

# History of Musical Theatre CBRT Script

By Victoria Schubert

1	Musical theatre took many years to become its own art form.	3	Any plot, no matter how far-fetched or improbable, [gesture]
2	In 1735, [gesture]	4	as long as it can be the frame for
3	<i>Flora</i> was performed in a court room in South Carolina.	5-6	big stars, [gesture]
4	This ballad opera remained popular for many decades in the Colonies.	7	song, [sound effect]
2	Once the Colonies became a nation, [gesture]	8	dance, [gesture]
5	The burlesque was the new fad.	9	and humor. [ALL sound effect]
6	They consisted of travesties on	1	The play itself was not important,
7	or parodies of famous plays,	ALL	Only the elements within the play.
8-9	performers, [gesture]	2	In the 1920's, [gesture]
1-2	or dancers [gesture]	3	the Princes Theatre shows
3	in song, [sound effect]	4	broke loose from the rigid formula.
4	dance, [gesture]	5	These shows concentrated on intimate and informal entertainment
5	pantomime, [gesture]	6	with small casts and NO stars.
6-9	and dialogue.	7	Instead of production numbers, humorous skits, and chorus-girl lines;
1	One of the earliest burlesque shows was <i>Hamlet</i> .	8	they were filled with sophistication, witty dialogue, amusing incidents that rose naturally, charming music, and American personality.
2	As history went on, European shows took over the scenes for the rest of the 18 <sup>th</sup> century. [gesture]	2	In 1927, [gesture]
3	Operettas, opera-bouffes, and comic operas were back! [ALL sound effect]	9	the greatest revolution in American musical theatre came with <i>Show Boat</i>
4	Although the European influence was inescapable,	1	by Oscar Hammerstein and Jerome Kern.
5	efforts were being made to create musical entertainment with an American style. [ALL sound effect]	3-4	At last, the play was the most important. [ALL sound effect]
6	Writers like Ed Harrigan	5	It integrated song, [sound effect]
7	and Tony Hart	6	humor, [ALL sound effect]
8	created burlesque-extravaganzas that became successful;	7	and plot into one story. [gesture]
9	but none stood up to George M. Cohan	2	Finally, with Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein's masterwork <i>Oklahoma</i> in 1943, [gesture]
ALL	the father of American musical comedy! [ALL gesture]	ALL	American Musical Theatre was born! [ALL sound effect]
1	Cohan established the principles of musical comedy writing:		

\*Reference: American Musical Theatre: An Introduction, <http://www.theatrehistory.com/american/musical030.html>