

## The Problem of Actualization of the Musical in Kazakhstan

*Yeslam Serikuly Nurtazin*

Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after T. Zhurgenov St. Panfilov, 127, 050000, Almaty, Kazakhstan

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**Abstract:** The research is devoted to the phenomenon of the musical and the problem of its actualization in Kazakhstan. Based on the first Kazakhstani musicals analysis, there was studied the experience of this genre scenic implementation and the ways of overcoming it for the further development of the contemporary theatrical art. The problem of actualization of the musical in Kazakhstan is in the issue of performances organization and of masterly performance. There were determined the qualifications and specified competences imposed on actors in the above mentioned genre, including a certain level of acting mastership, vocal and choreography. Lack of performers possessing all the performing skills hampers a musical creation process. There were identified the mechanisms that are able to promote the “musical” genre as the newest product in the domestic theatrical industry. There were identified and reasoned the parameters of changes in the already existing educational system of Kazakhstan, training future theatrical art performers, for formation of the professional Kazakhstani school of the musical.

**Key words:** Theatre of Kazakhstan • A musical • The problem of actualization • Acting art

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### INTRODUCTION

Having become a sovereign state, Kazakhstan smoothly emerged into the world cultural space. Today the Kazakhstani theatre needs the forms and genres of stage performances that are able to “talk” to a new, “advanced” spectator, the one that is able to move around different cultural landscapes, to be part of the globalized world. One of such innovational forms for the theatrical art in Kazakhstan is a musical. Nowadays, the contemporary theatrical industry of Kazakhstan is represented in practically all scenic genres, apart from the world leader, the genre of a musical, meanwhile the musical would facilitate innovational transformation of the musical theatre, development of stage and performance activities, attract new organization and management technologies, financing sources. The musical in Kazakhstan is the youngest genre, going through the foundation period. For this the musical has a lot, including a consistent creative basis, represented by talented new acting resources. But the most important is, in our opinion, a systemic complex education, synthesizing music, drama and choreography schools, development of the training system of performers, combining choreographic and vocal competences [1-5].

**The Target of the Research:** Is a musical as a specific music-scenic genre.

**The Subject of the Research:** Is performing arts, analysis of their artistic, presentative and technological specifics in the context of the “musical” genre.

**The Goal of the Research:** Is identification of possibilities for actualization of the genre of the musical in Kazakhstan as one of the aspects of the domestic culture development, as well as investigation of the acting art peculiarities in the context of the “musical” genre.

The tasks of the research:

- To analyze the experience of this genre scenic implementation in Kazakhstan
- To identify the problematic field of stage direction, administrative-production activities, management and ways of popularization of the Kazakhstani musical with specific references;
- To determine the dominant competences of professional training of actors of musical theatre (a musical) at creative higher educational establishments of Kazakhstan.

**The Development of the Musical on the Examples of the South Korea and Russia:** Synthesis of art and business in the 20<sup>th</sup> century played one of the key roles in alteration and development of the musical theatre. Investments into musical entertaining stage art lead to development of multi-faceted synthetic trend of the musical. In stage performances which a spectator had a possibility of seeing, there are all performing art kinds. For instance, "The King Lion", "War Horse" there are elements of a puppet show. And in "The Spiderman" and "Billy Elliot" plays there are elements of aerial acrobatics. This is what catches a spectator's attention. Business interest was in demand, which gave birth to the musical. Theatrical staging started yielding the money. This fact became a primary reason of business interest in art. Fight for a spectator appeared. Rivalry requires a qualitatively new professional growth of the theater in general and more spectacular shows. The musical in the 20<sup>th</sup> century became one of the most profitable scenic shows. Musical performances on the Broadway and West End stages that last for years, bring profit to production centres and are of great interest and popularity with the spectator audience all over the world. The musical arouses interest due to the interesting and original artistic solution of the classical, well-known plots in these performances. Stage, artistic work of the best stage directors. Fine acting performance of the parts. Tourists from all over the world consider it important to see these performances. But now, spectators have a possibility of seeing these performances without the need to leave their countries. The interest once aroused with a tourist, will make up his wish to see musicals in his own country as well.

