ek dink ek was baie dronk gisteraand.

492. **BRIGITTE** JOHAN… ASSEBLIEF.
KAN EK GOU IETS SÊ?
WANT EK KEN JOU EN EK WEET WAT JY WIL HÊ,
AL WEET JY NIE…
DIS OK.

493. **JOHAN** Ek is net fokken confused nou.

494. **BRIGITTE** Ek weet. Ek weet.

495. **JOHAN** Pieter is partykeer fokken irriterend, maar ons gaan saam intrek. Ons wil ŉ lewe saam bou. Ek is lief vir hom.

496. **BRIGITTE** Wat wil jy hê, Johan?

497. **JOHAN** Ek wil…

498. **BRIGITTE** Want… wat óns het… is spesiaal.

GISTERAAND WAS WEER SOOS MY EERSTE KEER.
EN MY EERSTE KEER WAS MET JOU.
ONTHOU?
EK WAS SKAAM EN OOK BANG EN NAÏEF OOR DIE DRANG
BINNE MY.
ONTHOU JY?

JY'T MY GETROOS EN GESÊ,

499. **BRI + JOH** DIS OK
ONS WEET NIE ALTYD WAT ONS WIL HÊ NIE.

500. **BRIGITTE** MAAR JY
HET MY GEHELP.
EN HIER IS ONS WEER. DIE TWEEDE KEER
EN NOU IS ONS ROLLE OOK OMGEKEER

> EK WAS MARIA EN JY WAS MY TONY
> NOU IS EK TONY IS JY IS MARIA
> MARIA… MARIA…

501. **BRI + JOH** MARIA… MARIA…

502. **JOHAN** BRIGITTE…

503. **BRIGITTE** Jy onthou?

> TOE JY MY LOS, WAG EK OP JOU
> DAT JY MY WEER IN JOU ARMS SAL VASHOU
> SOOS MY EERSTE KEER.
> WANT WIE SAL DIT DOEN VIR 'N MEISIE SOOS EK?
> 'n LELIKE, DOM EN VET MEISIE.

504. **JOHAN** Jy is nie!

505. **BRIGITTE** As jou ma my nie gehelp het toe ek haar nodig gehad het nie, sou dinge baie anders gewees het.

506. **JOHAN** Wat het sy gedoen?

507. **BRIGITTE** Net toe jy weg is Stellenbosch toe, het my pa my ma gelos vir Sunette.

508. **JOHAN** Sy sekretaresse?

509. **BRIGITTE** Dis cliché, ek weet.

510. **JOHAN** Ek het nie geweet hy't 'n ding vir *["vet vroue" dui hy met gebare aan]* nie.

511. **BRIGITTE** Hy kan dit nie help nie.

512. **JOHAN** Fok, hy's 'n doos. Ek… fok… Ek het nie eens gedink om te vra nie.

513. **BRIGITTE** Jy was besig. En ons was uit. Maar jou ma het my ingeneem en… wel, sy't my gehelp toe niemand anders wou nie. Ook nie jy nie. Maar toe kon ek 'n flat kry op kampus. Ek kon klaar swot. Ek kon 'n kar kry. En nou gaan ek na jou toe trek. Na Stellenbosch. En dan kan ons weer saam wees.

> NOU IS EK MOOI EN NOU IS EK MAER.
> NOU IS JY TERUG. EN JA, EK IS DANKBAAR
> WANT HIER IS ONS WEER
> EN DIT VOEL NOU SOOS MY TWEEDE EERSTE KEER.
> DIS JY EN DIS EK. DAAR'S NIKS OM TE VREES NIE.
> SO VOOR JY BESLUIT, KAN EK NIE DALK 'N OPSIE WEES NIE?
> EK.
> JOU MARIA.

Ek was lanklaas so gelukkig, Johan.

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514.	**JOHAN**	Maak ek jou gelukkig?
515.	**BRIGITTE**	Niemand het my al ooit so gelukkig gemaak nie. Net jy. En ek weet ek maak jou ook gelukkig, nè, Tony?
516.	**JOHAN**	Ek is jammer dat ek so fucked up is.
517.	**BRIGITTE**	En ek is nog steeds lief vir jou. *[Pouse.]*
518.	**JOHAN**	Ek ook.

[JOHAN en PIETER in PIETER se kamer.]

519.	**JOHAN**	Is jy al wakker?
520.	**PIETER**	Ja. Ek het gesukkel om te slaap.
521.	**JOHAN**	Ek het 'n vraag wat ek jou moet vra… en ek het nodig dat jy eerlik met my moet wees.
522.	**PIETER**	Is dit oor gisteraand? Ek is jammer oor die intrekery. Ek was heeltemal onredelik. Ek het net so baie hangups want ek voel asof ek nooit die verhouding met jou sal hê wat jy en Brigitte het nie en…
523.	**JOHAN**	Maak ek jou gelukkig?
524.	**PIETER**	Wat? Natuurlik maak jy my gelukkig? Watter soort vraag is dit? Ek date jou dan mos?
525.	**JOHAN**	Maar maak ek jou *regtig* gelukkig?
526.	**PIETER**	Is dit oor ek nie saam met Brigitte wou intrek nie? Ek het mos vir jou gesê ek is jammer? Ek was net omkant gevang want ek sou verkies het as jy dit eers met my bespreek het…
527.	**JOHAN**	Asseblief antwoord my vraag? *[Pouse.]*
528.	**PIETER**	Jy doen. Natuurlik doen jy. Ek is lief vir jou.
529.	**JOHAN**	Hoekom het jy gewag?
530.	**PIETER**	Wat?
531.	**JOHAN**	Hoekom het jy gewag voordat jy geantwoord het?
532.	**PIETER**	Ek het nie gewag nie. Dis net… ek was omkant gevang deur die vraag. Dit is nie die vraag wat ek verwag het om te hoor…
533.	**JOHAN**	Dan hoekom het jy nog nie jou ouma van my vertel nie?
534.	**PIETER**	Ek…

535.	**JOHAN**	Ek het al die pad hiernatoe gekom… jou al die pad saamgebring na Bloem om vir my ma-hulle van jou te vertel en… As ek jou gelukkig maak, hoekom sê jy nie jou ouma nie?
536.	**PIETER**	Sy is my ouma!
537.	**JOHAN**	Maar ek het my ma gesê?
538.	**PIETER**	Dis glad nie dieselfde nie.
539.	**JOHAN**	Hoe is dit nie dieselfde nie? Ek verstaan nie?
540.	**PIETER**	Ek het nie baie tyd met my ouma oor nie. As ek vir haar gaan sê, gaan dit haar net ongelukkig maak en sy verdien dit nie. Sy verdien nie om ongelukkig te wees nie.
541.	**JOHAN**	Maar ek doen?
542.	**PIETER**	Wat!?
543.	**JOHAN**	Ek het my ma van jou gesê en jy weet hoe moeilik dit vir my was. Ek probeer jou integreer met my familie want jy maak my gelukkig en ek wou net my fokken geluk met hulle deel.
544.	**PIETER**	God, Johan! Ek het jou nie forseer om dit te doen nie. Ek wou nie eens hiernatoe gekom het nie! *[Pouse.]*
545.	**JOHAN**	Ok.
546.	**PIETER**	Ek is jammer. Ek het dit nie bedoel nie. Ek…
547.	**JOHAN**	Maak ek jou nog gelukkig?

