

21 January 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I love New Line Theatre. Not just because they did a great production of one of my plays—not just because Scott Miller is one of the most thoughtful, passionate and engaged artistic directors I've ever interacted with—but because New Line Theatre is saving the Musical.

The musical is one of the most iconic American popular art forms. And yet, it's struggling to stay relevant. As I see it, this is the result of a number of factors: ticket prices rising, the average age of theatergoers rising, as well as the commercial pressures that bring more and more unnecessary film adaptations to Broadway. For the next generation of audience, for whom theater is competing with film and television and video game systems, it's not surprising that musicals often don't feel like a very good investment of time and money.

*But it doesn't have to be this way.* A great piece of musical theater can have incredible power. Music has the ability to drill straight into our emotional cores, to elevate drama in a profound way. New Line Theatre understands this. From my discussions with Scott, it's clear that his company approaches musicals as drama—committed to digging deep to excavate the best in the works his company chooses to produce. In every production, they work to prove why the musical form is important. They demonstrate why this form deserves to live on, and why it deserves to evolve with the times.

I don't know of any other theater that does the kind of programming that New Line does. They take chances on new, cutting-edge works. They revisit quality shows that flopped on Broadway but deserve another look. And they do game-changing reinterpretations of classics. It's a varied, exciting mission, and I'm honored to have been included in it. I very much hope to be again.

New Line deserves your fullest support. What they're doing is truly important.

All the best,  
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