In the globalization era, we now see contingency of cultures of different countries and there are interests, preferences that are uniting different countries and nations. One of such scenic genres became the musical. The musical is understandable and interesting in all parts of the world. Production companies now have several troupes in different countries. The geography of these plays is wide. In West and East Europe, in Asia there are the theatres on the stages of which musical shows, earlier staged on Broadway and West End stages, are on.

For instance, the situation in the South Korea is described by Miss Hyunjung Lee in her article, "In contemporary South Korean Theater, the idea of Broadway evokes visions of magnificent glamor, global success and the superior "Other." These visions remind Korean audiences of their nation's lack of global presence as well as its deeply held desire to create a global identity. Two mid-1990s South Korean productions and their subsequent travels to New York-The Last Empress, the

musical (1995) and the nonverbal performance Nanta [Cookin'] (1997)-demonstrate how the notion of "Broadway" in South Korea has transcended its definition as a mere physical location (i.e., a major theater district in New York City) to become a trope in the conversations around the making of these plays. In this context, as the ultimate, superior "Other," Broadway represents the power to evaluate and criticize and also to praise. For its part, local theater willingly trusts and relies upon whatever comment this superior "Other" makes about what it has achieved. In South Korea, Broadway musicals "had a jump start in acquiring the specific capacity and implicit charge of projecting a mainstream sense of "America". The power of this immediately popular genre, a "distinctively American and widely influential art form," remains linked with commerce and the workings of global capital» [6].

When participating in the 6<sup>th</sup> Daegu International Musical Festival (DIMF2012) we had an opportunity of viewing the musicals staged by the Korean creators. The three shows by the local authors were seen by us. And we came to such a conclusion: the spectacles have a consistent musical-performing basis, a powerful choreographical performing school, the national character of the music material and the images played by the actors were interesting. But the problem of acting mastership in these spectacles was articulately pronounced. The performers' overly excessive affectation and no obvious ground for mixing the genres, the comedy solution dramatic scenes of the play hindered the organic existence of the actors on the stage. But we also noted the popularity of this genre among the viewers. Interest was confirmed by the fact that throughout the Festival at all the performances the halls were full. It is also known that "The First Metro Line" musical of Korean manufacture has 19 years of history; the play was staged in 1994. This is the record holder of Korean productions.

The strong influence of the European and Broadway musicals on the productions is obvious. Perhaps this is due to the fact that on the Korean scenes there are the most famous musicals such as "The Phantom of The Opera", "Notre Dame de Paris", "Romeo and Juliet", "West Side Story" and many others. Such experience of productions gives a big push for development and popularization of the musical. A group of producers that has experience in staging arrives and leads rehearsals with local performers. This gives a professional result in mastery, definite technical equipment and expertise. The popularity of this genre in Korea is confirmed by professional winnings in the performances.

In Russia growing popularity of a genre of the musical is also noted. On the stages of the Moscow theaters there were put a number of the musicals, earlier having made success in other countries. Russia has always been famous for the theatrical industry and the theatrical viewers. In Moscow the musical is represented by the best world musicals, beginning from works by Andrew Lloyd Webber, Alan Menken, Bernstein and many others. Russia has a strong performing school. In this country all scenic genres are well-developed. In 2012 in Moscow "The musical Theater" opened. "We decided to connect the Russian tradition of repertoire theater to the Broadway principle of daily show", the art director of Theatre of The musical Mikhail Shvydkoi says [7]. In the repertoire of the theater there will be three-four musicals, by Russian and foreign authors. Each performance will be played in a row for 7–10 days a month. The first season of the Theatre of the Musical opened with the "Times don't choose" performance, the libretto of which was written by Mikhail Shvydkoi in co-authorship with Aleksey Kortnev. The musical "Embezzlers" inspired by Valentin Katayev's play was the following premiere. The authors of the performance were Maksim Leonidov and Aleksandr Shavrin. In the creative plans of the theater there are both the best world musicals which have become classics and new performances based on works of domestic authors.