09 SOMTYDS GELUKKIG

| 548. | **PIETER** | SOMTYDS
SOMTYDS IS EK GELUKKIG
SOMTYDS IS EK NIE.
EK DINK NET DAT GELUK IS 'n KEUSE. JY KIES.
JY BESLUIT OM GELUKKIG TE WEES, OF DAN NIE.
EN ELKE DAG KIES EK.
EK NEEM DIE BESLUIT OM VIR JOU LIEF TE WEES.
AL VOEL EK NIE LUS NIE,
AL VOEL EK SOMS KWAAD.
SOOS NOU. EK VOEL KWAAD
WANT EK HET JOU EWE VEEL LIEF
SOOS EK JOU SOMS HAAT.
EN DIS OK.
WANT EK KIES.
EK NEEM 'n BESLUIT. |
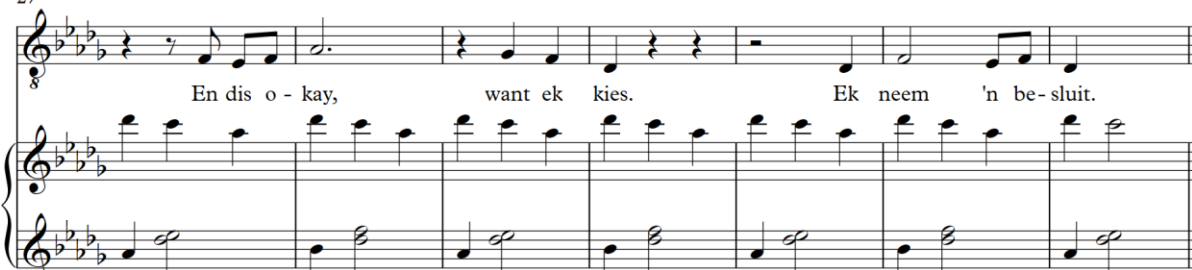
[JOHAN uit. Dan: KAREN en ALBERT in die studeerkamer.]

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549. **KAREN**   Jy't nooit kom slaap nie.

550. **ALBERT**   Die Godfrey-dokumentasie moet klaar.

551. **KAREN**   Dis Kersfees, Albert. Los asseblief die rekenaar. Jou kind is hier en…

552. **ALBERT**   Ek is een vertrek weg? Hy kan net deur die deur stap.

553. **KAREN**   Dis nie dieselfde nie, Albert. Ek weet jy is net so ongelukkig met die omstandighede soos ek, maar ten minste probeer ek. Jy sit net agter daardie verdomde rekenaar en jy ignoreer die feit dat jou kind 'n pa nodig het! Dat ek jou nodig het!

               EK HET JOU NOU NODIG,
               ALBERT
               EK HET JOU NODIG BY MY.
               EK NODIG DAT JY
               MY KANT KIES,
               ALBERT.
               EK HET JOU NODIG WANT EK
               IS DIE ENIGSTE EEN WAT BAKLEI.
               ALBERT, ALBERT!
               PRAAT MET MY,
               ALBERT!

554. **ALBERT**   Wat wil jy van my hê, Karen?

555. **KAREN**   SÊ MY JY'S VERVEELD
               SÊ MY JY IS KWAAD
               SÊ MY JY'S GEÏRRITEERD!
               ENIGIETS! PRAAT
               MET MY, ALBERT!

               [Pouse.]

               Dalk moes ek vir die kinders gesê het om nie te kom nie.

556. **ALBERT**   EK DINK DAT DIE GEVEG WAT JY VEG
               IS DIE VERKEERDE GEVEG.
               JY IGNOREER DIE PROBLEEM

557. **KAREN**   DIE EEN VAN ONS SEUN!

558. **ALBERT**   DIE GROTER PROBLEEM.
               DIE EEN VAN MY EN VAN JOU.

               WAT HET GEWORD VAN MY VROU?
               DIE VROU WAARMEE EK GETROU HET?
               DIE VROU MET DIE AVONTUURLUSTIGE GEES

DIE VROU MET DIE LUS? DIE VROU MET DIE DRYF?
DIE VROU MET DIE KAPASITEIT, KAREN,
OM LIEFDE TE WYS?

[JOHAN in.]

559.	**KAREN**	Regardt het nog net Asiatiese vroumense hier aangebring en Katrien is verloof aan 'n geskeide man. Ek… Ek wil net een kind hê wat die regte besluite neem.
560.	**JOHAN**	Pa…
561.	**KAREN**	Johan! Jammer, ek het jou nie gesien nie… Ek… ek gaan gou Woolies voor hulle toemaak.
562.	**JOHAN**	Mamma…

[ALMAL belig.]

11 ALTYD SPYT

563.	**JOHAN**	BESLUITE… BESLUITE…
564.	**ALMAL**	IS JY GELUKKIG?
565.	**JOHAN**	GELUKKIG?
566.	**ALMAL**	IS JY SPYT?
567.	**ALBERT**	SPYT?
568.	**ALB + JO**	SOMTYDS.
569.	**ALMAL**	SOMTYDS GELUKKIG SOMTYDS SPYT. IS JY SPYT OF GELUKKIG? GELUKKIG, MAAR SPYT? SPYT, TOG GELUKKIG? GELUKKIG ÉN SPYT?
570.	**ALBERT**	MAAK SPYT JOU GELUKKIG OF KWEEK DIT VERWYT? VERWYT OOR DIE FEIT DAT JY KOESTER JOU SPYT?
571.	**ALMAL**	WEL? NEEM 'N BESLUIT.
572.	**JOHAN**	DIT WAT JY KIES BEPAAL DIT WAT GEBEUR MAAR WAAK WAT JY KIES, OF DIT STEL JOU TELEUR DAN VERWYT JY JOUSELF OOR JOU SLEGTE BESLUIT EN DUS DIE GEVOLG: JY KOESTER JOU SPYT.
573.	**ALB + JO**	SOMTYDS…

574.	**ALMAL**	SOMTYDS GELUKKIG.
		SOMTYDS SPYT.
		NEE.
		ALTYD GELUKKIG EN
		ALTYD SPYT.

[ALBERT en JOHAN in die studeerkamer.]

575.	**ALBERT**	Kyk, hulle het nie aangedui dat die onderhoud hulle verantwoordelikheid is nie, so julle moet maar net daaroor navraag doen. Mens wil nie hê die eiendom moet vergaan terwyl júlle daar is en dan moet julle uitbetaal nie. Glo my, as mens eers met 'n bouery betrokke raak…
576.	**JOHAN**	Dankie, pa.
577.	**ALBERT**	Julle het 'n baie goeie prys gekry, in ag genome Stellenbosch.
578.	**JOHAN**	Dit is seker.
579.	**ALBERT**	In elk geval, ek kan nie sien hoe julle met goedkoper gaan wegkom nie.
580.	**JOHAN**	Dink pa…
581.	**ALBERT**	Kyk net asseblief na die klousule oor die sekuriteit. Is daar 'n veiligheidshek? Wie se verantwoordelikheid is dit?
582.	**JOHAN**	Dink pa dis 'n slegte idee om met Pieter in te trek?
583.	**ALBERT**	Johan, luister vir my. Jy… jy weet dat ek jou sal ondersteun of jy nou by jou vriend intrek of nie. Jou ma… Sy… Jy het nodig om te doen wat jy moet doen. Die Here weet, daar is min genoeg gelukkige mense in hierdie familie.
584.	**JOHAN**	Is pa nie meer gelukkig nie?
585.	**ALBERT**	Johan, ek was laas gelukkig in 1995 toe die bokke die wêreldbeker gewen het.
586.	**JOHAN**	Ma hou regtig nie van Pieter nie…
587.	**ALBERT**	Jy't ons nogal min waarskuwing gegee.
588.	**JOHAN**	Ja, maar ek het nie gedink…
589.	**ALBERT**	Ek sê nie jy moes dit anders gedoen het nie. Hy is nou hier. Ek hou nogal van hom. Maar jou ma is 'n ander storie. Onthou, sy's 'n delikate vrou.
590.	**JOHAN**	Ek is jammer. Ek weet dis nie wat julle wou gehad het nie. *[Stilte.]*
591.	**ALBERT**	Ek weet.

12 GESKENKE

[JOHAN alleen. ALBERT en KAREN effe belig soos hulle onderskeidelik begelei op die kontrabas en dwarsfluit.]

592. **JOHAN**   GELUK IS SOOS 'N GESKENK:
　　　　　　　　　DIS 'N GESKENK WAT DUBBELD BELOON:
　　　　　　　　　EEN KEER VIR JOU, DAN DIE ANDER PERSOON
　　　　　　　　　VIR JOU EN…

[PIETER en BRIGITTE in die kombuis.]

593. **BRIGITTE** Werk hy al?

594. **PIETER**   Ja, dit was toe Malware.

595. **BRIGITTE** Wat is dit?

596. **PIETER**   Dis soos 'n virus wat jy kry van na dodge websites gaan.

597. **BRIGITTE** 'n Virus?

598. **PIETER**   Ja, dis soos 'n STD vir 'n rekenaar.

[JOHAN alleen.]

