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Stage Management

5 February 2019

Heathers Dramaturgical Analysis

Heathers the Musical is a rock musical based on Daniel Waters' film *Heathers*. Although the film was released in 1988, the material is still relevant, and the musical was first presented as a concert in 2010 (Playbill.com). Over the years it was developed-- the show ran at: Hudson Backstage Theatre in Los Angeles in 2013 (Broadway.com), New World Stages off Broadway in 2014 (Broadway.com), Hayes Theatre in Sydney, Australia in 2015 (HayesTheatre.com), Sydney Opera House in 2016, The Other Palace off West End in 2017, and at the Theatre Royal Haymarket on West End in 2018(Playbill.com). The show has also had several regional productions throughout the US, and was even adapted into a high school show in 2016.

Original Sources:

- Heathers: the Musical is based on *Heathers* (1988), written by Daniel Waters and directed by Michael Lehmann. (IMDB)

Playwrights

- Laurence O'Keefe is a living composer/lyricist.
 - He was born in 1969.
 - He graduated from Harvard where he was involved in Hasty Pudding Theatricals.
 - He wrote *Bat Boy*, which premiered in 2001 to critical acclaim.
 - He co wrote Legally Blonde the musical.
- Kevin Murphy is a living composer/lyricist/screenwriter.
 - He wrote Reefer Madness.
 - He co wrote Legally Blonde the musical.

World of the Play:

- What happened in 1989? (PeopleHistory.com)
 - The Velvet Revolution was happening in Czechoslovakia.
 - Free elections happened in Poland.
 - NASA launched the Galileo Spacecraft.

- George Bush Senior was president.
- The US government gave aid to Columbia to help fight drug lords.
- Microsoft Office was launched.
- *When Harry Met Sally* was released.

Production History-- Financial (Playbill.com)

- Heathers garnered interest as a bar concert, and earned enough money during the limited Los Angeles run that it went Off Broadway.
- Although the cast album sold well, Heathers closed after just 4 months Off Broadway.
- It was taken to Off West End, and did well enough financially to receive a month long run on West End.

Production History-- Criticism/Theory:

- Negative Reviews:
 - West End production had catchy music, but the gentle, human approach didn't fit the jarring themes of the script. (Financial Times)
 - Off Broadway production was too long, a critic suggested seeing it drunk. (New York Times)
 - "What the show could really use is competent direction . . . The producers were wise to go with a modest (meaning cheap) Off Broadway mounting of material not built to withstand the spotlight of a bigger stage." (Hollywood Reporter)
- Positive Reviews
 - Off Broadway production was a "smartly executed musical treatment." (Variety)
 - West End production had catchy music and a smart and "acerbically funny" script. (Attitude UK)
 - West End production had an excellent cast and a witty script. (Stage Magazine)
- The Off Broadway production was nominated for 2 Drama Desk Awards and 2 Lucille Lortel Awards.

Sources

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