A high level of theatrical culture in Russia and the huge potential of the Russian theatrical market prompted "The Stage Entertainment" company to bring to Russia the advanced production technology, know-how, marketing expertise and to invest heavily in the development of musical theatre, which led to the establishment of "The Stage Entertainment Russia" subsidiary company ". The first project was the staging of the Russian version of the "CATS" musical. Then there followed "MAMMA MIA!", "The Beauty and the Beast", "ZORRO" and "The Sounds of Music" musicals. It was also extremely popular with the Russian public to enjoy ice shows from "Holiday on Ice" company. In 2009, the company released their own first ice show "The Nut-Cracker". Then there followed "The Snow Queen" and "The Sleeping Beauty" ice performances.

Musical in Russia is quite a young genre and, of course, there are a number of problems. And, of course, the musical attracted the attention not only of theatrical workers but also representatives of other kinds of art. As Russian critic Pavel Rudnev said, "The musical, fully merged with pop music on stage, as such, does not interest us. But the musical, with all the spectacular hit

remains a purely theatrical spectacle, which were at one time the "Nord-Ost" and "Chicago," but musical in the capital died [8].

**The Experience of the Musical Stage Implementation in Kazakhstan:** This is the situation in Russia and South Korea. Kazakhstan also has great potential for the creation of such interesting, exciting musicals. There is a base on which to create the musical. Today, in Kazakhstan there are 54 theaters: drama, puppet theatres, 3 opera theatres, 11 musical-drama theatres and theatre of musical comedy.

There are several pilot projects for the implementation of a musical. But there is no domestic European or Broadway class musical.

In Kazakhstan it is conditionally possible to select 3 musicals types:

- Musicals of Europe and the United States, translated into Kazakh and Russian languages.
- Opera, operetta, later named as musicals. In other words, staged on the basis of the accomplished musical-dramatic material.
- Musicals written by local authors.

"Kyz Zhibek" of Bolat Atabayev put in 2005 by forces of students of his class, is defined by the director as the musical. B. Atabayev's performance strongly differs from the previous versions of the "Kyz Zhibek" opera. The suits and adaptation of a scene were solved in a new way. The scenography is minimum, thus it should be noted the interesting solution of the image of the river Zhaiyk by means of a big blue cloth. Choreography differs for the ethnic expressiveness. National color penetrates all the performance. Actors, soloists and chorus dance and execution of the musical parts that only deepens the expressiveness of the performance. The orchestration was made especially for the Kazakh folklore orchestra. The director Bolat Atabayev said in the interview, "It is the "Kyz-Zhibek" opera. After all, Evgeniy Brusilovskiy wrote music for a symphonic orchestra. And I ordered to the composer Igor Kim the transposition for the "Otyrar Sazy" Orchestra of the National Instruments. It is very hard. But the "Kyz-Zhibek" performance nevertheless reached a premiere and successfully goes on a scene though we rehearsed nearly two years" [9]. But later Bolat Atabayev called this musical performance as the musical. However, because E. Brusilovskiy's opera was re-made for "Otyrar Sazy" Orchestra of the National

Instruments, the structure of music did not change. Rates and tonalities were not even changed. The instruments only changed. Actors also performed all musical parts in a habitual academic (classical) manner of singing. Musical and scenic genres were defined by the structure of a form of music first of all. And in itself, the art and production solution of the performance could not change the music genre. We after all defined this interesting, provocatively put "Kyz Zhibek" performance as the musical drama as this performance has nothing in common with performances of Broadway or West End musicals.