599. **JOHAN**   DAN MOET JY VRA WIE DIE MEESTE GAAN BAAT
　　　　　　　　　IS DIT JYSELF, OF DALK PIETER,
　　　　　　　　　OF IS DIT BRIGITTE, JOU PA EN JOU MA?

[PIETER en BRIGITTE belig.]

600. **BRIGITTE** So waar het dit vandaan gekom?

601. **PIETER**   Glo my, jy wil nie weet nie.

602. **BRIGITTE** Wel, ek vertrou anyway nie rekenaars nie.

603. **PIETER**   Nee, ek love rekenaars. Hy kan net doen wat jy vir hom sê hy moet doen.

604. **BRIGITTE** Ja, maar hy luister nooit na my nie. Koffie?

[JOHAN alleen.]

605. **JOHAN**   EN DIS WANNEER EK WONDER
　　　　　　　　　WIE DIE MEESTE KAN KRY?
　　　　　　　　　WANT PIETER EN EK
　　　　　　　　　AS ONS BAKLEI
　　　　　　　　　DAN DINK EK
　　　　　　　　　WEL… HY WAS GELUKKIG VOOR MY.
　　　　　　　　　EN HET HY MY NODIG OM GELUKKIG TE BLY?
　　　　　　　　　HY HET SY OUMA EN EK HET…

[PIETER en BRIGITTE.]

606.   **BRIGITTE**   Wyn? Die vliegtuig is darem al oor…

607.   **PIETER**   …wat beteken almal in die Huyshamen huis gaan begin drink.

608.   **BRIGITTE**   Ek dink hulle't klaar begin.

609.   **PIETER**   Dis omdat hulle almal so Calvinisties is. Hulle is een stap weg van verdrink in hulle eie nagmaalwyn.

610.   **BRIGITTE**   En jy drink glad nie?

611.   **PIETER**   Ek sou, maar as ek drink dan raak ek net vet.

[JOHAN alleen.]

612.   **JOHAN**   EN IS EK WAT HY REGTIG SOEK?
IS HY REGTIG GELUKKIG
OF NET GELUKKIG GENOEG?

[PIETER en BRIGITTE.]

613.   **BRIGITTE**   Ek dink jy is nou té maer.

614.   **PIETER**   Ek was hopeloos te lank in my lewe vet. Jy weet nie watter uitwerking dit op jou het wanneer mense jou spot "Pieter met die tiete" nie.

615.   **BRIGITTE**   Is dit hoekom jy begin Bant het?

[JOHAN alleen.]

616.   **JOHAN**   DIE BESTE GESKENK WAT EK HOM KAN GEE
IS OM UIT SY LEWE TE TREE.

[PIETER en BRIGITTE.]

617.   **PIETER**   As almal left swipe op jou Tinder profile, raak dit net embarassing. Ek het Johan eintlik al 'n hele rukkie vooraf gesien op Tinder toe hy Stellenbosch toe getrek het in Januarie. Ek het regs geswipe, maar hy… het obviously nie. As jy vir 'n maand lank die "No More Matches" screen sien, dan weet jy dis tyd om 'n plan te maak. Nadat ek die gewig verloor het, toe maak ek 'n nuwe profile. Nuwe foto's. Nuwe ek. Dis toe dat Johan vir die eerste keer actually regs geswipe het… en… wel… hier is ons nou.

[JOHAN alleen.]

618.   **JOHAN**   BRIGITTE.
DIS EK, JOHAN EN BRIGITTE.

[Toneel bloei oor na BRIGITTE en JOHAN.]

619.   **BRIGITTE**   JOHAN!

620. **JOHAN**   BRIGITTE!

621. **BRIGITTE** JOHAN!

622. **JOHAN**   BRIGITE!

623. **BRIGITTE** Jy moenie met my hart speel nie, Johan.

624. **JOHAN**   Jy ken my. Ek sal nooit iets so fucked up doen nie. Ek het regtig daaroor gedink, en…

     PIETER IS REG. JY WEET, GELUK IS 'N KEUSE
     EN JA, DIS 'N REUSE BESLUIT.
     MAAR MAAK NIE SAAK WATTER KEUSE ONS MAAK NIE,
     EK DINK NIE DAT ONS IS VIR MEKAAR GEMAAK NIE.
     MAAR EK EN JY.
     ONS WAS GELUKKIG
     WEL, MEESTAL GELUKKIG
     EN DIS AL WAT EK SOEK.
     DIE GELUK WAT EK GEHAD HET VOOR STELLENBOSCH
     JY KEN HOM MOS?
     DIE VRYE JOHAN!
     ONBESKEIE JOHAN!
     MY EIE JOHAN!
     DIE JOHAN WAT KAN LAG
     EN DIE JOHAN
     WAT MET SY MA KAN GAAN DRAF.
     DIS DIE JOHAN…
     NEE, DIT IS DIE MAN
     WAT EK GRAAG WIL WEES.

625. **BRIGITTE** Jy moet net… asseblief belowe my dat… dis die einde. As jy my kies – 'n vrou, Johan – is dit die einde van… daai goed.

626. **JOHAN**   Ek…

627. **BRIGITTE** Ek sal jou help. Ek sal mooi wees. Ek sal make-up dra. Ek sal elke dag gaan draf. Ons sal saam kerk toe gaan. Ek sal jou hand vashou en ek sal sterk wees wanneer ek weet jy sukkel. Belowe my…

     DAT EK IS MARIA
     MARIA
     MARIA
     EK IS JOUNE, MARIA!
     Wel?

628. **JOHAN**   EK IS JOU TONY!
     JOU TONY
     JOU TONY

629. **BRIGITTE** MY TONY!

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Dis die beste geskenk wat ek al ooit vir Kersfees gekry het.

[ALMAL belig. Later die aand in die sitkamer.]

630. **KAREN** Die oom het darem ook bygedra.

631. **BRIGITTE** Dis regtig 'n pragtige rok, tannie. Tannie het baie goeie smaak.

632. **KAREN** Nou goed, dan is dit… net Pieter.

633. **PIETER** Sjoe. Dis nogal 'n lekker ligte pakkie.

634. **KAREN** Ag wat, mens wil nie hê julle moet so sukkel met die terugry nie.

[PIETER maak die geskenk oop. Binne-in is daar 'n T-hemp of 'n knopieshemp met 'n Afrika-druk.]

635. **PIETER** Dis… so… Safari.

636. **KAREN** Maar kyk daar's ook 'n broekie.

637. **PIETER** En sokkies.

638. **BRIGITTE** Ek dink dis baie mooi.

639. **KAREN** Ek het dit gesien by Pick-'n-Pay Clothing en toe kon ek nie anders nie. Toe, pas dit aan.

[PIETER vou die hemp oop. Dis hopeloos te groot vir hom.]

640. **PIETER** Ek dink dit gaan dalk bietjie…

641. **KAREN** Jy gaan my sekerlik nie so beledig nie, Pieter?

[PIETER trek die hemp aan. Dit hang soos 'n sak aan hom.]

642. **KAREN** Kyk nou net daar!

643. **PIETER** Baie dankie, tannie. Dis nogal… interessant.

644. **KAREN** Hou jy nie daarvan nie?

645. **PIETER** Nee, nee. Ek doen. Ek hou daarvan. Dis net… dat… dis miskien 'n bietjie groot.

646. **KAREN** Ag nonsens. Dit sal jou binnekort weer pas. *[Stilte.]*

647. **BRIGITTE** Uhm… Ek wil gou asseblief almal se aandag kry… vir 'n belangrike… wel, ek en Johan wil iets met julle deel.

648. **JOHAN** Uhm… Brigitte…

649. **BRIGITTE** Ja?

650.	**JOHAN**	Dink jy dis nou 'n goeie idee?
651.	**BRIGITTE**	Hoe bedoel jy?
652.	**JOHAN**	Ek het net gedink ons kan dalk wag tot ons teruggaan Stellenbosch toe voordat…
653.	**BRIGITTE**	Maar waarvoor moet ons wag, Johan?
654.	**JOHAN**	Ek…
655.	**BRIGITTE**	Want ons het niks om oor skaam te wees nie.
656.	**KAREN**	Gaan julle saam intrek?
657.	**BRIGITTE**	Nee, tannie. Ons… Ek en Johan… ons het 'n amazing tyd saam gehad toe hy nog in Bloem gebly het. Die musicals… die konserte… die ekstravaganzas… Ons was onskeibaar.
658.	**JOHAN**	Brigitte…
659.	**PIETER**	Johan, wat gaan aan?
660.	**BRIGITTE**	Tannie Karen het ons altyd die terrible two genoem. Johan was soos 'n boetie vir my. Meer as 'n boetie. En hierdie Kersfees het ons…
661.	**JOHAN**	Brigitte, asseblief.
662.	**PIETER**	Johan, waarvan praat sy?
663.	**BRIGITTE**	Wel, dis waaroor Kersfees gaan. Oor met jou familie te wees en om julle liefde vir mekaar te wys. En daarom…
664.	**JOHAN**	Wil enigiemand nog wyn hê?
665.	**KAREN**	Johan, asseblief. Laat die kind praat.
666.	**BRIGITTE**	Daarom wil ek met julle deel dat… ek en Johan… ek wil die res van my lewe met hom deurbring. Hy is meer as my boetie. Hy is my man. *[stilte.]*
667.	**PIETER**	Johan? *[stilte.]* Wat bedoel sy?
668.	**JOHAN**	Ek… *[pouse.]*
669.	**BRIGITTE**	Toe. Sê vir hom, Johan. Jy't niks om oor skaam te wees nie.
670.	**JOHAN**	Pieter sal nie verstaan nie.
671.	**PIETER**	Waarvan praat sy, Johan?
672.	**JOHAN**	Ek het nodig dat jy kalm moet bly, Pieter. Belowe my dat jy sal kalm bly.

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673.	**PIETER**	Ek…
674.	**JOHAN**	Onthou jy ons eerste date? By die Akker? Ons het nog daar in die hoek-tafel gesit – die ronde een – en ek het vir jou alles van my lewe hier in Bloem vertel. Hoe baie ek dit mis en hoe eensaam ek is in Stellenbosch. Brigitte was… 'n groot deel daarvan… van my lewe hier. Ek en Brigitte… sy was my eerste groot liefde. En nou – toe my ma Brigitte hiernatoe genooi het… toe ontdek ek weer van voor af… hoe lief ek haar het.
675.	**PIETER**	So… wat? Jy is nou straight?
676.	**JOHAN**	Pieter, ek het jou gevra om kalm te bly.
677.	**PIETER**	Walg ek jou so dat ek jou straight genaai het?
678.	**KAREN**	Pieter, dis nie nodig om so vuil te praat nie. Ons is Christenmense in hierdie huis.
679.	**PIETER**	Wanneer het dit gebeur?
680.	**JOHAN**	Gisteraand. Ek is regtig jammer, Pieter. Ek sal altyd vir jou lief wees, maar ek weet net nie of ons mekaar regtig gelukkig maak nie.
681.	**PIETER**	Hierdie is so fucked up.
682.	**KAREN**	Pieter, dis nie nodig om te vloek nie.
683.	**PIETER**	Hierdie is so ongoddelik fucked up.
684.	**KAREN**	Brigitte, help my gou om hierdie goedjies skoon te maak…
685.	**PIETER**	Julle is die mees fucked up familie wat ek in my lewe gesien het. God, ek het geweet Bloemfontein is agterlik, maar julle is fokken hillbillies.
686.	**ALBERT**	Pieter, kom nou. Kom ons…
687.	**PIETER**	Fokken los my! Ek is dalk nie altyd gelukkig nie, maar ek máák nie asof ek gelukkig is nie. Jy's niks beter as jou fokken pa nie.
688.	**ALBERT**	Pieter…
689.	**PIETER**	Los my! Hoekom vertel jy nie vir hulle 'n bietjie wie Crystal is nie?
690.	**ALBERT**	Pieter!
691.	**PIETER**	Toe nou! Jou seun het nou vir almal sy ware kleure gewys. Hoekom try jy nie ook vir 'n slag nie! Sê vir jou familie wat jy regtig op daai kak rekenaar van jou doen wanneer niemand kyk nie.
692.	**KAREN**	Albert?
693.	**ALBERT**	Ek… Karen… asseblief. Nie voor die kinders nie.

694. **KAREN**   Wie is Crystal? *[lang stilte.]*

695. **PIETER**   Julle is almal fucked up.

696. **KAREN**   Albert?

BEDRYF DRIE

[ALBERT alleen.]

13 'N BAIE GROOT HUIS

697.   **ALBERT**   EK DOEN WAARDERING.
SOOS PLASE EN HUISE, JY WEET.
EN MEESTE VAN DIE TYD KOM KAREN MET MY…
MET MY…
MET MY…

TOE EK JONK WAS,
WAS BESLUITE EENVOUDIG.
JY BESLUIT OP 'N VROU
JY KOOP SAAM 'N HUIS
JY KRY DAN 'N KIND
JY BOU AAN JOU HUIS
DALK VOEL JY TUIS
MET JOU KIND EN JOU HUIS
(KRY DALK NOG 'n KIND?)
NOU'S JY EN JOU VROU
EN JOU KIND SAAMGEBIND.
MAAR WAT HET EK NOU?
'N HUIS EN VROU?
NEE.
NET 'N BAIE GROOT HUIS.

DIE HUIS IS GROOT,
ONS HUWELIK… OUD.
DIE VRYSTAAT IS WARM,
MAAR TOG KRY EK KOUD.
SO KOUD SOOS DIE VROU
EN DIE HUIS WAT SY BOU:
DIE MURE OM MY UIT HAAR LEWE TE HOU…

[ALBERT en KAREN. ALBERT staan in die gang buite hul slaapkamer.]

698.   **ALBERT**   Karen… Kan ek inkom?

699.   **KAREN**   Albert. Asseblief. Loop.

700.   **ALBERT**   Kan ek maar buite die deur met jou praat?

701.   **KAREN**   Albert, ek vra jou baie mooi om my asseblief alleen te los. Ek het nodig om te dink… *[Stilte.]*

702.   **ALBERT**   Ek het drooggemaak, Lientjie. Ek het lelik drooggemaak. Ek weet dit. *[Stilte.]* Dit was nooit 'n… ek het haar nooit ontmoet nie. Iemand by die werk het my vertel van die website… en… en… Ek dink ek wou net

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iemand gehad het om mee te praat. *[Stilte.]* Ek weet net nie of ek jou meer gelukkig maak nie. *[Stilte.]*

703.	**KAREN**	Weet jy hoe verneder ek is, Albert? *[Pouse.]*
704.	**ALBERT**	Ek…
705.	**KAREN**	Ek het my beste probeer, Albert. Ek het my bes probeer om 'n Kersfees met die hele familie te hê sodat dinge weer kan wees soos dit was… voordat… almal weg van mekaar is. Ek… jy… die kinders. Die kinders bel my nooit meer nie. Jy ignoreer elke Whatsapp wat ek vir jou probeer stuur… Ek voel so useless, Albert. Niemand het my meer nodig nie. Nie my kinders nie… Nie jy nie…
706.	**ALBERT**	Ek gaan inkom.

[ALBERT doen. Beligting verander om so aan te dui. Stilte.]

707.	**KAREN**	Lyk ek soos sy?
708.	**ALBERT**	Karen, kom hier.
709.	**KAREN**	Nee, Albert. Los my! Los my, asseblief!! Los my!!!
710.	**ALBERT**	Hoekom is jy bang vir my?

14 VYF-EN-DERTIG JAAR

711.	**KAREN**	IS EK DIESELFDE VROU WAT EK WAS DIE DAG TOE ONS GETROU HET? DIE VROU MET DIE LUS? DIE VROU MET DIE DRYF? WANT NA VYF-EN-DERTIG JAAR IS ONS UITEINDELIK WEER ALLEEN. DIE KINDERS IS WEG. DIS NET EK EN JY. EN EK IS BANG, ALBERT, DAT AS JY MY WEER LEER KEN MET DIE PLOOIE EN LETSELS VAN 'N OUER VROU DAT JY ONS VYF-EN DERTIG JAAR, ALBERT, SAL BEROU.

[Hulle bespeel hulle instrumente. Net MUSIEK. Geen lirieke. Die toneel bloei oor na JOHAN en BRIGITTE.]

712.	**JOHAN**	Waaroor dink jy praat hulle?
713.	**BRIGITTE**	Ek weet nie…
714.	**JOHAN**	Kan jy iets hoor?