At the beginning of 2009 the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan announced the "Tauyelsizdik Tolghauy" ("The Independence Wave") competition which for the first time was carried out in the Republic. And here in 12 months' time, the winners of the first Republican competition were announced. Almas Serkebayev, who now lives in the USA, received the Grand Prix in the nomination "The Best Opera Composition". In the course of the work the genre also changed - instead of the opera the "Bayterek" musical [10] was created. As the author of the libretto was Yuriy Kudlach. This project can be referred to the third type of musicals in Kazakhstan. When performance was thought up and written by authors, directors (in particular, the honored artist of the Russian Federation the art director of the Saint-Petersburg Opera Yuriy Isaakovich Alexandrov) were invited and the troupe of performers was collected. Performing resources of two cities - Astana and Almaty were involved. Alexandrov already had experience of staging in the Kazakh theaters, for example, in GATOB of named after Abay, the Karaganda Academic Regional Theater of the Musical Comedy. The performing group was collected in Almaty and Astana on the method of an open casting in which any actor could try the hand. "Such creative bands participated in crowd scenes as "Naz", "Terra" and group brake-dancers from Temirtau" [11; p.21].

The musical was submitted to the audience of the capital and then passed onto the domestic television channels. The opportunity to see the performance was given to all the inhabitants of Kazakhstan. However, the "Astana" musical didn't cause a great interest in the spectator audience. The reason for that - the chosen plot of the musical which did not reflect neither a life, nor the characters, close to the local viewer. The chosen musical convention of the musical too was not convincing. The composer A. Serkebayev in the work used jazz

elements. But characters of the performance had nothing in common with an era of this music and jazz musicians. The performers of the leading parts - soloists of opera theaters of Kazakhstan - performed parts in a classical academic manner. Actor's works on a scene were strongly affected, were not organic, images were not opened, interactions of partners were not traced, transitions from the word to a vocal were executed poorly and it is one of the main requirements to mastery in a genre of the musical. Irrelevance of the subject and musical material, bad actor's execution of parts with beauty of the stage had no impact on the viewer of Kazakhstan.

The "Zhibek" musical of composers Satzhan Shamenov and Dastan Rayeva is Venera Rakhysheva's producer project. She is the author of the idea of creation of the musical on the "Kyz Zhibek" Kazakh lyrical epos in the modern version. The libretto was written by poets Victor Antas and Lyaylya Askar. Aliya Grange was the production director initially, (after leaving of the first director, I became the director - E.Nurtazin). The choreographer-director Nadezhda Smolina, the arranger Satzhan Shamenov, the sound producer Dmitry Leykhan. After the musical and drama material was ready, the casting for the leading and supporting roles began. In 2008 the performing group was approved. In February, 2009 the rehearsal period began. Initially unsatisfactory dramaturgic material was the main problem of this musical during its preparation and rehearsal. Adaptation to a modern era was made poorly. Other shortcomings were obvious also: not worked enough dialogues, unjustified order and transitions of drama scenes to musical voice parts. All this complicated the production process. Mistake of administrative and producer department at selection of author's group in the person of authors of the libretto and a performance led to big problems in the course of the "Zhibek" performance creation. The production group had no experience of collaboration before and had no experience in a genre of the musical. This fact led to disagreements and different interpretations on this or that scene.

At the same time the producer group made a good promotional product. The advertising company of the "Zhibek" musical was supported by an album, a video-clip, articles in newspapers and magazines, posters and banners. But despite all advertising expenses, the premiere since May, 2009 was postponed for fall of the same year and subsequently because of financial and organizational problems performance did not receive the end.

**The Problem of Training Actors of the Musical Theatre (Musical) at Higher Educational Establishments of Kazakhstan:**

The actor of this genre to an equal measure is the actor, the dancer and the singer. Versatility of artistic ability is a condition of existence of the actor in this difficult genre of the musical. There are actors of only one or two directions performing art: acting and dance, vocal and dance. But the genre of the musical demands the synthetic actor, possessing all these skills. The problem is met in all domestic performances. The problem of the "Zhibek" musical was that actors of theater possessed acting, but not to a sufficient measure possessed vocal qualification. The performers did not possess acting skills, but coped with voice parts. The execution of musical parts on a stage and in a theatrical performance cardinally differs. Drama pieces of performance have specifics of another performance. In this case there was no opportunity to collect troupe only from actors or only from singers, for commercial and artistic production reasons. For solution of this problem, increased time of rehearsal of a vocal with actors and digression of classes in acting with performers was carried out.