715.	**BRIGITTE**	Nee… Dis nie ons besigheid nie, Johan.
716.	**JOHAN**	Hierdie is so 'n fokop.
717.	**BRIGITTE**	Ontspan nou. Jy kan niks daaromtrent doen nie.
718.	**JOHAN**	Ek moes nie hiernatoe gekom het nie. Ek het geweet dat ek nie vir Pieter moes bring nie.
719.	**BRIGITTE**	Dit gaan nie help om nou spyt te wees nie. Julle sou in elk geval opgebreek het. Niks hiervan is jou skuld nie. *[Pouse.]* Julle was in elk geval nie regtig gelukkig nie.
720.	**JOHAN**	Dink jy regtig so?
721.	**BRIGITTE**	Het ek al ooit vir jou gelieg?
722.	**JOHAN**	Ek weet nie wat ek gedoen het om jou te verdien nie.
723.	**BRIGITTE**	Dis ok. Nou hoef ons oor niemand anders behalwe mekaar te bekommer nie. Dis net Johan en Brigitte. Soos dit altyd was.
724.	**JOHAN**	Jy's die niceste mens wat ek ken.
725.	**BRIGITTE**	Kan ek vir jou Milo maak?
726.	**JOHAN**	Jy weet jy gaan 'n amazing ma wees.
727.	**BRIGITTE**	Ek dink ook so. Ek kan dit actually al sien. Johan en Brigitte Huyshamen. En ons gaan twee kinders hê: Sandriette en Jacques.
728.	**JOHAN**	Het ek nie 'n sê nie?
729.	**BRIGITTE**	Nee, want jy kry net die lekker deel en ek moet vir nege maande suffer.
730.	**JOHAN**	Dis nie fair nie.
731.	**BRIGITTE**	Anyway, Sandriette gaan na Oranje en Jacques gaan Grey en dan gaan hulle KOVSIES toe en Jacques gaan regte swot en Sandriette gaan…
732.	**JOHAN**	Hoekom sal ons ons kinders hier grootmaak?
733.	**BRIGITTE**	Wel, ons gaan seker in Bloem bly?
734.	**JOHAN**	Maar ek dog jy trek Stellenbosch toe? Saam met my?
735.	**BRIGITTE**	Dis obviously nie meer nodig nie, Johan.
736.	**JOHAN**	Hoekom nie?
737.	**BRIGITTE**	Gaan jy regtig teruggaan Stellenbosch toe na wat Pieter aan jou gedoen het? Na hoe daai plek jou verander het? Hulle is 'n klomp snobs, Johan. En anyway, jy kan nou hierso weer 'n werk by Tjokkies kry saam met

jou ma. Jy kan weer musieklesse gee. Ons kan weer Ekstavaganzas doen. Dinge kan weer teruggaan na soos dit was.

738. **JOHAN** Regtig?

739. **BRIGITTE** Regtig.

[BRIGITTE alleen.]

15 MARIA SE DROOM

740. **BRIGITTE** DAAR WAS 'N MEISIE MET DIE NAAM MARIA.
ONTHOU, BRIGITTE, DIS NET 'N IDIOOM.
EN HIERDIE MEISIE MET DIE NAAM MARIA
SY HET NIKS NIE. SY'T NET 'N DROOM:

DAT EENDAG GAAN SY TROU
EN 'N MAN GAAN HAAR KOM VIND
WANT HAAR PA HET HAAR GELOS
VIR 'N ANDER VROU EN KIND.
EN HAAR MA HET NET VERDWYN
SONDER WOORDE IN DIE NAG
EN MARIA WAS ALLEEN
SO MARIA HET GEWAG.
SY HET GEWAG.

MAAR DEUR ALLES HET SY DAREM NOG VIR TONY.
HAAR VRIEND. NEE, HAAR BROER… HAAR MAN.
MAAR TONY WAS ONSEKER OOR SY LIEFDE,
TOE LOOP HY WEG. TOE'T HY GEGAAN.

EN DAAR SIT MARIA ALWEER
EN PROBEER HAAR TRANE SLUK,
MAAR DIE TRANE PLA HAAR MINDER
AS DIE SKULDENAAR SE JUK.
EN KORT-VOOR-LANK DIE KLOP:
DIE BALJU IS BY DIE DEUR
WANT HAAR GELD IS AMPER OP
EN MARIA MOET STUDEER;
MAAR GEEN TRANE KAN HAAR HELP NIE
WANT MARIA HET NIE GELD NIE…

MAAR DIE HERE STUUR AAN MARIA 'N ENGEL
WAT NOU VIR HAAR 'N GOEIE TYDING BRING.
DIE ENGEL SAL MARIA HELP VEREFFEN
AAN HAAR SKULD. EN SY SING:

'EK HET 'N SEUN. SY NAAM IS TONY.
HY HET IN DIE NAG VERDWYN
MAAR EK WEET DAT HY NIE WOU NIE.

DIE BREË WEG HET HOM VERLEI.
EN AS EK JOU NOU HELP
EN JOU STUDIES KLAAR BETAAL
EN EK KOOP VIR JOU 'N KAR
DAN MOET JY MY KIND GAAN HAAL.
UIT DIE DONKER GAAN HAAL.'

EN MARIA STEM TOE IN WANT DIT WAS TONY
HAAR VRIEND, HAAR BROER EN HOPELIK HAAR MAN
WANT SY WEET DAT SY VIR TONY KAN VERANDER
JA, SY KAN! SY WEET SY KAN!

EN NOU IS HAAR DROOM GLAD NIE MEER 'N DROOM NIE
SY'T WAKKER GEWORD EN SIEN SY IS GESEËN
WANT MARIA HET HAAR SKULD VERRUIL VIR TONY
EN SY WEET:
EK'S NIE MEER ALLEEN NIE!

AL MY DROME IS NOU WAAR.
DIT WAS MAAR NET GEDULD.
EN EK SAL MY KRUIS NOU DRA…
MET 'N ANDER TIPE SKULD…

[JOHAN en PIETER buite die huis.]

741.	**JOHAN**	So jy's nou oppad?
742.	**PIETER**	Wel, fok, ek gaan beslis nie hier bly nie.
743.	**JOHAN**	Hoe gaan jy by die huis kom?
744.	**PIETER**	Wat de fok het dit met jou uit te waai?
745.	**JOHAN**	Ek vra net. Mag ek nie vra nie?
746.	**PIETER**	Jy't my mos nou gelos vir jou vriendin, so ek weet nie eintlik wat jy van my wil hê nie.
747.	**JOHAN**	Ek wou nie gehad het jy moes so uitvind nie.
748.	**PIETER**	Wat? So jy sou verkies het dat ons al drie saam intrek en dan drop jy net eendag, 'O, haai Pieter! Net so by the way, ek naai ons flatmate.'
749.	**JOHAN**	Ons was nooit regtig gelukkig met mekaar nie, en jy weet dit.
750.	**PIETER**	My God, Johan. Ek is jammer ek lyk nie die heeltyd asof ek 'n orgasme kry elke keer as ek jou sien nie…
751.	**JOHAN**	Dis nie wat ek bedoel het nie…
752.	**PIETER**	…dis my fokken neutrale gesig! Dis net hoe ek lyk! Moet ek die heeltyd jou in die oë kyk en lyk asof jy my histeries gelukkig maak?

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753.	**JOHAN**	Ten minste… ten minste laat Brigitte my voel asof ek iets beteken. Asof ek vir haar belangrik is. Ten minste weet ek ons is saam want sy is regtig lief vir my. Nie net omdat ek haar huur betaal nie.
754.	**PIETER**	Ek sien. So jy dink ek was net saam met jou omdat jy die huur betaal?
755.	**JOHAN**	Ek weet nie, Pieter. Eerlikwaar weet ek nie. Want jy verkies om agter jou rekenaar te sit eerder as net om met my te praat en net eenkeer vir my te sê dat ek jou gelukkig maak. Ek voel bietjie asof ek nege maande…
756.	**PIETER**	Dit was tien maande, Johan!
757.	**JOHAN**	Ek tel nie Maart nie!
758.	**PIETER**	Hoekom tel jy nie Maart nie!? Wat is fout met Maart?
759.	**JOHAN**	Want jy't eers in April uitgevind wat my gunsteling musical is.
760.	**PIETER**	My fok, jy's nie ernstig nie.
761.	**JOHAN**	En jy't my nie eens gevra nie! Jy moes dit op Facebook sien!
762.	**PIETER**	Watter verskil maak dit? Dit is die mees random ding wat ek in my lewe gehoor het!
763.	**JOHAN**	Dit is vir my belangrik, Pieter.
764.	**PIETER**	Hoekom? Hoekom is dit vir jou so belangrik?
765.	**JOHAN**	Dit is die enigste musical wat my ouers ooit kom kyk het. Maar jy sal dit nie verstaan nie want jy het nie regtig ouers nie.
766.	**PIETER**	Jy's reg. Ek sal nie verstaan nie. Anyway, wat maak dit saak? Wat maak dit nou saak? Jou ma het gekry wat sy wou gehad het. Jy het gekry wat jy wou gehad het. Julle almal is gelukkig.
767.	**JOHAN**	Waar gaan jy nou bly?
768.	**PIETER**	Ek gaan by my ouma intrek in Durbanville. Ek vat nou 'n bus. Ek gaan sommer deur Darling ry en na die fokken grafte kyk dat ek darem iets het om oor te praat as ek by die huis kom.
769.	**JOHAN**	Moet ek vir jou iets inbetaal?
770.	**PIETER**	Ek sal manage.
771.	**JOHAN**	Nou hoe betaal jy vir die bus?
772.	**PIETER**	My ouma het vir my geld ge-EFT.
773.	**JOHAN**	Waarvoor dink sy is dit?

774.	**PIETER**	'n Kursus in grafsteen-waardering. *[Pouse.]*
775.	**JOHAN**	Pieter…
776.	**PIETER**	Wat?
777.	**JOHAN**	Ek wil net sê… Onthou jy… Op Tinder?
778.	**PIETER**	Ja?
779.	**JOHAN**	Onthou jy nog wanneer ons eerste chat was?
780.	**PIETER**	Wat de fok doen jy nou?
781.	**JOHAN**	Ek het jou actually al voor dit op Tinder gesien. Toe jy nog vet was. Ek het actually toe al gedink jy's oulik.
782.	**PIETER**	Dan hoekom het jy nooit regs geswipe op my profile nie?
783.	**JOHAN**	Miskien wou ek nie 'n verhouding gehad het nie. Dalk net 'n vriend.
784.	**PIETER**	Ek kry jou jammer, Johan. Jy's seriously opgefok.
785.	**JOHAN**	Ten minste hier in Bloem is ek nie alleen opgefok nie.
786.	**PIETER**	Hierdie was 'n fucked up Kersfees.
787.	**JOHAN**	Ek is jammer.
788.	**PIETER**	Dis ok. Moet my net nie bel as jy eendag op Oprah se couch sit nie.
789.	**JOHAN**	Dankie. Ek dink ons gaan actually gelukkig wees.
790.	**PIETER**	As jy so sê. *[Pouse.]*
791.	**JOHAN**	By the way, jy moet jou neutrale gesig verander. Dis bietjie fucked. *[Pouse.]*
792.	**PIETER**	Wel, darem het ek een nice Kersgeskenk gekry.
793.	**JOHAN**	Die hemp?
794.	**PIETER**	Ja, die hemp, Johan. Nee, poephol!
795.	**JOHAN**	Dan wat? *[Pouse.]*
796.	**PIETER**	Ek dink ek gaan my ouma sê ek's gay.

[Musiek soos die ligte stadig verdoof.]

Addendum B: *Fees* (2016) Sheet Music

Dieselfde, Maar Beter
FEES

André Gerber

David Wolfswinkel

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meen, dis net be-ter! Die self - de, maar be-ter.___

Espressivo ♩ = 72.0

Die self - de, maar be - ter.

En hoe veel Wim- pies? kan daar nou wees?

A tempo, cantabile

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2

Dis Nie Dat Ek Karen Vermy Nie
FEES

André Gerber

David Wolfswinkel

CUE: "Wat dink jy? 'Hi, ma, kan ek en my gay lover asseblief gay seks in my
gay bed hê sodat ons gay babas kan kry?'"

2

4

Ek doen waar-der-ing, soos pla-se en hui-se. Jy weet? En

mees-te van die tyd___ kom Ka-ren met my dan ry ons waar-ook-al die pad ons

lei.

Dan won-der ek hoe-kom Ka-ren nog bly...

So ek meng maar werk en ple-sier. Dis meest-al maar werk, maar daar's tog ple-sier. Kyk, ons is

daar om te werk, die ple-sier bly maar hier.

Hoe laat is dit nou?

Dis vyf-uur.

Maar ek... uhm... het nog

3

André Gerber

[Daar's Iets Aan Die Naam] Brigitte
FEES

David Wolfswinkel

CUE:"Haai, ek sien jy't 'n nuwe kar!"

Poco Rit

K. hier vir drie dae en dan gaan hul ry. Hy en Jo - han.

P. hier vir drie dae en dan kan ons ry. Ek en Jo-han! ek en Jo- han... en Bri

Calm, al niente ♩ = 52.0

P. gi- tte...

Johan: Jy is 'n beter mens as ek.
Brigitte: Johan *(stop)*, ek is jammer...

4A

My Seun Is Gay. Wat Nou?
FEES

André Gerber

CUE: *"**Karen:** Ekskuus?"*

David Wolfswinkel

Karen: Dank die vader jy's treug, Albert.

Albert: Jammer. Die Godfrey-saak trek nog die heeltyd aan.

Karen: Wel, ek het hom ontmoet.

Albert: Godfrey?

Karen: Nog erger!

Ek was in hoër- skool, nog vroeg, soos graad ag? Dis wa- rm. Ok- to- ber. Dis laat in die dag. Ek

sit in die kar en die sweet tap my af, maar my ma hou aan draf. Jy sien, sy rig

sport af. Maar sy roep my en sê: "Kom Jo- han, kom draf saam."

Albert: Lientjie, jy kan darem vreeslik oordyf.

Karen: Blykbaar gaan hulle nie eens kerk toe nie!

Albert: Het jy jou pille geneem? (⋆)

Karen: Ek weet nie of ek hiervoor kans sien nie, Albert.

Albert: Lientjie, luister vir my: daar is nou niks wat ons kan doen nie. Asseblief, los dit net. Jy wil nie weer 'n episode hê nie.

Johan: Ek wil baie graag hê my ouers moet van jou hou.

Pieter: Jy ken my duidelik nie. Ek is amazing met tannies.

Johan: Ek weet, ek weet. Dis net...

Pieter: O fok.

Johan: My ma... Sy is baie sensitief.

Pieter: Ok?

Johan: Jy gaan dit nou verkeerd opvat, en dan gaan dit 'n issue wees.

Pieter: Dit gaan nie - dit gaan nie 'n issue wees nie.

271

J. al wat ek wil wees is die seun waar-mee sy kan draf. Maar

J. toe ek die boe-kie toe-maak, in die hit-te, die Jet-ta, die

J. sweet en die vrees, toe weet ek al klaar wat op die voor-blad sal wees.

Pieter: So wat? Moet ek nie myself wees nie? Ek gaan mos nie vir jou ma sê "God is Dood" nie! Of is dit iets anders?

Johan: Jy sien, nou's dit 'n issue.

Pieter: Dis nie 'n issue nie. Ek verstaan net nie hoekom jy my nou so target nie. Jy weet ek is klaar gespanne hieroor en...

Underscore

Johan: Asseblief, ek wil net nie enige... issues hê nie. *[cut]*
Kan ons asseblief probeer om nie issues te maak nie.

VAMP

Gaan Direk "Choral" Toe

273

4B

Choral
FEES

André Gerber

Direk van "My Seun Is Gay, Wat Nou?"
CUE: "Kan ons asseblief nie enige issues hê nie?"

David Wolfswinkel

Besluite
FEES

André Gerber

CUE: "Wel, ek hoop darem die vleis gaan gaar wees."

David Wolfswinkel

Pieter:
Lie - we Ou - ma, ek sit in Dar-ling en dink aan jou by die graf - te.

En ek kan nie help maar won - der... as ek na die graf-te kyk, oor die

men - se___ daar on-der en hoe pre-sies het hul dood ge-lyk? En

4

6

Pieter: So, dis hoekom ek nie aardapples eet nie.