Vocal training of students of specialization in the actor of a musical theater and the actor of the musical is limited to the academic manner of singing. It is a basic preparation on which is based on all vocal schools and the directions. The musical has an extensive area which is different from the music directions. Thus requirements to execution are dictated by the genre and the stylistic features of music. Expressiveness of means of plasticity is also dictated by music. In KAZNAA of named after *T. Zhurgenov* there are no big differences in the requirements to plastic training of actors of the drama and of the musical theater. Additional subject matters are necessary for the solution of these problems, without canceling the existing disciplines that are basic. In the program of training of actors, in a dance class in the first year of training there are the classical ones, to the second year begins national dances. But as though, it was catastrophically not enough, all these efforts for development of actors of the musical. Additional disciplines as step, the jazz dance, hip-hop modern dance and so on are necessary. Scenic movement and scenic fight are distinctive basic subjects which are not taught at foreign theatrical higher educational institutions. Plastic development of the student entirely lays on choreography shoulders. It is our plus in training of actors. As the gained skills in these disciplines give the chance to actors

to master difficult fighting performances. Acting at domestic drama schools is based on drama existence on a scene. Such detailed existence and psychological action is not meant in musicals. But skills acquired are improved by process and level of a created image on a scene. To possess all the professional skills of the actor of the musical is yet a guarantee of successful correct existence on a scene. The most difficult and important synthesis of all the skills equally is needed for finding of full organic chemistry. That in singing there is also the actor's mastership and it is plastic and on the contrary. Domestic drama schools have a consistent plus in the course of training of actors of theater. It is a strong drama training of actors of the musical drama theaters. Now additional disciplines, in stage movement subjects and in vocal preparation are necessary.

## CONCLUSION

The musical is initially reflected not as simply a theatrical performance, but as the cultural project pursuing specific aims and tasks and receiving expected result. All this assumes competent professional management.

It proves need of development for Kazakhstan of art management and the professional organization of theatrical production. Considering undoubted commercial appeal of the musical, it is possible to consider that it possesses for this purpose optimal opportunities.

Our own art industry, capable to make musicals financially attractive to potential investors that will allow domestic theater not to only successfully realize the ideas, but also to take a worthy place in the world which is necessary for Kazakhstan.

Creation of originally national Kazakh musicals seems to us objective need. It is a magnificent opportunity to create a unique cultural brand through which traditional cultural wealth of the Kazakh people, its history, outlook and ethnic memory will be broadcast.

At present popularity of musicals for the audience and directors only grows.

Kazakhstan whilst has a very modest experience in staging of musicals, but a steady interest to it testifies to the importance of the processes happening in the domestic theater world. Cultural globalization strengthens and accelerates development of the creative industries as one of the most important aspects of a sustainable development of the state. Synthesis of arts as the most important and indicative feature of the musical is capable

to provide the most intensive and full disclosure of creative potential of young actors of Kazakhstan, to bring their skill and professionalism to qualitatively new level.

Thus, for the actor of the musical besides possession of high level of acting, “skills” of vocal, choreography, plasticity, but free possession of these arts which, supplementing each other are necessary, will create some kind of “the universal actor”. Also understanding that is important, if the actor possesses a certain creative freedom of expression.

The world practice shows that the musical is one of the key moments in the development of the theatrical industry. It promotes the professional growth of the actor. The musical very much interests the Kazakhstan viewers, it is necessary to them.

Interest of the spectator audience and creative groups of Kazakhstan in a genre of the musical is obvious today. Potential of domestic authors, directors, producers, performers for creation of the domestic musical of high professional level, undoubtedly, is. The musical in Kazakhstan all designated types of performances are necessary to an arising genre. On the basis of the already approved musicals it is necessary to gather production, performing experience, borrowing foreign theaters. The strong musical, drama, choreographic base of the country can become the base for creation of this genre. Today in Kazakhstan there are attempts to carry out experimental performances in a genre of the musical. The new genre can and has to promote development of all the theatrical industry of Kazakhstan.

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