Karen: Dis wat gebeur as jy die gewig te vinnig verloor. Mens kan nie dit volhou nie.

Johan: Maar hoe het jy dit reggekry?

Brigitte: Ek het met jou ma gaan draf.

Karen: Darem wil iemand met my draf.

Pieter: Ek sal moreoggend met taanie gaan draf.

Karen: Jou pa het hierdie verskriklike duur rekenaar gekoop en hy weet nie eens hoe die ding werk nie.

Albert: Die man by die winkel het vir my gesê dis op special.

Karen: Dis nie 'n goeie special nie.

Pieter: Dis maar hoeveel die goed kos, tannie.

Brigitte: Ek dink ons almal probeer maar geld spaar.

283

10

K. Kers-fees-is hier, en dis tyd om te braai.

B. Kers-fees-is hier, en dis tyd om te braai.

P. Kers-fees-is hier, en dis tyd om te braai.

J. Kers-fees-is hier, en dis tyd om te braai.

A. Kers-fees-is hier, en dis tyd om te braai.

Pno.

6

André Gerber

Besluite (Reprise)
FEES

David Wolfswinkel

CUE: *"Ai, Johan"*

Johan: Ek het te veel gedrink. Ek moet seker gaan slaap.
Brigitte: Kom, loop saam met my.
Johan: Dis aande soos dit wat ment slegte besluite maak.
Brigitte: Dalk goeie beluite.

Karen: Gaan jy kom slaap, Albert?
Albert: Ja, ek kom nou-nou.
Karen: Dis al middernag.
Albert: Ek werk net nog. *[Pouse]*
Karen: (*) Partykeer voel ek jy't daai gebreekte
rekenaar meer lief as vir my.

2

Gaan Direk "Kan Ouma Dalk
My Kruis Sien?" Toe

7

Kan Ouma Dalk My Kruis Sien?
FEES

André Gerber

David Wolfswinkel

2

kruis wat jy saam met jou dra.   En daar's nie-mand   wat jy kan ver - tel nie.   Kan

Ou- ma__   dalk   my kruis sien?

So   lief soos ek Ou-ma het,   so   lief is ek ook vir Jo-han.   Dis

net dat ek weet   dat dis on - ver-soen-baar: die   lief - de   vir hom en die lief - de   vir   Ou - ma.

Ek meen,   dis swaar._____   Hier - die

290

Lyrics (measure 28): kruis. Want Ou-ma is reg, om te lieg is ver-keerd. Die pad na die hel is met leuens ge po leerd

Ad Lib

Lyrics (measure 31): maar kan Ou-ma dalk my kruis sien?

Doloroso, espressivo (♩.=40)

Lyrics (measure 35): Ek is lief vir my kruis, my kruis ge-naamd Jo-han. Ek

Lyrics (measure 39): weet dis ver-keerd, en ek weet dis 'n leuen, maar son-der my kruis is ek werk lik al - leen.

Gaan direk "Jy, My Maria" toe.

292

8

André Gerber

Ek, Jou Maria.
FEES

David Wolfswinkel

Direk van "Kan Ouma Dalk My Kruis Sien?"

Brigitte: Kom lê nog 'n beitjie. Toe.
Dis son is nog nie eers op nie.

Johan: My ma gaan my wasgoed buite my deur soek.
As ek nie in my kamer is nie, gaan sy iets agter kom.

Brigitte: O...
Johan: Brigitte...

Tranquillo ♩ = 119

Piano

pp

Con Pedale

Johan: Ek is jammer.
Brigitte: Hoekom is jy jammer?
Johan: Ek dink ek was baie dronk gisteraand.

Brigitte: Ja, Johan?

B.

(safety)

Brigitte:

Jo-han,   as-se

blief,   kan ek gou iets sê?   Want ek ken jou   en ek weet wat jy wil hê.   Al

Johan: Ek is net fokken confused nou.
Brigitte: Ek weet. Ek weet.

Johan: Pieter is partykeer fokken
irriterend, maar ons gaan saam intrek.

B.

weet   jy nie,   dis o - kay.

Underscore

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Johan: Ons wil 'n lewe saam bou. (*)
Ek is lief vir hom. (**)

Brigitte: Wat wil jy hê, Johan?
Johan: Ek wil..
Brigitte: Want.. wat ons het... is spesiaal.

Gis'-

traand was weer soos my eer ste keer. En my eer ste keer was met jou. Ont hou?

Ek was skaam en ookbang en na-ïef oor die drang bi-nne my. Ont-hou jy?

Jy't my ge-troos en ge-sê "Dis o-kay. Ons weet nie al-tyd wat

Dis o-kay. Ons weet nie al-tyd wat

294

Simplice, Meno Mosso

Poco più mosso

los_____ wag ek op jou dat jy my weer in jou a-rms sal vas- hou, soos my eers - te keer.

Johan: Jy is nie!

Want wie sal dit doen vir 'n mei-sie soos ek? 'n Le-lik- e, dom en vet mei- sie?

Brigitte: As jou ma my nie gehelp het toe ek haar nodig gehad het nie, sou dinge baie anders gewees het.

Johan: Wat het sy gedoen?

Brigitte: Net toe jy weg is Stellenbosch toe, het my pa my ma gelos vir Sunette.

Johan: Sy sekretaresse?
Brigitte: Dis cliché, ek weet.

A Tempo ♩=133

Johan: Ek het geweet hy't 'n ding vir...nie.
Brigitte: Hy kan dit nie help nie.

Johan: Fok, hy's 'n doos. Ek... fok... Ek het nie eens gedink om te vra nie.

Brigitte: Jy was besig. En ons was uit. Maar jou ma het my ingeneem en my...
Wel, sy't my gehelp to niemand anders wou nie.

(safety)

296

Brigitte: Ook nie jy nie.

Brigitte: Maar toe kon ons 'n flat kry op kampus.

Brigitte: Ek kon klaar swot. Ek kon 'n kar kry. En nou gaan ek na jou toe trek. Na Stellenbosch.

Brigitte: En dan kan ons weer saam wees.

Nou is ek mooi__ en nou is ek maer. Nou is jy terug. En

ja, ek is dank-baar want hier is ons weer__ en dit voel nou soos my twee-de, eers-re

297

Brigitte: Ek was lanklaas so gelukking, Johan.
Johan: Maak ek jou gelukkig?

Brigitte: Niemand het my al ooit so gelukkig gemaak nie. Net jy. En ek weet ek maak jou ook gelukking, né, Tony?

Gaan Direk "Ek Het Jou Nodig" Toe

Ek Het Jou Nodig

FEES

André Gerber

Direk van "Somtyds"

David Wolfswinkel

303

11

Altyd Spyt
FEES

André Gerber

CUE: "Mamma…"

David Wolfsiwnkel

308

309

Geskenke
FEES

André Gerber

David Wolfswinkel

CUE: "*Johan: Ek is jammer. Ek weet dis nie wat julle wou gehad het nie. [Pouse.]*
Albert: Ek weet."

310

Brigitte: Werk hy al?
Pieter: Ja, dit was toe Malware.
Brigitte: Wat is dit?

Pieter: Dis 'n virus wat jy kry van na dodge websites gaan.
Brigitte: 'n Virus?
Pieter: Ja, dis soos 'n STD vir 'n rekenaar.

Brigitte: So, waar het dit vandaan gekom?
Pieter: Glo my, jy will nie weet nie.

Brigitte: Wel, ek vertrou anyway nie rekenaars nie.
Pieter: Nee, ek love rekenaars. Hy kan net doen wat jy vir hom sê hy moet doen.

311

Brigitte: Ja, maar hy luister nooit na my nie. Koffie?

Brigitte: Wyn? Die vliegtuig is darem al oor...

Scherzoso leggero ♩ = 113

bly?   Hy het sy   ou-ma   en ek het...

poco rit.

p

Pieter: ...wat beteken almal in die Huyshamen
huis gaan begin drink.
Brigitte: Ek dink hulle't klaar begin.

Pieter: Dis omdat hulle almal so Calvinisties is.
Hulle is een stap weg van verdrink in hulle eie nagmaalwyn.
Brigitte: En jy drink glad nie?
Pieter: Ek sou, maar as ek drink dan raak ek net vet.

Semplice

En is ek wat   hy   reg-tig soek?   Is hy reg-tig ge-luk-kig,   of   net ge - luk-kig ge-noeg?

Brigitte: Ek dink jy is nou té maer.
Pieter: Ek was hopeloos te lank in my lewe vet. Jy weet
nie watter uitwerking dit op jou het waneer mense
jou spot "Pieter met die tiete" nie.

Brigitte: Is dit hoekom jy begin bant het?

313

Johan:

Die bes-te ge skenk wat ek hom kan gee   is om   uit   sy   le- we__ te

Pieter: As almal left swipe op jou Tinder profile, raak dit net embarassing. Ek het Johan eintlik al 'n hele rukkie vooraf
gesien op Tinder toe hey Stellenbosch toe getrek het in Januarie. Ek het regs geswipe, maar hy... het obviously nie.
As jy vir 'n maand lank die "No More Matches" screen sien, dan weet jy dis tyd om 'n plan te maak.

Delicato

tree.

Pieter: Nadat ek die gewig verloor het, toe maak ek 'n nuwe profile. Nuwe foto's.
Nuwe ek. Dis toe dat Johan vir die eerste keer regs geswipe het...

(Safety)

Pieter: ... en... wel... hier is ons nou.

Johan:

Bri - gi- tte._

314

Brigitte: Jy moenie met my hart speel nie, Johan.

Johan: Jy ken my. Ek sal nooit iets so fucked up doen nie.
       Ek het regtig daaroor gedink, en...

315

317

Poco a poco rit. ma non troppo

Dis die Jo han... Nee, dis die man wat ek graag wil wees.

Brigitte: Jy moet net.. asseblief belowe my dat...

Brigitte: ... dis die einde. As jy my kies - 'n vrou, Johan
- is dit die einde van... daai goed.

Johan: Ek...

Dolce semplice

Brigitte: Ek sal jou help. Ek sal mooi wees.
Ek sal make-up dra. Ek sal elke dag gaan draf. Ons
sal saam kerk toe gaan. Ek sal jou hand vashou en
ek sal sterk wees wanneer ek weet jy sukkel.

Brigitte: Belowe my...

Affettuoso

Brigitte:

...dat ek is Ma-ri-a!__ Ma

Delicato rit.

318

13

'n Baie Groot Huis
FEES

André Gerber

David Wolfswinkel

CUE: "*Karen: Albert?*"

Doloroso ♩. = 123

Albert

Ek   doen waar-der - ing.   Soos pla-se en

Piano

mp

Con Pedale

7

poco a poco rit. decresc.

hui - se, jy weet. En mees - te van die tyd   Kom Ka-ren met my...   Met my...   Met   my...

13 **A Tempo, Simplice** ♩.=108

Toe ek jonk was,   was be-slui-te een - vou - dig.   Jy be-

17

sluit op 'n vrou.   Jy koop saam 'n huis.   Jy kry dan 'n kind.   Jy bou aan jou huis.

Sonoro, nel suo complesso e non occupato

320

19

Dalk voel jy tuis met jou kind en jou huis? (Kry dalk nog 'n kind?) Nou's

21 *Simplice*

jy en jou vrou en jou kind saam-ge-bind. Maar wat het ek nou? 'n Huis en 'n vrou? Nee.

24 **Dolorosamente, simplice**

'n Bai-e groot huis. Die huis is groot, ons hu we- lik...

30 *Poco a poco sotto voce, ma non troppo.*

oud. Die Vry-staat is wa-rm, maar tog kry ek koud. So koud soos die vrou en die huis wat sy

33 *Psante, allargando.*

bou: *Psante* Die mu - re om my uit haar le-we te hou...

321

14

Vyf-En-Dertig Jaar
FEES

André Gerber

David Wolfswinkel

*CUE: "**Albert:** Hoekom is jy bang vir my?"*

poco a poco rit. delciato

15

André Gerber

Maria Se Droom
FEES

CUE: "**Johan:** *Regtig?*
Brigitte: *Regtig.* "

David Wolfswinkel

47

B.

haar 'n goe ie ty-ding bring. Die en-gel sal Ma-ri-a help ver - ef-fen aan haar skuld.

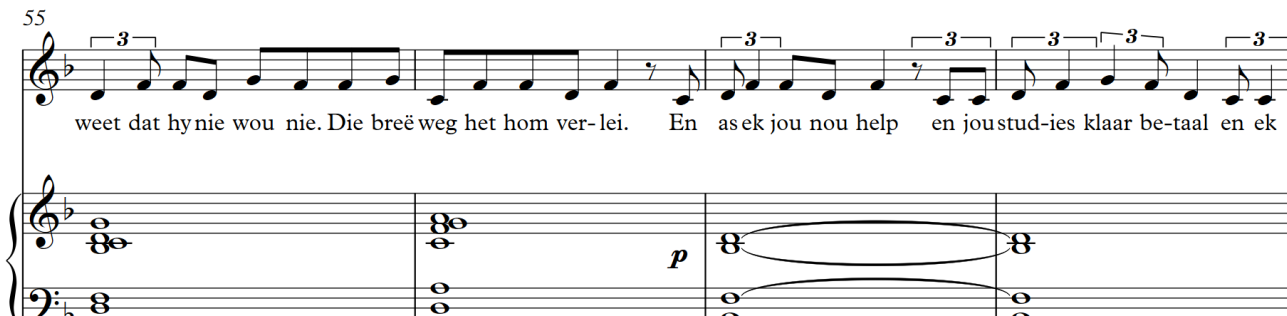**51** *Cresc. poco accel.*

Simplice

B.

En sy sing: "Ek het 'n seun sy naam is To-ny. Hy het in die nag ver-dwyn, maar ek

Simplice

f *mp*

55

B.

weet dat hy nie wou nie. Die breë weg het hom ver-lei. En as ek jou nou help en jou stud-ies klaar be-taal en ek
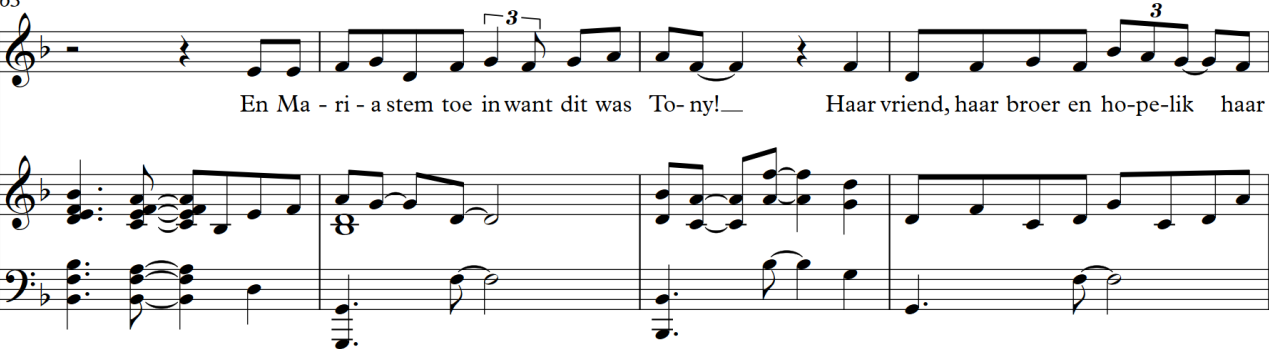
p

59 ***Molto Ritardando***

B.

koop vir jou 'n kar dan moet jy my kind gaan haal, uit die don-ker gaan___ haal."___

Piú Mosso

B. En Ma - ri - a stem toe in want dit was To- ny!__ Haar vriend, haar broer en ho-pe-lik haar

B. man. Want sy weet dat sy vir To-ny kan ver - an- der.__ Ja, sy kan! Sy weet sy

Grandioso

B. kan! En nou is haar droom glad nie meer 'n droom nie, sy't

Molto Cresc.

B. wak-ker ge-word en sien sy is ge-seën want Ma - ri - a het haar skuld ver-ru il vir To-ny

79

B.

en sy weet: Ek's nie meer al - leen   nie!_____

Psante (♩. = 47)

86

B.

Al my dro-me is nou waar.   Dit

89

B.

was maar net ge-duld.   En ek   sal my kruis nou   dra... met 'n   an-der ti-pe   skuld...

16

Finale

FEES

André Gerber

David Wolfswinkel

Piano